



Social Planning Council
of Winnipeg



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Child Poverty: 30 Years and Still Counting

2019 marks the 30th anniversary of when all the parties present in the 1989 House of Commons unanimously voted to end child poverty by the year 2000. Today, Campaign 2000 to End Child Poverty released our updated analysis of child poverty by federal riding.

The findings show the following about Manitoba:

- More than one third (five) of Manitoba's fourteen ridings (35.7%) are in the highest quintile of child poverty. This is among the highest in Canadian provinces and territories.
- Manitoba still includes the riding with the highest child poverty rate, Churchill--Keewatinook Aski (63.6%) and the third highest, Winnipeg Centre (40.5%), while the fifth highest is Dauphin--Swan River--Neepawa (37.5%).

The Canada Child Benefit was introduced in July, 2016. By comparing the 2015 child poverty rate based on tax filer data to that in 2017, the latest available, we can better understand the effect to date of this federal program.

“A comprehensive measure on this large, inclusive data set, clearly shows that both our provincial and federal government have jumped the gun in celebrating a significant decrease in child poverty” Sid Frankel.

“No one is saying that the CCB isn't helping or should be scrapped. It needs to be strengthened and even more targeted to get to the families most in need.” Kate Kehler, “And our provincial government should not be clawing back CCB gains in their programs. There was a notable cut to families on Rent Assist in 2017.”

The report once again highlights that in Manitoba, as in all of Canada, the ridings with the highest rates of child poverty are also home to the largest proportion of Indigenous people, recent immigrants, racialized people and lone-parent families.

“Children are poor because their families are poor. We have poverty because we have an incredible income imbalance.” Damon Johnston, “An Oxfam Canada report shows that in Canada billionaire wealth grew by \$28 billion in 16/17, enough to pay for universal child care and lift 4.9 million Canadians out of poverty. However, here we are in 2019 without either.”

“The CCB helped, but there is no instant solution to child poverty. 40.5% of children in Winnipeg Centre continue to live in poverty. As a result, these children have a higher chance of developing serious health issues, have limited success in school and suffer from low self-esteem. By advocating to reduce child poverty, you're advocating for better health and a better future for these children. We need changes that support and empower all Canadian children.” Keren Taylor Hughes.

Elimination of child poverty should continue to be a priority for the incoming federal government and for the Manitoba government. There have been small gains, but the job is not done. The full report is available on the Campaign 2000 national website <https://campaign2000.ca>.

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BACKGROUND:

The report defines poverty by the Low Income Measure (after tax). This is one of the indicators identified by the federal government to evaluate its poverty reduction strategy. Research demonstrates that relative measures like Canada's Low-Income Measure are more comprehensive measures of all aspects of poverty including material deprivation, exposure to harsh environments, social exclusion and stress related to social comparisons and insufficient resources. The Low-Income Measure is much more strongly correlated with the known health, developmental and social effects of poverty.

The poverty rates are from the 2017 tax filer data, the latest available. Data on population characteristics are from the 2016 census.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- More than one third (five) of Manitoba's fourteen ridings (35.7%) are in the highest quintile of child poverty when all 338 federal ridings are divided into five groups according to their rate of child poverty. This is among the highest in Canadian provinces and territories.
- Manitoba includes the riding with the highest child poverty rate, Churchill--Keewatinook Aski (63.6%), the third highest, Winnipeg Centre (40.5%), and the fifth highest, Dauphin--Swan River--Neepawa (37.5%).
- The Canada Child Benefit was introduced in July, 2016. So, if we compare the 2015 child poverty rate in 2015 to that in 2017 we can understand the maximum effect of the Canada Child Benefit.
- The Canada Child Benefit reduced child poverty only a small amount or not at all in the Manitoba ridings with the highest rates:
 - Churchill--Keewatinook Aski – A reduction of only 2.3 percentage points (65.9% in 2015 to 63.6% in 2017).
 - Winnipeg Centre – A reduction of only 3.9 percentage points (from 44.4 % in 2015 to 40.5% in 2017)
 - Dauphin--Swan River--Neepawa - A small increase of .6 percentage points (from 36.9% in 2015 to 37.5% in 2017).
- In Manitoba as in all Canada the ridings with the highest rates of child poverty are also home to the largest proportion of Indigenous people, recent immigrants, racialized people and lone-parent families.