

Let's do this – let's end child poverty for good ^[1]

Campaign 2000 report card on child and family poverty in Canada 2015

Author: Campaign 2000

Source: Campaign 2000

Format: Report

Publication Date: 24 Nov 2015

AVAILABILITY

Media release [English](#) ^[2] and [French](#) ^[3]

Full report [English](#) ^[4] and [French](#) ^[5]

Introduction

A climate of renewed hope and optimism provides Canada with an important opportunity to close the book on its greatest failure. With decades of research and evidence to guide us, we must now muster the resolve to end child and family poverty for good.

Campaign 2000 has consistently stated that child poverty is not inevitable, but that it is a result of choices. Federal politicians pledged to end child poverty in 1989, 2009 and 2015; but it continues to deprive over 1.34 million children of their only childhood. Choosing to allow child poverty to continue forces children to endure hunger, deprivation and exclusion, and compromises their health and life chances. Choosing to reduce Canada's fiscal capacity rather than to invest in social programs exacerbates inequality. Choosing to cast away almost 1 in 5 children to poverty deprives Canada of the richness of their full contributions.

Campaign 2000 recognizes the significant poverty reduction potential of the commitments from the new federal government. The government's planned leadership role in creating a national poverty reduction strategy, long a top priority for Campaign 2000, presents a once in a generation opportunity: children left waiting by the 1989 promise to end child poverty by the year 2000 never saw a plan to eliminate child poverty materialize. Therefore, we implore the government to demonstrate its political will by including poverty reduction targets and timelines in its strategy.

This report draws upon research, evidence and the voices of people in poverty in its recommendations in order to maximize the child and family poverty reduction potential of the government's commitments to date. Eradicating child poverty requires persistent targeted investments, sound research and a commitment to equity to ensure children have equal opportunities to realize equal futures.

After decades of waiting, we have the opportunity to eradicate child and family poverty in Canada – let's do this right.

Key findings from the 2015 National Report Card:

- Child poverty has increased since 1989: from 15.8% to 19% today; 40% of Indigenous children live in poverty.
- 37% of children in poverty reside in households with full time, full year employment.
- Canada needs a good jobs strategy and decent wages: over 2 million workers stuck in temporary employment.
- Canada still needs a national childcare program. There are only enough regulated child care spaces to cover 25% of children aged 0 – 12 years.
- Poverty affects people differently: Children in racialized, recent immigrant and Indigenous families as well as children with disabilities are at greater risk of living in poverty, leading to persistent social and economic inequality.
- 1 million children experience food insecurity, lacking reliable access to adequate, safe, good-quality, nutritious food.
- Government transfers prevent poverty: 705,000 additional children would live in poverty without transfers. However, Canada's system of transfers is not as effective as those of other OECD nations.
- One in seven of those in homelessness shelters are children. Living in inadequate, crowded and unaffordable housing is associated with higher vulnerability to asthma and injury, an accelerated spread of communicable diseases, anxiety and insomnia, less physical exercise and diminished school performance.

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Links

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