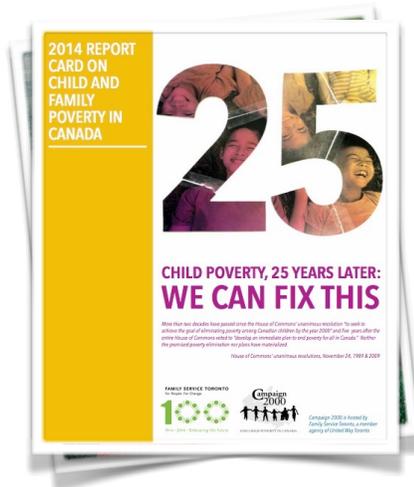


# THE YONGE STREET MISSION RESEARCH BULLETIN

Mobilizing Information | Sharing Best-Practices | Stewarding Knowledge



## Title

**2014 Report Card For  
Child & Family Poverty  
In Canada**

## Date Published

July 2015

## Published By

Campaign 2000, Family  
Services Ontario

## Link to YSM's Digital Catalogue

<http://bit.ly/1Staqlg>

## Research Tags

Poverty, Child, Family, Income  
Tax Benefit, Precarious  
Employment, Subsidized  
Childcare, Homeless, Food  
Insecurity, Canada

## Summary of Research Report

Campaign 2000, a network of 120 partner organizations, set out to a goal to end child poverty in Canada in 1989. This report, the 23rd monitoring report of its kind, measures the progress of this issue since that point in time. The report indicates an abysmal lack of progress in reducing child poverty in Canada. The economy has more than doubled in size, yet the incomes of families in the lowest decile have virtually stagnated. The gap between rich and poor families remains very wide, leaving average-income families also struggling to keep up. With considerable evidence from academic, community-based and government research and from extensive testimony from people with lived experience of poverty, we know more about how to eradicate poverty than we did 25 years ago.

## Key Findings & Figures

- ◆ Over 25 years, child and family poverty has increased to 1,331,530 children (19.1%) from 1,066,150 children (15.8%) in 1989. (p. 3)
- ◆ Approximately 40% of Canada's indigenous children live in poverty, and 50% of children in First Nations communities. (p. 3)
- ◆ The Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB) and National Child Benefit Supplement (NCB) have shown to contribute to lower child poverty rates, with every \$1,000 spent leading to lower likelihood of being in poverty and decrease in depth by \$760-\$1,120. (p. 6)
- ◆ In 2012 Campaign 2000 commissioned a simulation to model the impact of an enhanced child benefit of \$5,400 maximum NCB, which showed that the poverty rate would fall by 15% and 174,000 children would be lifted out of poverty. (p. 6)
- ◆ The most recent data shows that in the last two years, the availability of regulated childcare spaces increased slightly to cover only 20.5% to 22.5% of children depending on age. (p. 8)
- ◆ The percentage of subsidized childcare has been static or even dropped. The national median for monthly fees ranges from \$674 to \$761, however Quebec fees are \$152 for all ages. (p. 8)
- ◆ As many as 235,000 Canadians experience homelessness annually, with more than 35,000 homeless on a given night. This costs the economy \$7 billion. (p. 9)
- ◆ Over the past 25 years, Canada's population has increased by 30% and yet annual national investment in housing has decreased by 46%. Nearly 1 in 5 households experience extreme housing affordability problems, meaning they have low incomes and have to spend more than 50% of their income on rent. (p. 10)



## Why Research?

The Yonge Street Mission believes in the incredible value that evidenced-based research and information sharing plays in developing—as well as delivering—the most enhanced and effective programs and services to our community members. We are called to be stewards of knowledge; educated, informed and diligently tapping into innovation and insight. Best practices are continually refined, and studies, research and analysis are regularly being published. Keeping up to date and well-versed with this literature is essential. It is for this reason we've designed this Research Bulletin to promptly scan and disseminate the key findings and recommendations from recently published research materials relevant to the Social Service sector, and to our work at The Yonge Street Mission.

**This summary has been prepared by The Yonge Street Mission. The information given does not purport to be an exhaustive or exact replica of the original research. Omissions or errors resulting from the summation process are the responsibility of The Yonge Street Mission.**

## Proposed Recommendations & Areas For Action

- ◆ Introduce a federal action plan to reduce and eradicate poverty in consultation with provincial and territorial governments, non-governmental organizations and people living in poverty. (p. 2)
- ◆ Enhance the child benefit for low-income families to a maximum of \$5,600 per child. (p. 2)
- ◆ A plan to prevent, reduce and eventually eradicate child and family poverty in indigenous families developed in conjunction with indigenous organizations. This includes a commitment to Jordan's Principle. (p. 2)
- ◆ Enhancements to Employment Insurance that expand access, duration and levels of benefits. (p. 2)
- ◆ Proactive strategies, including employment equity in the public and private sectors and a sensible training strategy for racialized communities and other historically disadvantaged groups. (p. 2)
- ◆ Develop an emergency fund of \$500 million in federal transfer payments earmarked for regulated child care to provinces, territories and indigenous communities. (p. 2)
- ◆ Extend and enhance maternity/parental leave benefits that include all new parents, which are more flexible and include a "father only leave" benefit. (p. 2)
- ◆ A comprehensive national housing strategy reflecting the needs of local communities and First Nations in partnership. (p. 2)
- ◆ Develop a national ECEC program, which includes a well-developed policy framework based on the principles of universality, high quality and comprehensiveness. (p. 2)

## Notable Quotes

- ◆ "Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life..." (p. 2)
- ◆ "... Thousands of accumulated studies have come to the same basic conclusion: The incidence of poverty is a severe – if not the most severe – threat to the health and quality of life of individuals, communities, and societies in wealthy industrialized societies such as Canada." (p. 6)
- ◆ "On behalf of low-income families, women, people with disabilities, food banks, indigenous families, service-providers in health, childcare and affordable housing, many faith communities, teachers, social workers, unions and many others, Campaign 2000 partners have helped to highlight the unacceptable situation for low-income children and have proposed practical solutions." (p. 2)