

# Child poverty, 25 years later: We can fix this <sup>[1]</sup>

2014 Report card on child and family poverty in Canada

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## AVAILABILITY

Full report available in [English](#) <sup>[2]</sup> and [French](#) <sup>[3]</sup> (PDF)

[Provincial reports](#) <sup>[4]</sup>

## Description:

This year marks 25 years since the unanimous House of Commons' resolution to end child poverty in Canada and five years after the entire House of Commons voted "to develop an immediate plan to end poverty for all in Canada." The year 2014 also marks the centennial anniversary of our host agency, Family Service Toronto, which is celebrating a century of providing vital community services in Toronto.

The 2014 national report card highlights the compelling reasons why the federal government needs to take leadership and develop a national plan to end child and family poverty. It will present the latest statistics on child and family poverty and make recommendations for all political parties. A Breakfast on the Hill event is scheduled in Ottawa and all MPs and Senators will be invited to attend and urged to take action.

On the same day, several of Campaign 2000 provincial partners released their provincial report cards on child and family poverty, including Vancouver, BC; Edmonton, Alberta; Saskatoon, Saskatchewan; Winnipeg, Manitoba; Toronto, Ontario; Saint John, New Brunswick; Halifax, Nova Scotia; and Charlottetown, PEI.

## Recommendations:

- The Government of Canada introduce a federal action plan with targets and time lines to reduce and eradicate poverty in consultation with provincial and territorial governments, Aboriginal governments and organizations, non-governmental organizations and people living in poverty. Secured in legislation, this plan should identify key roles for all levels of government and recognize the particularities of how Québec pursues social policy in the Canadian context.
- An enhanced child benefit for low-income families to a maximum of \$5,600 per child (2014 dollars, indexed to inflation) by streamlining support to families through the taxation and transfer systems.
- A plan to prevent, reduce and eventually eradicate child and family poverty in indigenous families developed in conjunction with indigenous organizations.
- A commitment by federal government to implement Jordan's Principle and by provinces and territories to adopt Jordan's principle to ensure that indigenous children's needs are met expeditiously.
- Enhancements to Employment Insurance that expand access, duration and levels of benefits.
- Proactive strategies, including employment equity in the public and private sectors, and a sensible training strategy accessible to those not on EI to level the playing field for racialized communities and other historically disadvantaged groups.
- A national ECEC program, led by the federal government and developed collaboratively with provinces/territories and indigenous communities, which includes a well-developed policy framework based on the principles of universality, high quality and comprehensiveness.
- In the short term, an emergency fund of \$500 million in federal transfer payments earmarked for regulated child care to provinces/territories and indigenous communities.
- Extended and enhanced maternity/parental leave benefits that include all new parents (adoptive, student, trainee, self-employed parents, part-time and casual workers), are more flexible and include a "father only leave" benefit.
- A comprehensive national housing strategy reflecting the needs of local communities and First Nations in partnership with provinces, territories, municipalities, First Nations, the non-profit sector and the private sector.
- As a first step, reverse the trend of decreasing federal investment in affordable housing by providing funds for affordability, funds for capital renewal and support for transforming the social housing sector for future success.

- Addressing growing income inequality by restoring fairness to the personal income taxation system and re-introducing the principle of taxation based on ability to pay

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

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

federalism <sup>[7]</sup>

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