



END CHILD & FAMILY POVERTY IN CANADA

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **Three out of four cross-Canada parties commit to reduce poverty; Conservatives ignore Poverty Reduction and Inequality**

**Toronto** – Citing the persistence of poverty and growing gap between the rich and poor across Canada, national anti-poverty coalition Campaign 2000 today expressed satisfaction that three out of four parties have committed to a poverty reduction plan.

Reducing poverty and inequality is not just a moral issue, but an essential element in managing the economy. Poverty and inequality drive health care and crime control expenditures, lead to skilled labour shortages through poor educational attainment, and generate social conflict.

Poverty persists across Canada with nearly one in ten people, including 610,000 low-income children and their mothers, living in poverty (2008 LICO after-tax). These most recent statistics do not reflect the current situation or the full impact of the recession and continuing economic disruption. These families still feel the double burden of job loss at the workplace and increased economic stress at home.

“We’ve analyzed the party platforms and found that all parties except for the Conservative Party have plans for poverty reduction in their platforms. The Liberals, New Democrats and Greens have all agreed to develop a plan to address poverty, to establish a system of universally accessible, high quality early childhood education and care services and to develop a national strategy for affordable housing including funds for social housing. The Bloc Québécois also supports a plan to make poverty history in Canada that recognizes Québec’s particular role in social policy,” said Laurel Rothman, National Coordinator of Campaign 2000. “These commitments are essential to an effective strategy to reduce and eventually eradicate poverty in Canada.”

“We do know how to reduce and eradicate poverty – northern European countries have child and family poverty rates below 5%, without sacrificing vibrant economic growth or prosperity. Those countries invest in people throughout the life cycle and everyone in society benefits. In Canada, the majority of provinces have adopted or are all working on poverty reduction plans. But the missing link is an active federal government role,” said Sid Frankel, University of Manitoba and Social Planning Council of Winnipeg. “That’s why this federal election is so important – we need Canada’s next federal government to commit to a plan to reduce poverty levels by at least 25% over the next 5 years and enshrine that in legislation.”

To view a full copy of the Campaign 2000 party grid (short form and long form) summarizing party platforms on poverty, visit [www.campaign2000.ca](http://www.campaign2000.ca).

*Campaign 2000 is a non-partisan cross Canada coalition of over 120 organizations committed to ending child & family poverty in Canada.*

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