

# Poverty reduction in an age of uncertainty and change: 2011 report card on child and family poverty in Ontario <sup>[1]</sup>

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**Source:** Family Service Toronto

**Format:** Report

**Publication Date:** 6 Feb 2012

## AVAILABILITY

Press release <sup>[2]</sup>

Full report in pdf <sup>[3]</sup>

Campaign 2000 has been reporting on the state of child and family poverty in Canada and its provinces for over 20 years. Much of our efforts have been on the problems faced by poorer families and their children. In Ontario, like the rest of Canada, child poverty will, until it is eradicated, remain a critical issue that affects our families, communities, society and the economy.

The Ontario government's first poverty reduction strategy, introduced in 2008, aims to reduce child poverty in Ontario by 25% (90,000 children) by 2013. The provincial government has established a number of programs, including the Ontario Child Benefit, that have helped reduce child poverty in Ontario in the year following the recession. Poverty figures from Statistics Canada show that 19,000 fewer children lived in poverty in 2009, a 4.6% decrease compared to the year before. This is good progress. However, 393,000 children still live in poverty in our province. We are already aware of the growing gap between the rich and the poor. As unemployment in Ontario remains above the Canadian average, especially for youth, and while social assistance rates stay unacceptably low, there is a real fear that the number of children living in poverty in Ontario may actually rise, rather than continue to fall.

If the Ontario government wants to stay on track and reduce child poverty, it has to see poverty reduction as a priority, a key consideration in public sector decision making. Otherwise, our province will not only continue to struggle with the heavy cost of poverty, but will also risk further harming the social and economic potential of the next generation of parents, children, workers and residents.

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## Key Recommendations:

- The Ontario government must prioritize poverty reduction in the 2012 budget and work towards the eradication of child and family poverty in Ontario;
- The Ontario government must increase the minimum wage to \$11/hour in 2012 & fully index it to inflation;
- The Ontario government must improve the delivery of social assistance. The government can immediately start making changes to the current system by implementing the short-term recommendations made by the Social Assistance Review Advisory Council (including stopping the practice of treating loans taken out by social assistance recipients as income) even before the Commission for the Review of Social Assistance in Ontario releases its final report and recommendations in summer 2012;
- The 2012 budget must allocate \$287 million in emergency funding to prevent the closure of hundreds of child care centres across Ontario;
- The Ontario government must improve the current Long-Term Affordable Housing Strategy, introducing targets and timelines and ensuring that it responds to the immediate needs of families and housing providers in Ontario.

**Related link:** Poverty fight must go on despite deficit, activists say <sup>[4]</sup>

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

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

**Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/12/02/poverty-reduction-age-uncertainty-and-change-2011-report>

## Links

<sup>[1]</sup> <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/12/02/poverty-reduction-age-uncertainty-and-change-2011-report> <sup>[2]</sup>

<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/ontario-does-not-have-a-choice-on-poverty-reduction-509568471.html> <sup>[3]</sup>

[http://campaign2000.ca/Ontario/reportcards/2011Ont\\_Report\\_Card\\_Feb2012.pdf](http://campaign2000.ca/Ontario/reportcards/2011Ont_Report_Card_Feb2012.pdf) <sup>[4]</sup> <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/12/02/poverty-fight-must-go-despite-deficit-activists-say> <sup>[5]</sup>

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7856> <sup>[6]</sup>

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