Family security in insecure times: The case for a poverty reduction strategy in Canada [1]

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AVAILABILITY
- National Report Card [2]

Excerpts from press release:

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The 2008 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Canada shows the nation's child poverty rate is almost what it was in 1989 when Parliament unanimously resolved to end child poverty by the year 2000.

"Canada has enjoyed more than a decade of strong economic growth yet child poverty is essentially the same, based on the latest data available, as it was in 1989," says Laurel Rothman with Campaign 2000. "As Canada heads into a period of economic uncertainty, the most strategic decision the federal government could make would be to lower the poverty rate."

Among the study's key findings:

• Canada's after-tax child poverty rate appears stalled at 11.3 per cent;
• Nearly one out every nine Canadian children lives in poverty;
• A startling 40 per cent of low-income children live in families where at least one of their parents works full-time year round &em; they're the working poor;
• Children in racialized, new Canadian and Aboriginal families as well as children with disabilities are at greater risk of living in poverty.

"Child poverty rates remained far too high in the good years, and things are about to get much worse for low income families" says Andrew Jackson of the Canadian Labour Congress. "We need major job creating public investments and improvements to EI to stop an economic downturn from becoming a disaster for those most in need."

An October 2008 Environics poll shows an overwhelming majority (92 per cent) of Canadians say that if nations like the UK and Sweden can make significant progress on reducing poverty, then Canada can too. Eighty-six per cent say governments should take concrete action, reducing poverty by 25 per cent in five years.

"These findings echo my experience across the country," says Peggy Taillon, President of the Canadian Council on Social Development. "Canadians are looking for leadership."

"Support for poverty reduction is growing across the country," said Joe Gunn, Executive Director of Citizens for Public Justice. "Several provinces are implementing poverty reduction strategies. We need the federal government to take leadership too."

Provincial Report Cards are available for:
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