

2019 Annual Report Card - 2020: Setting the stage for a poverty free Canada ^[1]

Child and family poverty 30 years later

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AVAILABILITY

[Full report card \(childcare report card p. 17 - 20\)](#) ^[2]

[2020 report card overview](#) ^[3]

Excerpted from introduction

INTRODUCTION

Strong public policy and political will can end poverty in Canada. In 1989, all federally represented parties voted unanimously in the House of Commons to end child poverty by the year 2000. After the passing of this resolution, rates of child poverty continued to rise before they decreased. Thirty years later, there are over 1.35 million children living in poverty with their families in Canada today and income inequality, the gap between the rich and poor, has grown to unjustifiable heights.

We have missed the opportunity to end poverty for a whole generation of children.

Precarious and low wage work is widespread and social assistance rates remain abysmally low creating a floor that is only one small step above destitution. The rise in housing costs, food prices, childcare fees and costs of prescription medication along with other necessities means families are left to make difficult choices every day about what they can afford and what they must do without. Inequality and poverty are rooted in systemic discrimination and stratified along lines of Indigenous identity, race, gender, immigration status (or lack of), ability, among other social, cultural and economic locations that result in specific populations being unable to access opportunities available to all other Canadians.

Poverty is never inevitable.

The historic federal poverty reduction strategy and official poverty measure became law this past year and is a welcomed re-commitment from the government to address poverty over the long term. But targets that are too low, timelines that are too far away, measurements that do not account for some of the most marginalized in our communities and no new budget commitments means that families and children will continue to endure the harsh health and social impacts of poverty.

Canada has the resources to end poverty.

In this report, Campaign 2000 sets the stage for a poverty-free Canada. We examine the critical role that government transfers play in reducing poverty, in particular, the Canada Child Benefit after its first full year of implementation, and makes key recommendations for enhancements. In addition to boosting incomes through transfers, labour market interventions, high-quality accessible public services and community-building initiatives in low-income communities are needed if child poverty is to be eradicated.

Direction can be taken from the number of strategies, action plans and expert committee reports generated through government and civil society initiatives related to poverty eradication in the areas of truth and reconciliation, missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, housing, food security, labour, childcare and pharmacare. Where they are rooted in human rights and intersectional gender analysis, these documents can provide both the conceptual and practical frameworks to identify and remove systemic barriers through policy initiatives, and allocation of public resources.

As we begin a new decade under the mandate of a new minority government, we have a unique opportunity for collaboration on the shared goal of ending poverty for all. We simply cannot afford to fail another generation of children.

Related link:

Region: [Canada](#) ^[4]

Tags: [poverty](#) ^[5]

[public management](#) ^[6]

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poverty-free

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/20/01/2019-annual-report-card-2020-setting-stage-poverty-free> [2]
<https://campaign2000.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/campaign-2000-report-setting-the-stage-for-a-poverty-free-canada-january-14-2020.pdf> [3]
<https://campaign2000.ca/campaign-2000s-new-national-report-card-on-child-and-family-poverty-sets-the-stage-for-a-poverty-free-canada/> [4]
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