



Social Planning Council
of Winnipeg



MEDIA RELEASE
June 8, 2020

Exceptionally high child poverty rates in Black and Indigenous communities, indicator of systemic violence in Manitoba.

Winnipeg – Amidst renewed mobilization by Black communities for government and civil society to seriously address anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism in Canada, anti-poverty activists from across the country support their call to address the systemic nature of violence and poverty within their communities. Data released today show exceptionally high rates of poverty across the country in Black, First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities.

For 30 years, Campaign 2000 has been tracking rates of child poverty in Canada. While they are unacceptably high given that the federal government made a promise to eradicate it by the year 2000, the numbers are exponentially higher for Black and Indigenous children. Custom Census data tabulation from 2016, the latest data available, was supplied by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. It reveals that Status and non-Status First Nations children living on and off reserve experience astoundingly high child poverty rates. In Manitoba, 65% of Status First Nation children living on reserve live in poverty. Status First Nations children living off reserve experience a child poverty rate of 54%.

Census 2016 data also shows that in Manitoba as in every province across the country, rates of child poverty in Black communities are much higher than for the general population. In Manitoba 36% of Black children are living in poverty. This is 8.1 percentage points above the province's overall child poverty rate of 27.9%. This is also 5.8 percentage points above the child poverty rate for Black children for all of Canada.

"This is our legacy of colonialism," says Leila Sarangi, National Coordinator of Campaign 2000. "Poverty and police violence in Black and Indigenous communities uphold our systems of oppression and white supremacy. We need to address this. We support Black and Indigenous calls for immediate police accountability and significant investments into mental health services, housing, employment, childcare and education for these children."

"Economic discrimination against Black and Indigenous children threatens the very survival of these communities through robbing them of a future generation which is as healthy, educationally accomplished, and occupationally successful as Canadians in general. This cannot be tolerated," said Sid Frankel, Associate Professor of Social Work at the University of Manitoba and member of Campaign 2000 National Steering Committee.

"For anyone who believes we are somehow superior to the United States when it comes to racism, they simply need to look at the numbers. When you are 10 times more likely to be incarcerated if you are Indigenous and 3 times if you are of African decent than the national average, then we all have to admit we have a problem. We waste billions addressing crime through incarceration instead of supporting families so they can support their kids." Kate Kehler, Social Planning Council of Winnipeg.

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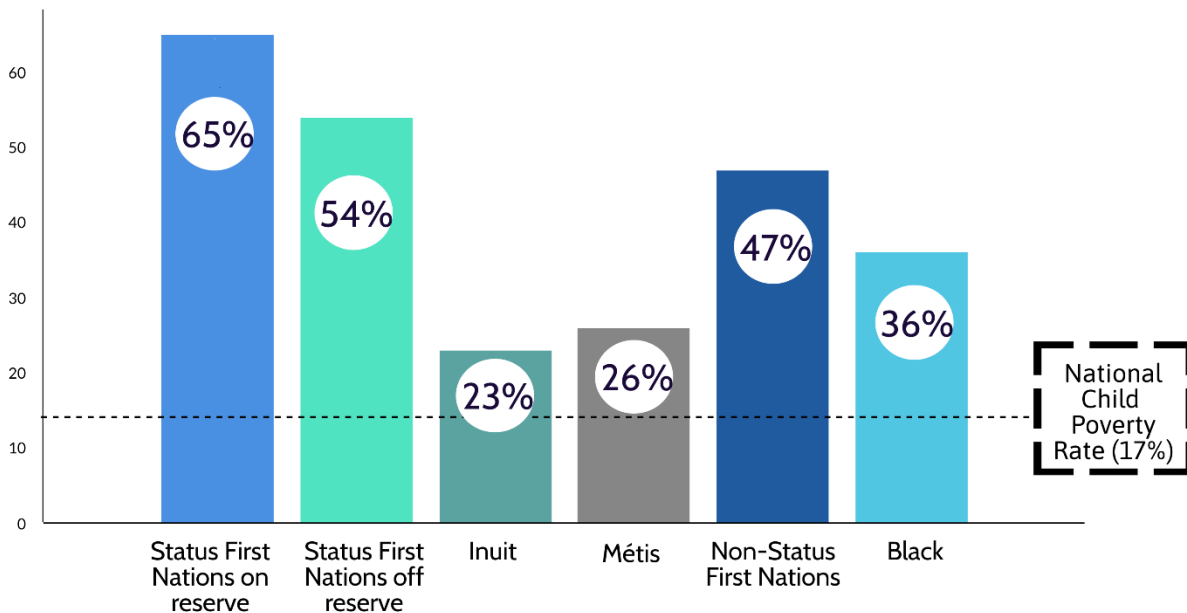
BACKGROUNDER:

Campaign 2000 is a pan-Canadian network of over 120 organizations working to end child and family poverty and generously hosted by Family Service Toronto, a multi-service agency providing mental health supports to low-income individuals. Visit www.campaign2000.ca for more information.

The Social Planning Council is a non-profit community development and policy advocacy organization, which works for a sustainable community that is caring, just and equitable. It is a partner of the Campaign 2000 coalition.

Custom disaggregated data on Indigenous child poverty rates has been graciously supplied by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, an independent, non-partisan research institute concerned with issues of social, economic and environmental justice. Visit www.policyalternatives.ca for more information.

Manitoba 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.