

*For Immediate Release*

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## **Anti-poverty groups and allies call for more action for child living in poverty in federal COVID response plan**

**TORONTO** – Over 250 groups and individuals sent a letter today calling on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the federal COVID Cabinet Committee to ensure children living in poverty from marginalized communities are central to their COVID-19 response and recovery plan.

Written by the Campaign 2000 Steering Committee and endorsed by partners from across the country, the letter sets out a suite of immediate and longer term policy solutions and fiscal investments to ensure that low-income children and families have the supports they need to survive the pandemic and thrive in the recovery.

“First Nations, Inuit, Metis children, newcomer and racialized children, children with disabilities and children in sole mother-led households all have significantly higher rates of poverty. They experience worse health outcomes, higher stress levels and a significantly higher risk of compromised immune systems,” said Sid Frankel, associate professor at the University of Manitoba and member of the Steering Committee. “Their parents and caregivers are less able to afford to stock up on groceries and cleaning supplies and are more likely to occupy low-waged or precarious work, such as cleaners and grocery store workers. They are more likely to commute on public transit and all of this results in higher exposure to the virus.”

The Canadian Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) is providing more monthly income than the wages working parents of many poor children earn in normal times. It is also more generous than the social assistance benefits that support many poor families with pre-school children, parents with disabilities, and those unable to find work.

“Early federal announcements of modest one-time top-ups to the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) and the Goods and Services (GST) credit are insufficient, and families have to wait until the end of May, more than three months after the pandemic started, to receive the CCB, said Leila Sarangi, national coordinator of Campaign 2000. “And the approximately 25% of the population who are outside of the tax system do not have access to these benefits.”

Campaign 2000 and the groups and individuals endorsing the letter propose a robust and bold plan of action. It includes better investments and universal access to income supports, social infrastructure that prioritizes building and maintaining affordable, public childcare and housing systems as key to economic recovery efforts, and progressive tax measures to mitigate deepening inequality while generating revenue for COVID-related and poverty reduction expenditures.

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Campaign 2000 is a non-partisan, pan-Canadian network of 120 national, provincial and community partner organizations committed to working to end child and family poverty, hosted by Family Service Toronto. For more information visit <http://www.campaign2000.ca>.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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Regional media spokespeople from various provinces are available to comment upon request.