

# If low-income women of colour counted in Toronto <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** Khosla, Punam

**Source:** Community Social Planning Council in Toronto <sup>[2]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Available in print for order (see SOURCE) and online for download.

- Executive summary in pdf <sup>[3]</sup>

- Full report in pdf <sup>[4]</sup>

## Excerpts from report

Poverty is the women's biggest challenge and even their tough resourcefulness cannot overcome the impossibilities this condition creates in their lives. Yet the women, many of whom are racialized immigrants, have insistent dreams of a better and more independent life.

Managing rising levels of stress and ill health, Toronto's low-income women try to make the impossible possible. Decent housing is hard to find in a tight rental market, and many landlords discriminate against women who are either single mothers, social assistance recipients or racialized women. Increasing numbers of women have lost the roof over their heads while many more face an invisible form of homelessness in which they are bunking with relatives, barely surviving in substandard, expensive and overcrowded units.

In spite of their great desire to work and better their economic circumstances, few of the women are able to find paid work. Those who do have jobs find themselves in part-time, insecure, low-paying positions which have little hope of advancement. Many aren't able to even look for work because of the lack of affordable childcare. Few low-income women know how to access regulated care and, where they do find childcare, informal arrangements are the norm. Elderly women, many of whom speak little English, find themselves stuck doing long hours of unpaid work caring for their children's children.

Access to affordable, quality childcare is a key factor affecting women's ability to overcome poverty and isolation. In a recent Toronto study, childcare management was cited as one of the top five barriers low-income immigrant women face in accessing a paid job, and a key reason for problems retaining a job.

Increasing numbers of women are forced to use expensive, private and informal babysitting arrangements to fill this gap. Although studies tell us that the vast majority of parents using care would prefer to have their children in licensed care, the Provincial government is strengthening the casual approach by diverting funds to Early Years Centres where parents can go with their children, but which don't provide the relief women need to allow them to get jobs and increase their economic and social independence.

**Region:** Canada <sup>[5]</sup>

**Tags:** economics <sup>[6]</sup>

poverty <sup>[7]</sup>

quality <sup>[8]</sup>

funding <sup>[9]</sup>

accessibility <sup>[10]</sup>

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mother's labour force participation <sup>[13]</sup>

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