

Child poverty rates unacceptable ^[1]

Author: Singleton, Dan

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EXCERPTS

A newly-released report on child poverty in Alberta should be a wake-up call for all stakeholders, including politicians at every level.

Prepared by Public Interest Alberta, the Alberta College of Social Workers and the Edmonton Social Planning Council, the “One in Six is Too Many: An Alberta Children Poverty Report” found that more than 17 per cent of all kids in the province now live below the poverty line.

And most troubling of all is the finding that the child poverty rate has increased markedly over the past decade.

Specifically, as of 2016, there are 171,860 children ages 0-17 under the low-income threshold in Alberta, up from 162,200 in 2014. This equates to 17.7 per cent or more than 1 in 6 Alberta children living in poverty.

As well, since 2006, there has been a 23.4 per cent growth in the number of children in Alberta living below the poverty line.

Joel French, executive director of Public Interest Alberta, says the findings should immediately promote provincial government action.

“Alberta is the only province in the country without a poverty reduction strategy,” said French. “Legislating a plan to eliminate poverty with targets and other accountability measures would show we are serious about addressing the problem. Our federal government now has one, as do Alberta’s major municipalities, so immediate provincial government action on this is necessary.”

Lynn L. King, executive director and registrar of the Alberta College of Social Workers, echoes French’s comments.

“We strongly urge the government to collaborate with communities and stakeholders to develop and implement a provincial poverty reduction strategy that would strengthen real action to combat poverty in Alberta,” said King.

“To address the growing rate of children living in poverty in Alberta, it is incumbent upon us all to tackle the root causes of poverty through programs and resources that aim to break the cycle of poverty for future generations.”

Albertans can be proud of many things, but increasing poverty for the province’s youngest and most vulnerable citizens isn’t one of them.

Related link:

2018 Provincial reports and supporting material on child and family poverty: Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, ^[3]

Region: Alberta ^[4]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/11/child-poverty-rates-unacceptable>

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