



MEDIA RELEASE

Study Finds Toronto Child Poverty Rates Have Increased a Record Amount Two Years in a Row, Calling for Renewed Action on Poverty Reduction

Tuesday, November 19, 2024
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TORONTO, ON— Child and family poverty rates in Toronto increased record amounts two years in a row. Between 2020 and 2021, Toronto’s child poverty rate increased 3.8 percentage points from 16.8% to 20.6%, the highest amount on record in a single year. That record was broken between 2021 and 2022, when the child poverty rate increased another 4.7 percentage points to 25.3%. **Toronto now has the unfortunate distinction as the child poverty capital of Canada**, with the highest rate of child poverty among large municipalities in 2022.

The report, entitled *Fighting for Our Future: Child and Family Report Card, Toronto 2024*, draws on the latest available taxfiler and census data to track how child poverty rates have increased in every one of Toronto’s 25 wards since 2020.

“In a city as wealthy as Toronto, there should be no reason why over a quarter of our children are living in poverty,” said Jin Huh, Executive Director of Social Planning Toronto. “In fact, in some census tracts, we have seen child poverty rates as high as 61%.”

Toronto Centre has the highest rate of child poverty by ward at 36.6%, but it also includes a census tract with a child poverty rate of 56%. Parkdale-High Park has the lowest rate of child poverty by ward at 14.9%, but includes three census tracts with rates above 30%. Census tracts are smaller geographic areas than wards that provide greater insight into neighbourhood-level data.

The report shows that inequities within our city are deep, disproportionately affecting Indigenous, racialized, newcomer, and non-permanent resident communities, as well as one-parent households.



MEDIA RELEASE

“Over half of all children in one-parent families live in poverty,” said Beth Wilson, a Senior Research and Policy Analyst at Social Planning Toronto and one of the report’s co-authors. “That’s three times the rate of children in couple families. We’re seeing how the elimination of pandemic-related benefits has been disproportionately impacting these families, most of whom are led by women. Without meaningful interventions, the problem is likely to get worse.”

The report details municipal policy recommendations the City of Toronto can take to make a significant difference in the lives of children and families living in poverty, including taking a human rights approach to affordable housing, food security, access to transit and technology, ensuring livable incomes and inclusive economies, addressing systemic inequality, and developing a fully-funded Third Term Action Plan for the City’s Poverty Reduction Strategy.

“Every child has the right to live free from poverty,” says Huh. “Our research shows that government policies can have a significant and positive impact. The solutions to child poverty are available to us, but they require political will.”

The report is being released in tandem with two reports from [Family Service Toronto’s Campaign 2000](#) that has found child and family poverty rates have similarly been increasing in Ontario and nationwide. *Ending Child Poverty: The Time is Now* contains policy recommendations at the federal level, and *Tackling Child Poverty: A Call for Bold Solutions* contains recommendations for the provincial government.

- 30 -

Fighting for Our Future was researched and written by [Social Planning Toronto](#), a non-profit, charitable community organization that works to improve equity, social justice and quality of life in Toronto through community capacity building, community education and advocacy, policy research and analysis, and social reporting.

Additional support was provided by [Family Service Toronto \(Campaign 2000\)](#)

Contact:

Melissa Wong
Director, Engagement & Strategic Initiatives
mwong@socialplanningtoronto.org
416-728-2778

Jin Huh
Executive Director, Social Planning Toronto
jhuh@socialplanningtoronto.org
647-210-1186