



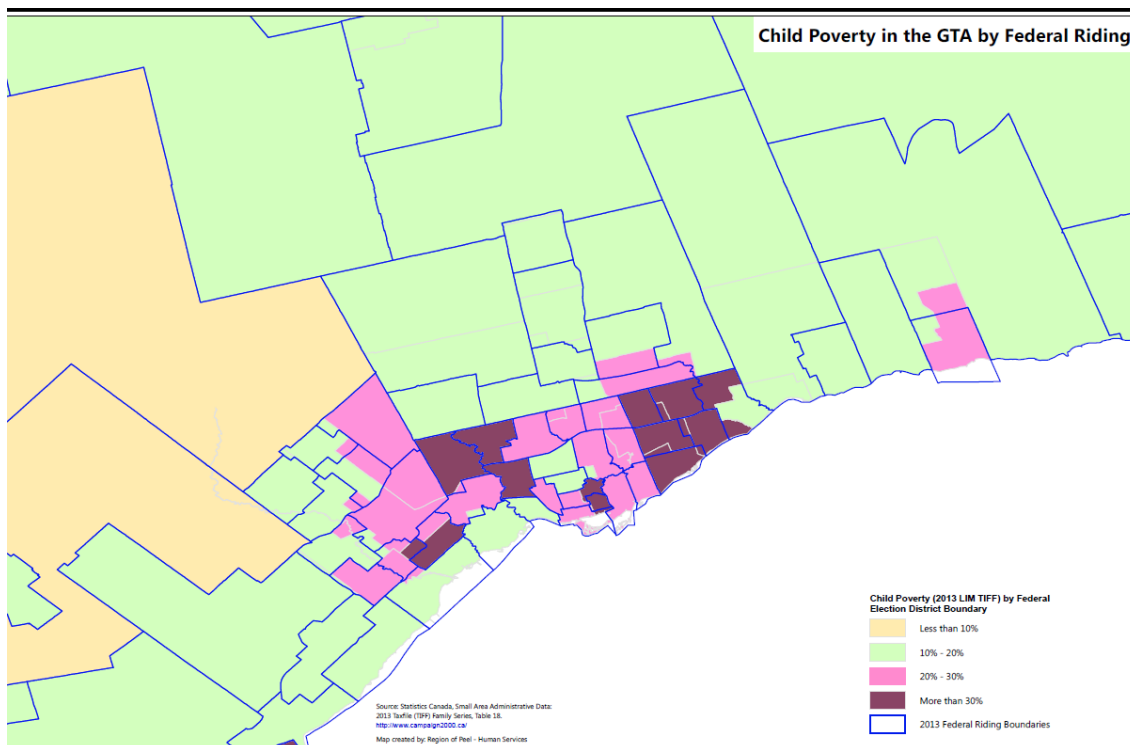
Mapping Child Poverty: A Reality in Every Federal Riding

End Child & Family Poverty in Canada

On the eve of the 2015 federal election, Campaign 2000: End Child and Family Poverty in Canada has mapped the prevalence of child poverty on a riding by riding basis. This is the first time that child poverty rates have been mapped by riding from coast to coast to coast. PDF and interactive versions of the maps are available via www.campaign2000.ca

The interactive regional maps include Atlantic Canada, Ontario and Quebec, the Prairies, British Columbia and the Territories. These maps present a snapshot of child poverty rates based on the most recent available data from 2013 on child poverty by federal electoral district or federal riding. The child poverty rates are mapped according to 2013's 308 riding boundaries.

PDF versions of the maps available through www.campaign2000.ca have the new, 338 riding boundaries super-imposed on the 2013 child poverty data and riding boundaries, providing an up-to-date picture of child poverty in advance of the federal election on October 19th. Here is a sample map of the Greater Toronto Area that includes the new federal riding boundaries super-imposed on top of the 2013 data:



Source: Statistics Canada, Small Area Administrative Data: 2013 Taxfile (TIFF) Family Series, Table 18.
Map created by Region of Peel Human Services.

Background on Child Poverty

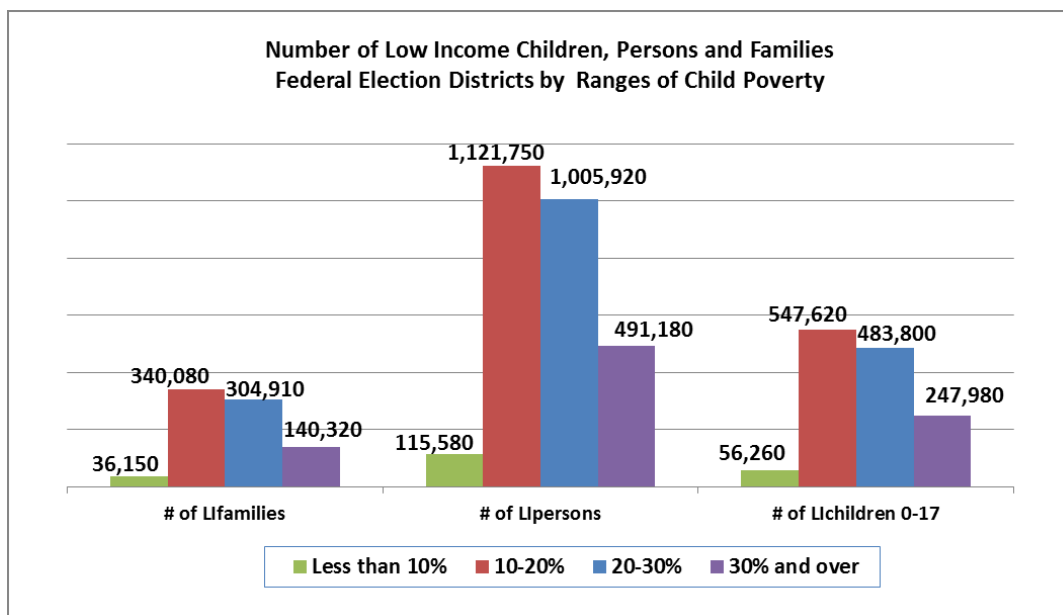
The latest data show that over 1.3 million children live in poverty. Canada's child poverty rate is 19%, meaning nearly 1 in 5 children live in poverty (2013 T1FF Family File, Table 18, Low Income Measure-After Tax). Among Indigenous children, the child poverty rate is a shameful 40%. Children in families that are racialized, immigrant, led by a female lone parent or affected by disability also live in poverty in disproportionate numbers.

Families today face increased challenges associated with precarious, part-time work, dismal social assistance rates, limited access to training and shortages of affordable housing and quality childcare. Many are left with no choice but to turn to food banks to feed their children.

Eradicating child and family poverty in Canada requires federal leadership and a sustained commitment that is backed by investments. All federal parties have pledged to end child poverty three times: in 1989, 2009 and in February 2015. Despite growing inequality and persistent poverty plaguing Canadians, there has not been a sustained or significant reduction in child and family poverty since 1989.

Mapping Trends

The mapped ridings are divided in 4 ranges. The first range includes ridings with child poverty rates less than 10%, the second is from 10-20%, the third from 20-30% and the fourth 30% and above. The chart below provides a breakdown of the number of low income families, persons and children in each mapped range.



The first range contains 27 ridings; the lowest child poverty rate is in Lotbinière - Chutes-De-La-Chaudière Quebec. Twenty-one ridings are located in Quebec, 2 are in Alberta and 4 are in Ontario. The second range has 149 ridings and the third 99. Ridings in the second and third ranges reflect a cross section of the country's provinces and territories, and include 17 ridings with child poverty rates

above the national average of 19%. The fourth range contains 29 ridings, spanning Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Nunavut and Nova Scotia. The riding of Churchill Manitoba has the worst child poverty rate in Canada – over 65% of children there live in poverty. Also represented in the fourth range are 8 Toronto ridings with child poverty rates above 30%.

Cross referencing the data with National Household Survey's findings reveals that marginalized children and families are over-represented in those ridings with the highest rates of child poverty In this regard:

- 9.1% of the people in the lowest range are immigrants compared to 33% of those in the highest.
- 9.2% of people in the lowest range are Visible Minority compared to 36.7% in the highest.
- People of Aboriginal Identity comprise only 1.2% of those in the lowest range but make up 9.2% in the highest.

People living in ridings with higher child poverty experience lower rates of labour force participation and markedly higher unemployment, according to the NHS. In 2011, the labour force participation rate for people age 15 and over in the highest range was 62.1%, while the unemployment rate was 10.3%. At the same time, the participation rate and unemployment rate in the lowest range was 68.6% and 5.7%, respectively.

Campaign 2000 presents NHS data here with caution. Participation in the survey was voluntary, making the results subject to a potentially higher non-response rate than 2006's Mandatory Long-Form Census.

We strongly urge the federal government to reinstate the Mandatory Long Form Census or a similarly reliable data source immediately.

The Case for Federal Leadership against Poverty

The maps highlight that child poverty is an issue in every federal riding. This is contrary to claims that it is not an issue in more affluent parts of the country. Wealthy ridings in wealthy cities are home to high numbers of low income children and families. This is the case in Toronto Centre, which is a riding mixed with wealthy and low-income neighbourhoods. The child poverty rate there is a startling 37.8%)

At the local level, over 40 municipal and regional governments have committed to poverty reduction measures. Every province and territory in Canada except for British Columbia has a poverty reduction strategy in place or in development. Eradicating poverty requires action from all levels of government, municipal, provincial, territorial, First Nations and federal. The role of the federal government is crucial to poverty reduction because of its significant taxation and transfer powers, administration of key income security programs and setting taxation levels. Unfortunately, the federal government is missing in action on poverty reduction and needs to play a much stronger role through a coordinated federal action plan that sets out clear goals and provides the necessary resources to end the child poverty crisis.

There are compelling reasons for federal government leadership to eradicate poverty. First, it is the right thing to do for our children and for all of us. Federal leadership and the will to act can ensure that every child can realize his or her full potential and escape poverty while meeting Canada's obligations

to uphold the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Second, poverty is expensive, costing Canada an estimated \$72- \$86 billion annually; child poverty leads to more illness throughout life, impairs educational attainment and presages employment vulnerability. Finally, Canada has the fiscal capacity to act. Even if revenues decrease, poverty reduction should have the first call on resources.

Recommendations

Through substantial research and leadership from people living in low income, Canada has amassed the knowledge and solutions to eradicate child and family poverty plaguing every corner of the country. Campaign 2000 and its diverse network of over 120 partners recommend that a plan to eradicate poverty include the following components:

1. A commitment for The Government of Canada to introduce a federal action plan with targets and time lines to 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.
2. An enhanced child benefit for low income families of a minimum of \$5,600 per child (2015 dollars, indexed to inflation), which can be partially funded by streamlining support to low and modest income families through the taxation and transfer systems.
3. A plan to reduce, prevent and eradicate child and family poverty among Indigenous families developed in conjunction with Indigenous organizations.
4. A good jobs program that addresses the rise in precarious work, involuntary part-time work and working poverty. This program should include employment equity in the public and private sectors to address the disproportionate levels of poverty experienced by people with disabilities, racialized and Indigenous people, women, and recent immigrants; and enhancements to Employment Insurance that expand access, duration and levels of benefits.
5. A national early childhood education and care 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.
6. A renewed approach to Canada's social safety net that rebuilds transfers for social assistance and social services. A new funding formula, negotiated with the provinces and territories, must provide sufficient, stable and predictable funding and recognize regional economic variations while ensuring government accountability for adequate income support to be available to all low income Canadians who are without other adequate means of support.
7. 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 and private sectors.

Conclusions

Campaign 2000 calls on each party to demonstrate the leadership and will to provide equal opportunities and equal futures to all children by immediately committing to issuing a national poverty eradication plan.

About Campaign 2000:

Campaign 2000 is a non-partisan, cross-Canada coalition of over 120 organizations committed to ending child and family poverty in Canada. www.campaign2000.ca

Acknowledgements:

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Summary of Key points:

- There are a total of 147 ridings from coast to coast to coast to coast that have child poverty rates over and above the national average of 19%
- The maps highlight that child poverty is an issue in every federal riding
- People living in ridings with higher child poverty experience lower rates of labour force participation and markedly higher unemployment
- Marginalized children and families are over-represented in those ridings with the highest rates of child poverty
- The role of the federal government is crucial to poverty reduction
- Eradicating poverty requires action from all levels of government, municipal, provincial, territorial, First Nations and federal
- All federal parties have pledged to end child poverty three times, in 1989, 2009 and 2015
- Campaign 2000 calls on each party to demonstrate the leadership and will to provide equal opportunities and equal futures to all children.

--Updated Oct. 8, 2015