



END CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY IN CANADA

MEDIA RELEASE

DECEMBER 4, 2015

Speech from the Throne must Prioritize Children & Families in Poverty

OTTAWA – Campaign 2000: End Child and Family Poverty in Canada will focus on how the Speech from the Throne addresses the urgent need for immediate action to eradicate child and family poverty in Canada. “We recognize the significant poverty reduction potential of the commitments from the new federal government and we are focused on how and when these commitments will be put into action to create meaningful change for children and families in poverty,” says Anita Khanna, National Coordinator for Campaign 2000.

While federal politicians committed to eliminate poverty among children in 1989, 2009, and 2015, it is worse today than in 1989. Poverty plagues 1.33 million children, almost 1 in 5 in Canada, and 1 in 2 Status First Nations children.

The government’s planned leadership role in creating a national poverty reduction strategy presents a once in a generation opportunity to end child poverty for good – it must not fall short. Canada can and must free this and future generations from the stress, inequity, indignity and ill health caused by poverty.

Campaign 2000’s 2015 national report card, *Let’s Do This: Let’s End Child Poverty for Good*, chronicles the state of child poverty in Canada and offers solutions that the federal government can adopt immediately to reduce and eradicate it. It 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. Recommendations address precarious employment, gaps in the social safety net, housing, income inequality, and early childhood education and care (ECEC), long a fundamental piece of Campaign 2000’s child poverty eradication agenda.

In his response to Campaign 2000’s report card, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Jean-Yves Duclos stated that “Supporting families and ensuring every child gets the best possible start in life is a priority of this government.”

Key recommendations from the 2015 National Report Card, *Let’s Do This: Let’s End Child Poverty for Good*:

- **A federal action plan to eradicate poverty that is secured in legislation and includes both targets and timelines.**
- **Ensure the Canada Child Benefit design reduces Canada’s child poverty rate by 50% in five years.**
- **Collaborate on a plan to prevent, reduce and eventually eradicate child and family poverty in Indigenous families.**
- **Increase funding for the Canada Social Transfer and remove arbitrary growth restrictions.**
- **Enhance Employment Insurance to expand access, duration and levels of benefits.**
- **A national ECEC program, led by the federal government and developed collaboratively with provinces/territories and Indigenous communities, based on the principles of universality, high quality and comprehensiveness, and guided by targets and timelines.**
- **In the short term, an emergency fund of \$500 million in federal transfer payments earmarked for regulated child care.**
- **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.

We are pleased that Minister Duclos has welcomed our report card, and in the throne speech we look for evidence that children will not be sacrificed to fighting the unexpected deficit.

Campaign 2000 is a non-partisan, cross-Canada network of 120 national, provincial and community partner organizations committed to working to end child and family poverty. For Campaign 2000’s 2015 report cards, in French and English, visit <http://www.campaign2000.ca>

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