

Keep the promise: Make Canada poverty-free ^[1]

2009 report card on child and family poverty in Canada: 1989-2009

Author: Various

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AVAILABILITY

See links for provinces below.

- [Canada report card \(eng.\)](#) ^[2]

- [Canada report card \(fr.\)](#) ^[3]

Excerpts from press release:

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Keep the Promise: Make Canada Poverty-Free looks at the nation's most recent child and family after-tax poverty rate compared to 20 years ago, when Parliament unanimously resolved to end child poverty by 2000, and finds today's after-tax rate is 9.5 per cent, a slight budge from 11.9 per cent in 1989.

"If Canada were a student, she would be in danger of dropping out," says Campaign 2000's Laurel Rothman. "Following an unprecedented period of growth since 1998, the small change in the rate of child and family poverty is shocking."

"As Canada develops strategies to foster economic growth and recovery, the most strategic decision the federal government could make would be to take leadership and set a target to lower the poverty rate."

-The report card's key findings show Canada has far to go to prevent and reduce poverty:

One in 10 children still live in poverty in Canada today. It's worse for children living in First Nation's communities: one in four grow up in poverty;

-There are more working poor: 40 per cent of low-income children live in families where at least one parent works full-time year round, up dramatically from 33 per cent in the 1990s;

-Child poverty is persistent across Canada: rates of child and family poverty (LICO before-tax) are in the double digits in most provinces.

-The gap between rich and poor has widened: On average, for every dollar the families in the poorest 10 per cent had, families in the richest 10 per cent had almost 12 times as much (\$11.84) in 2007.

"Canada could succeed if our federal government used public policy resources to improve labour market options and make our tax system more progressive," says Ed Broadbent, the former New Democratic Party leader who moved the 1989 motion to end child poverty by the year 2000.

"All Canadians will benefit from less poverty," says Peggy Taillon, President of the Canadian Council on Social Development. "As a society we either share the collective responsibility to prevent child and family poverty or we face rising costs in health care services, criminal justice and education."

"Now that seven out of 10 provinces have committed to poverty reduction, it's time for the federal government to exercise leadership and develop a clear plan with targets and timetables," says Sid Frankel, Social Planning Council of Winnipeg.

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BACKGROUNDER

Highlights

-Families live deep in poverty. Low-income two-parent families, on average, would need an additional \$9,400 a year just to reach the poverty line. For lone-parent mother-led families, the average depth of poverty is \$9,600 (LICO before-tax).

-Poverty affects people differently: Children in racialized, new Canadian and Aboriginal families as well as children with disabilities are at greater risk of living in poverty, fostering persistent social and economic equality.

-Poverty rates are a formidable barrier in Aboriginal communities. Almost one in two Aboriginal children (49 per cent) under the age of six (not living in First Nations communities) lives in a low-income family.

-Canada is a laggard on social spending. Canada spends less money on benefits for families and the unemployed than other countries. Canada is now 25th out of 33 OECD countries in the percentage of GDP spent on social programs.

-Canada ranks last among 25 OECD nations on benchmarks for early childhood education and care services including subsidized and regulated child care services, public expenditures and parental leave.

Campaign 2000 partner provincial report cards:

BC Campaign 2000: 2009 child poverty report card ^[4]

We must do better: It's time to make Alberta poverty-free ^[5]

Child and family poverty, Saskatchewan report ^[6]

20 years lost: The poverty generation- 2009 Manitoba child & family poverty report card ^[7]

From promise to reality- recession proofing Ontario families: 2009 report card on child & family poverty in Ontario (eng.) ^[8](fr.) ^[9]

The Nova Scotia child poverty report card 2009:1989-2007 ^[10]

Child and family poverty report card New Brunswick 2009 (eng.) ^[11] (fr.) ^[12]

Related link: 20 years after the House of Commons resolution to abolish child poverty- open letter to MPs ^[13]

Tags: advocacy ^[14]

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