

# Poverty or prosperity: Indigenous children in Canada <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

Full report in pdf <sup>[2]</sup>

Excerpts from the news release:

Indigenous children in Canada are over two and a half times more likely to live in poverty than non-Indigenous children, according to a study released today by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) and Save the Children Canada.

The study disaggregates child poverty statistics and identifies three tiers of poverty for children in Canada based on data from the 2006 census, which is the most recent data available on Indigenous child poverty:

The first tier has a poverty rate of 12% and excludes Indigenous, racialized, and immigrant children in Canada.

The second tier includes Métis, Inuit, and non-status Indian children, who suffer a child poverty rate of 27%; visible minority children, who suffer a poverty rate of 22%; and immigrant children, whose poverty rate is 33%.

The third tier consists of status First Nations children, who have by far the highest child poverty rate of any of the Indigenous groups at 50%.

"The average child poverty rate for all Indigenous children in Canada is 40%, compared to 15% for non-Indigenous children," says David Macdonald, a Senior Economist with the CCPA and co-author of the study. "Regionally, the situation is even worse in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, where two out of three status First Nations children live in poverty."

Indigenous children trail the rest of Canada's children on practically every measure of wellbeing: family income, educational attainment, crowding and homelessness, poor water quality, infant mortality, health and suicide.

"The report's findings that half of status First Nation children live in poverty should shock all Canadians," said Patricia Erb, President and CEO of Save the Children. "Looking beyond the numbers to the impact of poverty on the lives of Indigenous children explains why Save the Children is currently growing our programming in Canada."

According to the study, it would require \$7.5 billion a year from either market income or government transfers to bring all children up to the poverty line, \$1 billion of which would be required for all Indigenous children and \$580 million specifically for status First Nations children.

"The Indigenous population is the fastest growing in Canada. With adequate and sustained support these people will become an integral part of society and the workforce-particularly as baby boomers retire", says Daniel Wilson, Indigenous rights advocate and co-author of the study. "But if we refuse to address the crushing poverty facing Indigenous children, we will ensure the crisis of socioeconomic marginalization and wasted potential will continue."

"As an organization that works internationally to promote and protect the rights of children, we know the positive impact Canada has had around the world," noted Erb. "It is time to work together-communities, civil society, governments, and the private sector-to ensure that Indigenous children grow up in happier and healthier communities and have the relevant education and opportunity to help build stronger, more prosperous communities."

**Related link:** Half of First Nations kids living in poverty, new study finds, Toronto Star, 18 Jun 13 <sup>[3]</sup>

**Region:** Canada <sup>[4]</sup>

**Tags:** poverty <sup>[5]</sup>

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