

# Research Update

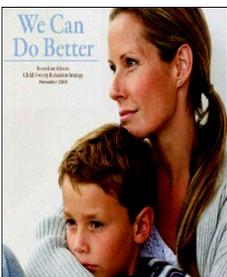
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December, 2008

## Research News

### [We Can Do Better: Toward an Alberta Poverty Reduction Strategy for Children and Families](#)

Our new provincial report on Child and Family poverty reveals that 77,595 children are living in families below Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut Off (LICO). This means one in ten children in Alberta live below the poverty line.



The report, [We Can Do Better](#), also

shows that low income children in Alberta live deeper in poverty than children in other parts of Canada, and four out of five live in families where their parent or parents are working. 35,585 of these children live in a family with at least one parent working part-time or full-time part of the year, a further 20,855 had one parent working full time, full year and a further 3,840 had both parents working full time, full year.

This report coincides with the release of the national report on child and family poverty by Campaign 2000 on Parliament Hill in Ottawa and with several other reports being released in provincial capitals on the same day.

The full report is available on our website - [www.edmontonsocialplanning.ca](http://www.edmontonsocialplanning.ca).◇



Most articles listed here are also available in PDF format by searching in the online catalogue.

The catalogue is available 24/7, and can be accessed by going to:

[www.socialresearchlibrary.ca](http://www.socialresearchlibrary.ca)

### [A Count of Homeless Persons in Edmonton: 2008](#)



Homeward Trust Edmonton has recently released the results of the 2008

Homeless Count. The count takes place every second year. This year's count (the eighth count), found 3079 homeless people in the City of Edmonton. Of these, 1862 were absolute homeless (having no housing alternative) and 1217 were sheltered homeless (living in emergency accommodations). This represents an increase of 18% in the overall number of homeless individuals in the City of Edmonton from the 2006 count tally of 2618. The count took place on October 21, 2008. Some major findings from the count include:

- There was a significant increase in the number of families enumerated in 2008 as compared to 2006 (133 compared to 79).
- There are 125 children living on the street.
- There was an increase in the number of shelter spaces available from 2006.

- The vast majority of the 3079 total homeless figure is single aboriginal men between the ages of 31-54.

- The numbers reflect an increase in the number of children, and seniors over 65 yrs of age living on the street.

The report is available on the website of Homeward Trust Edmonton, [www.homewardtrust.ca](http://www.homewardtrust.ca).◇

### [ESPC Community Consultations 2008](#)

Our Community Consultations wrapped up this fall. Thank you to everybody who participated. The Community Consultation process sought input from a number of organizations working in the Edmonton community to achieve social and economic justice. Through focus groups, surveys, and conversations, we asked participants what the most pressing social issues facing the community are, and how research might help to address these issues.

The final report is now available on our website, [www.edmontonsocialplanning.ca](http://www.edmontonsocialplanning.ca).◇

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**News**

**Mental Health First Aid**

Mental Health First Aid is here! The Canadian Mental Health Association-Edmonton Region is now offering this two day workshop. Mental Health First Aid teaches participants how to help someone showing signs of a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The course aims to teach people to:

Identify when a person may be a danger to themselves or others and take steps to preserve life.

Recognize the early signs for mental health problems and provide help to prevent more serious problems from developing.

Provide comfort to someone with a mental health problem and support them in recovering their mental health.

Anyone can benefit from Mental Health First Aid-members of the general public, teachers, health service providers, emergency workers, frontline workers who deal with the public, volunteers, human resources professionals, employers, community groups.

There are a number of Mental Health First Aid instructors in the Edmonton area. Courses are run on an ongoing basis. To find out about upcoming courses or for more information, visit [www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca](http://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.ca).

***This just in!***

**Ontario releases Poverty Reduction Strategy**

**Breaking the Cycle: Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy** sets a target of reducing the number of children living in poverty by 25% over the next 5 years. The strategy will deliver benefits to all low-income families, and will aim to move 90,000 kids out of poverty. To read the report, go to [www.growingstronger.ca](http://www.growingstronger.ca).

**Reviews**

**Class Matters: Cross-Class Alliance Building for Middle Class Activists**

Book by Betsey Leondar-Wright, 2005.  
Review by Anette Kinley

It is often the case that organizations or groups trying to address poverty and working-class issues are mainly, if not totally, represented by middle-class people. The differences in perspectives and life experiences between classes can lead to a variety of misunderstandings, missteps and frustrations that create barriers to working together effectively toward common goals.

*Class Matters* is an engaging collection of stories and practical ideas from experienced advocates that illuminate how the class differences that can limit the progress of groups working for social change can be overcome. To put it in author Betsy Leondar-Wright's words,

"We all have the choice to get by, get over, or get together. This book is for those who take the "get together" path, and its goal is to help us get together across class differences." (page 7)

Even though I haven't read it from cover to cover - yet! - I am convinced that *Class Matters* should be recommended, *if not required*, reading for people working for social change. It is of particular interest to those who are working with, or seeking to work with, people from diverse class backgrounds (and across cultures, ethnicities, gender, sexual orientations, etc.).

The variety of issues covered by this book makes it difficult to summarize. One of its main focuses, however, is recognizing and countering the socially conditioned, and often unconscious, behaviours and assumptions that distance middle-class activists from the working-class people they are trying to help.

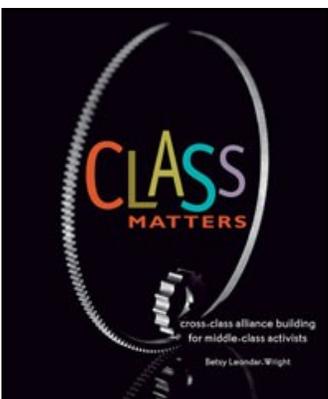
"... we all make mistakes. There's not a middle-class person alive who hasn't said dumb,

insensitive things that step on working-class toes. ... As we talk, working-class people notice how oblivious or how aware of class issues we seem, and make decisions about how much to collaborate with us based on those evaluations, among others factors. The goal of reducing the classism in our speech is not to keep ourselves out of trouble by avoiding angering working-class people, and it's not to reach some kind of perfect non-classist purity. The goal is to make ourselves more trustworthy and to alienate working-class people less so that we can work together for economic justice and other common goals." (page 89)

The book concludes with practical tips and resources to help break down the barriers of class difference and enable groups to work together effectively for social change. Some of these tips include:

- **Moving from pretense to authenticity:** building trust through honesty in dialogue.
- **Moving from politeness and caution to openness and humor:** build relationships through friendliness and respect.
- **Moving from competition and superiority to confident humility:** recognizing our common limitations as human beings.
- **Moving from excessive abstraction to groundedness:** rooting discussion and action in reality.
- **Moving from guilt to balanced responsibility:** avoiding being misled or immobilized by guilt.
- **Moving from individual achievement to community interdependence:** seeing the big picture, balancing individual tasks and relationships/working together.

*Class Matters* is now at the top of my reading list! If you're experiencing, or just plain interested in, the tensions and challenges (and rewards!) of cross-class work, you might want to add it to yours, too.◊



## Reviews, cont.

### The Costs of Poverty

Review, by Erin Krekoski, of:

**The Cost of Poverty: an analysis of the economic cost of poverty in Ontario.** Report by Nathan Laurie, Ontario Association of Food Banks, November 2008.

**The Costs of Child Poverty for Individuals and Society: a literature review.** Report by Julia Griggs and Robert Walker, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, October 2008.

**Estimating the Costs of Child Poverty.** Report by Donald Hirsch, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, October 2008.

**The Economic Costs of Poverty in the United States: subsequent effects of children growing up poor.** Report by Harry Holzer et al., Center for American Progress, January 2007.

Poverty is expensive. Some new reports, from the UK, the US, and across Canada, are demonstrating that the costs of poverty over the long term are far greater than the costs of prevention. What's more, these studies have deliberately used conservative measures in estimating the financial costs of poverty to ensure that the cost of poverty is not exaggerated or overstated – which means that in all likelihood, the true costs of poverty are even greater. The numbers below are summarized from 4 reports that have recently been added to our library on the costs of poverty to society. Note that there are, inevitably, great challenges in calculating the financial costs of poverty – while the various reports are useful tools and give an idea of how poverty reduction programs could save money, the different methodological approaches yield different cost estimates and are not directly comparable.

Overall:

- Overall cost of poverty in Ontario: \$10.4 billion to \$13.1 billion per year, which is equal to \$2299 to \$2895 per household in Ontario per year, or 5.5 to 6.6% of Ontario's GDP.
- Overall cost of child poverty in the US: \$500 billion per year, or 4% of GDP.

*Intergenerational Effects:* Children are not poor by their own making, and there is evidence dem-

onstrating that children who grow up poor are less able to escape poverty later in life.

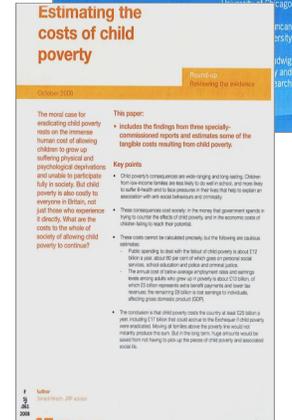
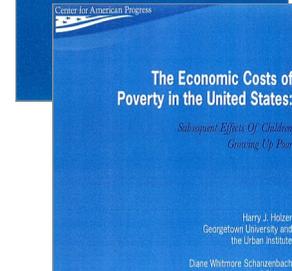
- Lost income tax revenues created by lower incomes of adults who grew up in poverty: in Ontario, \$1.3 billion to \$1.6 billion per year; in Canada, \$3.1 billion to \$3.8 billion per year.
- Lost productivity resulting from the experience of growing up in poverty or near poverty in the US: \$170 billion per year, or 1.3% of GDP.

*Health:* Growing up in poverty negatively affects health – this conclusion is supported by well-documented and peer reviewed studies that have examined the relationship between socio-economic status and a variety of health indicators throughout the life cycle.

- Cost of increased health expenditure and reduced value of health in the USA: more than \$150 billion, or 1.2% of GDP per year.
- Cost of additional primary healthcare expenditure resulting from child poverty in the UK: approximately £859 million per year.
- Cost of additional acute healthcare expenditure resulting from child poverty in the UK: £1.2 billion per year.
- Potential health care savings of raising the incomes of those in the lowest quintile to be equivalent to the income of the second-lowest quintile: in Ontario, \$2.9 billion per year; in Canada, \$7.6 billion per year.

*Crime:* Although crime is correlated with poverty, it is difficult to establish definitive causal links between the two. A number of studies, however, demonstrate links between crime and other indicators of poverty, such as educational attainment, literacy levels, and neighbourhood inequality.

- Additional costs of crime created by child poverty in the US: \$170 billion per year, or 1.3% of their GDP.
- Cost of child poverty for additional police and criminal justice services in the UK: £1.2 to £2.9 billion per year.
- Potential savings in the cost of crime by reducing poverty and raising literacy levels: in Ontario, \$250 to \$550 million per year; in Canada, \$1 to \$2 billion per year. ◊



### Immigration and Integration in Canada in the Twenty-first Century

Book edited by John Biles, Meyer Burstein, and James Fridires, 2008.

Review by Jaylene Ellard

They say you can't judge a book by its cover, so with my good judgment I would say that the cover, a finger-painted mosaic of colours alluding to Canada's variety of cultures, is a perfect match for the book.

Immigration and Integration is a collection of

articles that address immigration and integration through the scope of politics, economics, culture and social spheres of Canadian society. There are three foundational principles that the editors stress are fundamental to recognize when dealing with immigration policy. The first is that immigration and the series of outcomes that are products of it represent a choice that Canadians made and have more or less adhered to for over a century. The second foundation of this collection is that all modern societies receive some form of migrants, not just because of lively immigration programs but also because they have made choices in other areas of domestic and foreign policy.

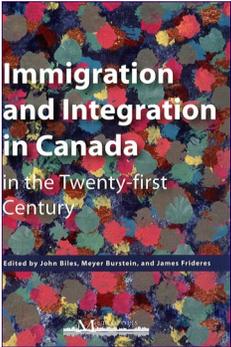
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### Get Your READ on!

The ESPC Book Club will be meeting once every two months to discuss a work of fiction, and its relation to social issues in the community and the work that we do. If you would like to be a part of this group, contact [Erin](#).

Reviews, cont.

(Continued from page 3)



Third and finally, after making such choices leading to a great deal of immigration, Canada has positioned the integration of immigrants as a “societal endeavor”. This endeavor is defined as a “two-way street” where it is both the responsibility of immigrants and current citizens to adapt to one another in order to ensure positive outcomes for the political, economic, cultural, and social spheres of society.

The book is divided into two parts: the first four chapters include recent research on controversies, debates, and assumptions about integration. Every chapter in this section includes recommendations and measures for evaluating the relative success of the ‘two way street’ of Canadian immigration and integration.

The second part of the book uncovers related information about immigration so that the reader may benefit from a greater understanding of integration in Canadian society. The five chapters highlight the ways in which integration can be understood as a societal venture. There are chapters on media coverage and public opinion polls that indicate that more education is needed surrounding immigration. Two chapters on integration policies suggest that better collaboration and coordination might lead to better integration outcomes.

This book is a wealth of knowledge on integration and immigration. With the collaborative efforts of the editors, authors, and other advisors in the immigration, diversity, multiculturalism, and Canadian studies fields, this 278-page book provides the reader with not only knowledge, but ways to put that knowledge into action!◊

Rhetoric for Radicals: A Handbook for 21st Century Activists

Book by Jason Del Gandio, 2008.  
Review by Erin Krekoski

Don’t be frightened away by the title of this book. Rhetoric for Radicals is a critical, easy-to-read, and thorough guide to communicating that will be useful for anybody whose work involves advocacy, education and awareness, or movement-building.

Why rhetoric? What does it mean to employ rhetorical skills – and how can it help? This book starts with an analysis of what rhetoric really means. Rhetoric is, according to author Jason Del Gandio, three things:

- Rhetoric is persuasive – it looks at how to establish common ground, create logical arguments, mobilize, inspire, and motivate.
- Rhetoric is discursive and analytical – this means that rhetoric studies what people say, how they say it, and what the effects are, for example, what are the effects of using the term ‘collateral damage’ as opposed to ‘civilian casualties’ when speaking about war?
- Rhetoric creates our realities – rhetoric shapes our lives because our language, thoughts, signs, symbols, stories, perceptions, and actions shape our lives, and rhetoric is a part of all of those.

Viewing rhetoric in this way, the author makes it clear how learning to use rhetoric can be a useful tool for those of us who work to make a better world. The book is full of strategies, tips, outlines, and explanations about how to become better at rhetoric, and how to use it in your work.

The second chapter goes over the basics of the ‘rhetorical package’ – your message, your audience, your strategy, your goal, and the situation. It also provides tips about writing and public speaking, and

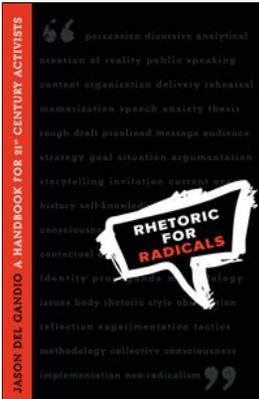
introduces four different rhetorical approaches: persuasion, argumentation, invitation, and storytelling. The techniques and tools outlined in this chapter are simple yet complex, and utterly useful.

Have you ever found yourself struggling to articulate exactly what it is your campaign or organization will do? Chapter 3, on the Power of Language, might help. It discusses how language affects the message and its reception. This chapter looks at why certain phrases and terms have had such an effect while others are easily forgotten, and how we can frame our message to be powerful ones. Yes, please!

Another chapter looks at how body language works – from protests, to street theatre, to individual conversations, our bodies tell just as much of a story as our voices. This chapter offers some advice on how to observe, reflect, experiment, and apply different styles of physical communication.

Rhetoric for Radicals differs from a lot of other how-to books. It doesn’t stop at being prescriptive – telling us what to do. Instead, it explains how and why we need to harness rhetoric in our work; and how and why it will work. This book provides our sector with another tool in the toolbox for change: uncovering the power of rhetoric, learning how to frame messages powerfully and practicing strategic communication skills can elevate the profile of the important work of the non-profit, social agency sector in our community.

For open-minded readers, this book can be a valuable tool, but it is by no means neutral, and takes a bold political stance. It examines history, it critiques our current political reality, and it openly and unabashedly puts the political project of radically changing our society front and centre. This book is part of a revolutionary project, as the author puts it, “Above all, I hope this book starts a revolution. [...]Rhetoric is not the be-all and end-all for social change and Rhetoric for Radicals is not a blueprint for revolution. But rhetoric is a necessary component and this book can help us move in that direction. With that in mind, I say to everyone: Radical rhetors of the world, unite!”◊



## Resources

### Journals

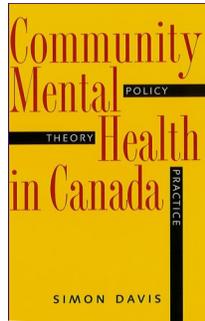
Canadian Review of Social Policy No 59, 2007

- The SANE Project
- Welfare Time Limits: Symbolism and Practice
- Returning to Ontario Works
- Canadian Public Opinion on Cannabis: How far out of step with it is existing law?
- Aide sociale au Nouveau-Brunswick: le discours des personnes assistées sociaux au sujet de leurs rapport avec leur gestionnaire de cas
- Public Policy and Population Health: why is there so little public policy attention in support of health?
- Placing Families First: The state of family policies in la belle province
- Early Childhood Education and Child Care: key to family income stability
- The Ontario Child Benefit and the Deception of Ending the NCBS Clawback
- Book Reviews (6 english, 7 french)

Policy Options October 2008 – feature issue on the US election

Policy Options November 2008 – feature issue on the Canadian federal election

### Health, Mental Health, and Disability



Health Care in Canada 2008. Report by the Canadian Institute for Health Information, 2008.

Community Mental Health in Canada: Policy, Theory, Practice. Book by Simon Davis, 2006.

Navigating the Maze: Improving Coordination and Integration of Disability Income and Employment Policies and Programs for People Living with HIV/AIDS. Discussion Paper by John Stapleton and Anne

Tweddle, August 2008.

### Women's Issues

Women's Inequality in Canada. Report by the Canadian Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA), September 2008.

Strengthening the Canada Social Transfer: A Call to Account. Report by Shelagh Day and Gwen Brodsky, FAFIA, April 2006.

Search our catalogue and link to resources online:

[socialresearchlibrary.ca](http://socialresearchlibrary.ca)

### Food Security

Hungercount 2008: A comprehensive report on hunger and food bank use in Canada. Report by Food Banks Canada, November 2008.

The Cost of Poverty: An analysis of the economic cost of poverty in Ontario. Report by the Ontario Association of Food Banks, November 2008.

Food Bank Network Newsmagazine. By the Alberta Food Bank Network Association, Fall, 2008.

Food Deserts in the Prairies? Supermarket accessibility and neighbourhood need in Edmonton, Canada. Article by Karen Smoyer-Tomic, John Spence, and Carl Amrhein, 2006.

From Land to Mouth: Understanding the Food System. Book by Brewster Kneen, 1995.

Global Hunger Index: The Challenge of Hunger 2008. Report by the International Food Policy Research Institute, October 2008.

### Housing

A Count of Homeless Persons in Edmonton: 2008. Report by Homeless Trust Edmonton, November 2008.

Community Engagement Process – Final Report. Report by the Edmonton Committee to End Homelessness, August 2008.

A Housing Benefit for Ontario: One housing solution for a poverty reduction strategy. Report prepared by a coalition of community and industry partners in Ontario, September 2008.

Housing for Immigrants in Ontario's Medium-Sized Cities. Report by David Wachsmuth, Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN), September 2008.

A Safer Haven: Innovations for improving social housing in Canada. Report by Nathalie Pierre, CPRN, December 2007.

City-Regions and the Provision of Affordable Rental Housing. Report by Leonore Evans, CPRN, September 2007

Inclusion and Social Housing Practice in Canadian Cities: Following the path from good intentions to sustainable projects. Report by Joel Thibert, CPRN, August 2007.

Fostering Better Integration and Partnerships for Housing in Canada: Lessons for creating a stronger policy model of governmental and community collaboration. Report by Michel Molgat Sereacki, CPRN, August, 2007.

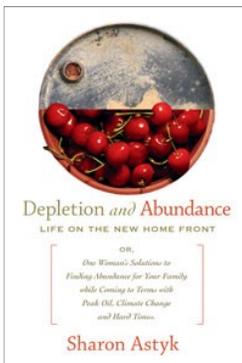
Social Lives in Social Housing: Resident connections to social services. Report by Jeff May, CPRN, August 2007.

### This just in!

**CMHC's Rental Market Report for Edmonton, Fall 2008**

The [CMHC's Fall 2008 Rental Market Report](#) is now available.

While vacancy rates in most zones increased on average 2.4% over the past year, the average monthly rent continues to climb, now at \$1034 for 2 bedroom, up \$76 from last year's \$958 average. However, this increase (9.2%) is less than the increase between 2006 and 2007 (18.8%).



A Seat at the Table: Resource guide for local governments to promote food secure communities. BC Provincial Health Services Authority, June 2008.

Food Security for the Faint of Heart: Keeping your larder full in lean times. Book by Robin Wheeler, 2008.

Depletion and Abundance: Life on the new home front. Book by Sharon Astyk, 2008.

## Resources, cont.

### Poverty

Poverty and Health in Edmonton. Report by Alberta Health Services, November 2008.

Silent Voices No More: Quotes from People Living in Poverty. Booklet by Striving to Overcome Poverty (STOP), 2007.

Ready for Leadership: Canadians' perceptions of poverty. Report by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, October 2008.

The Economic Costs of Poverty in the United States: Subsequent effects of children growing up poor. Report by Harry Holzer et al., Center for American Progress, 2007.

Poverty Policy. Report by Sherri Torjman, Caledon Institute, October 2008.

Income Security for Working-Age Adults in Canada: Let's consider the model under our nose. Report by John Stapleton, Metcalf Foundation, November 2008.

### Child Poverty

We Can Do Better: Toward an Alberta Poverty Reduction Strategy for Children and Families. Report by John Kolkman, ESPC, November 2008.

Child and Family Poverty: Saskatchewan Profile 2008. Article by Social Policy Research Unit, Saskatchewan, November 2008.

2008 Child Poverty Report Card: BC. Fact sheets by First Call, BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, November 2008.

2008 Ontario Report Card on Child and Family Poverty. Article by Campaign 2000, November 2008.

Nova Scotia: Children Living in Poverty 1989-2006. Fact Sheet by Pauline Raven, November 2008.  
Estimating the Costs of Child Poverty. Report by Donald Hirsch, Rowntree Foundation, October 2008.

Manitoba at a Crossroads: 2008 Child and Family Poverty Report Card. Report by Campaign 2000, Winnipeg Social Planning Council, and Winnipeg United Way, November 2008.

The Costs of Child Poverty for individuals and society: a literature review. Report by Julia Griggs and Robert Walker, Rowntree Foundation, October 2008.

### Children

Inuit Children under Six Years Old. Article by Statistics Canada, November 2008.

First Nations Children under Six Years Old Living Off Reserve. Article by Statistics Canada, November 2008.

Métis Children Under Six Years Old. Article by Statistics Canada, November 2008.

Federal and Alberta Government Programs for Early Childhood Development: a schematic. Report by Kenneth Boessenkool and Evan Wilson, Canada West Foundation, November 2008.

### Environment

Is BC's Carbon Tax Fair? An impact analysis for different income levels. Report by Marc Lee and Toby Sanger, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, October 2008.

Making it Real: implementing Alberta's Land-Use Framework. Report by Steven Kennet and Richard Schneider, Pembina Institute & CPAWS, October 2008.

Our Water Commons: toward a new freshwater narrative. Report by Maude Barlow, Council of Canadians, October 2008.

### Other Topics

Immigration and Integration in Canada in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Edited by John Biles, Meyer Burstein, and James Frideres, published by Metropolis, 2008.

Rhetoric for Radicals: a handbook for 21<sup>st</sup> century activists. Book by Jason Del Gandio, 2008.

Class Matters: Cross-class alliance building for middle class activists. Book by Betsy Leonard-Wright, 2005.

Talking About Charities 2008: Canadians' opinions on charities and issues affecting charities. Report by the Muttart Foundation, 2008.

What's Next? Report on the forum on the future of higher education in Canada. Report by Ron Saunders, CPRN, October 2008.

From the Ground Up: Community's role in addressing street-level social issues. Report by Jim Diers, Canada West Foundation, October 2008.

## Research Links

**Stats & Facts** provides accessible, accurate and regularly updated statistical information on social and economic indicators for policy analysts, community planners, activists, journalists, and students.  
[www.ccsd.ca/factsheets/index.htm](http://www.ccsd.ca/factsheets/index.htm)

**How Canada Performs**, created by the Conference Board of Canada, this interactive website compares Canada's quality of life to that in peer countries. It includes analysis on economic, social, health, innovation, education & skills, and environmental indicators.  
[www.conferenceboard.ca/HCP](http://www.conferenceboard.ca/HCP)

The **Who Cares? Alberta Campaign** is an initiative of a coalition of provincial organizations that provide vital community services to Alberta families and children. The site is a valuable source of information about the human resources crisis Alberta's child and family services agencies are facing. [www.whocaresalberta.com](http://www.whocaresalberta.com)

I want your input! How can this Update be made more useful for you? Contact [Erin](mailto:erin@edmontonsocialplanning.ca) at:

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