

SASKATCHEWAN CHILD POVERTY REPORT CARD

ANTI-BLACK RACISM STATEMENT AND CHILD POVERTY (June 9, 2020)

The death of George Floyd is not a one-off accident. His death is the predictable outcome of the power imbalance in a racist society. To understand his death requires an analysis of power and how it serves the interests of the privileged by exploiting the disadvantaged. To understand the societal power imbalances in Canada and Saskatchewan, we need to question the dehumanizing experiences that people have in their everyday lives. Dehumanization robs people of their right to be fully human in the world, and these experiences are not random. Dehumanization is systematically structured into our societies and exhibited within the relations of domination and subordination.

We find its practice in oppression, the unjust abuse of power by privileged social groups over subordinated groups in order to exploit them and to deprive them of society's privileges. Racism continues because although race is not a real thing (humans are one species), dominant groups benefit from the systematic exploitation of racialized others.

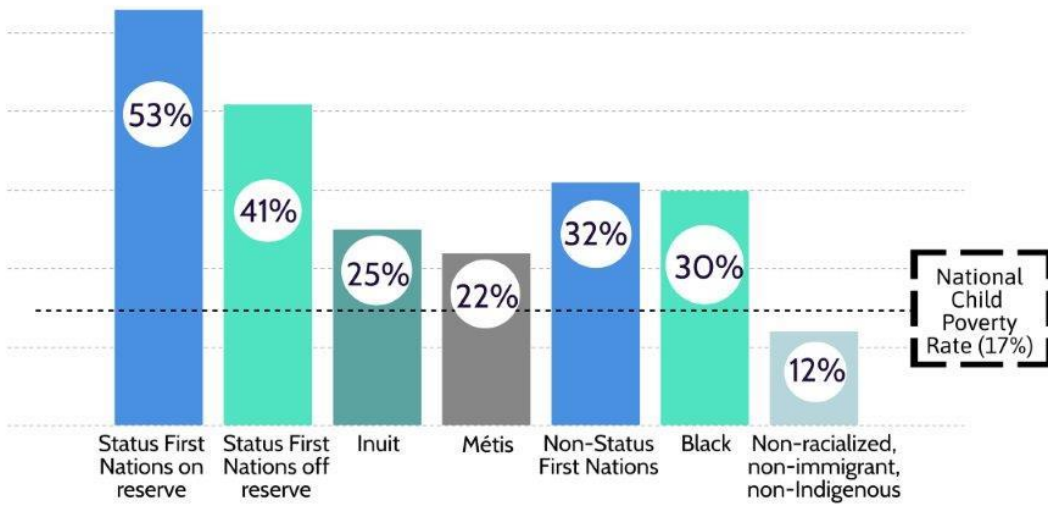
Change will not be easy. Discrimination towards racialized 'others' is deeply embedded in the assumptions of the institutions that govern society, supported by racial/cultural stereotyping in the media. Discrimination becomes unquestioned, and it becomes systematically reproduced to the point that anyone with privilege has a strong motivation to maintain the status quo. This is as true of racists as it is among those who do not readily identify themselves as prejudiced.

The result is the destruction of life opportunities through poverty, unemployment, poor education, homelessness, poor health and premature death. The destruction of opportunity for racialized people is to the advantage of the dominant groups by denying them a fair distribution of resources.

Poverty works to destroy hopes, aspirations and potential, not just at the personal level but throughout all of society. Predatory capitalism requires poverty because it creates the power imbalance allowing the dominant groups to exploit the poor.

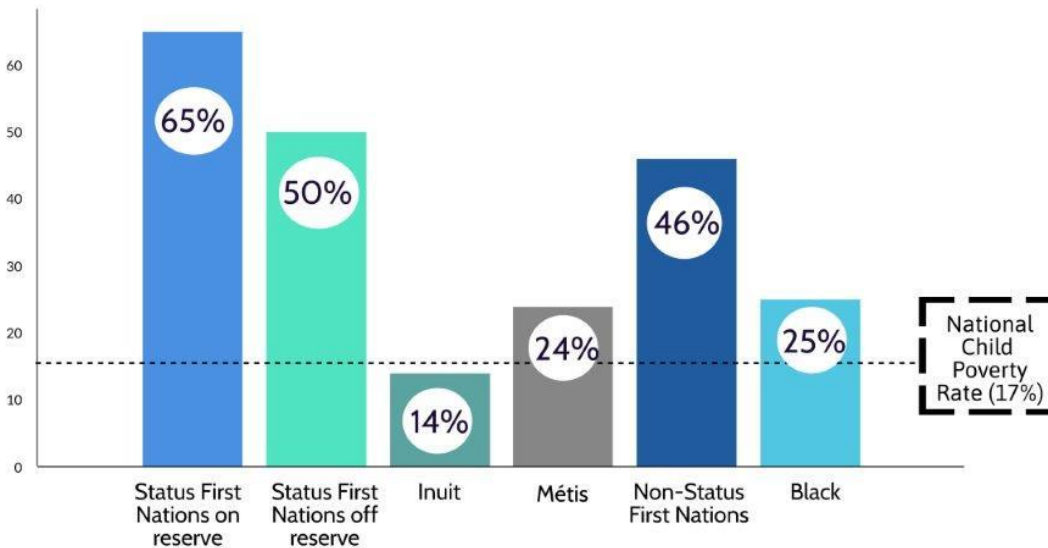
It only requires a couple of simple charts of who is poor to realize the power of racism in Canada and Saskatchewan. Although a minority population, racialized people including Black people are overwhelmingly represented in the ranks of the poor.

National Rates of Child Poverty for Black, Indigenous, and Non-Racialized, Non-Immigrant, Non-Indigenous Children



Source for Indigenous child poverty rates: Statistics Canada, custom tabulation 2016 generously provided by Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.
 Source for Black child poverty rate: Statistics Canada, Census of Population 2016.

Saskatchewan Rates of Child Poverty for Black and Indigenous Children



Source for Indigenous child poverty rates: Statistics Canada, custom tabulation 2016 generously provided by Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.
 Source for Black child poverty rate: Statistics Canada, Census of Population 2016.

As the Saskatchewan writers of the Child Poverty Report Card, we support the statements issued by the National Campaign 2000 office and are copied below:

We are outraged by the continued systemic violence and police brutality against Black bodies and the hostile responses to protests opposing anti-Black racism and supporting civil liberties. We grieve with our Black and Indigenous colleagues and community members who are suffering. We denounce all forms of anti-Black racism, colonialism and white supremacy.

While the United States has been the focal point, we know these systems have a long history and deep roots in Canada where Black and Indigenous Peoples have long been denied their human rights.

George Floyd lost his life in a horrific manner at the hands of police when they were called in while he was shopping. In Toronto, Regis Korchinski-Paquet lost her life in police presence when they were responding to a wellness call by concerned family members.

As organizations working directly in the areas of mental health and poverty eradication, we know that Black and Indigenous communities have much worse health outcomes and exponentially higher rates of poverty* than white Canadians and that this is both a result of and a strategy to maintain systemic oppression. We have a responsibility to ensure that our work in these areas contributes to ending anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism, which cannot be done without critical self-reflection, education and dialogue.

We will learn from and work with Black and Indigenous community members, service users, educators, leaders, policy makers and organizations to ensure our prevention and intervention services are relevant and barrier-free. We will work with them to ground our research and develop policy solutions that dismantle systemic violence and colonialism and lead us towards true democracy, safety and inclusion.

We support the calls from Black leaders and organizations to:

- Declare anti-Black racism a public health crisis.
- Enhance accountability infrastructure to address police brutality, police violence and harms to Black communities.
- A critical component of undoing anti-Black racism is working towards making Black life livable. Culturally appropriate organizations must be given the support they need to continue providing these services.ⁱ

We would add to the list our own recommendation for a robust exploration of a plan for the defunding of police and a transfer of those resources towards universal aid and crisis management. Many cities in the USA are currently exploring their options regarding this important question.

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ⁱ Family Service Toronto & Campaign 2000 Anti-Black Racism Statement. June 2020.

<https://campaign2000.ca/fst-c2000-joint-statement-on-anti-black-racism/>

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