

Research Update

February 2009

Research News

The **Edmonton Social Planning Council** has recently released a new fact sheet, [Federal Budget 2009 Analysis](#). This document summarizes some points in Canada's new federal budget that will have greatest impact to those living on low and moderate incomes. We are also hard at work on an updated version of *Tracking the Trends*. Look for it this spring! All of our publications are available on our website, www.edmontonsocialplanning.ca.

The **Edmonton Committee to End Homelessness** has released [A Place to Call Home: Edmonton's 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness](#). Great job! On February 4, the City of Edmonton unanimously endorsed the plan and established the Edmonton Homeless Commission. Keep up to date by going to the committee's website www.endedmontonhomelessness.com.

The **Edmonton Food Security Network** has a new website—check it out at www.foodforalliedmonton.org.

March 21st is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. It's coming up quickly! How is your organization participating? Get involved in some of the events hosted by the **Northern Alberta Alliance on Race Relations**—find out more at www.naarr.org.

The [Canadian Social Forum](#) will be held in Calgary from May 19-22. Are you coming? More information and registration is available on the **Canadian Council for Social Development** website, www.ccsd.ca.

The **Edmonton Citizen Panel**, a panel of 50 Edmontonians from diverse backgrounds, will be meeting throughout the next few months. Panelists will consider how city resources are allocated and develop recommendations about what the City's service priorities should be. Their recommendations will be used in City Council's 2010-2011 budget planning. Follow the Panel's progress online at www.edmonton.ca/citizenpanel.

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:

socialresearchlibrary.ca

Or, drop by our Library to read materials or make copies during business hours.

Reviews

Caregiver Community Consultation – A Report on the Findings

Report by the Alberta Disabilities Forum, 2008

Review by Jaylene Ellard

"We have taken over the care of our 40 year old brain-injured son because the agency's care was not adequate due to insufficiently trained staff and inconsistent care. We are trying to find our own program and treatment, but are really having to search for resources."

—Quote from Caregiver Community Consultation

The Alberta Disabilities Forum along with Alberta Seniors and Community Services compiled a report based on twenty-three consultations with caregivers and persons who use caregivers' services in fifteen communities

across the province. The report identifies some of the challenges and ideas for solutions in all communities involved. It is noted that the geographic location is not a determining factor on issues, but slight differences are revealed in comparing smaller centers to larger ones in regards to such matters as public transportation.

A number of themes are addressed with the three key challenges categorized as: "finding and retaining well qualified, professional caregivers; finding suitable respite services; and coping financially". Each theme includes a list of comprehensive challenges and solutions identified by community members. The report is a quick and interesting read infused with abundant ideas for solutions on the various noted challenges; a great beginning to sow the seed for change with anyone involved in the disability community. ♦

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Reviews, cont.

The Child Care Transition: a league of early childhood education and care in economically advanced countries

Report by UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2008.

Review by Erin Krekoski

This report card, the eighth in a series of reports and indicators on children’s well-being in rich countries, compares the performance of 25 OECD countries in providing high quality, universal, and accessible early childhood care.

As our economy and society continue to evolve and change, more and more young children are becoming reliant upon out-of-home early childhood education and care. The evidence is unequivocal – high quality services for young children are hugely beneficial and reach well into their later years. It is in this context that the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre set out to compare services and standards across 25 economically advanced countries.

Ten benchmarks are outlined in the report, a set of internationally applicable minimum standards – directed, for the most part, towards actions that governments can take to improve early childhood education and care within their country. The benchmarks are, in short:

- A minimum entitlement to paid parental leave of one year at least 50% of salary, and at least 2 weeks specifically reserved for fathers.
- A national plan with priority for disadvantaged children that would include, at the very least, a national plan for the organization and financing of early childhood services.
- A minimum level of child care provision – subsidized and regulated child care services available to at least 25% of children under three.
- A minimum level of access for four year olds, defined as the participation in 15 hrs per week (or more) of publicly subsidized and accredited early education services by at least 80% of

four year olds.

- At least 80% of staff have completed at least an induction course; pay and working conditions should begin to move towards those of the wider teaching and social care sectors.
- At least 50% of staff have completed at least 3 years of tertiary education with a recognized credential in early childhood studies or a related field.
- Minimum staff-to children ratios – for preschool children, this should be no less than 1:15.
- A minimum level of public funding, 1% of GDP, for early childhood education and care.
- A low level of child poverty, which should be less than 10%.
- Universal outreach to ensure that disadvantaged families reap the benefits of early childhood education and care. Benchmarks used to evaluate this include the rate of infant mortality, rate of low birth weight babies, and the immunization rate for 12 to 23 month olds for preventable childhood diseases.

Unfortunately, Canada lags behind most other OECD countries; most of the 25 countries compared have met 5 or more benchmarks. **Canada ranks last** (tied with Ireland) and has only met 1 benchmark: at least 50% of staff have a recognized tertiary education. We have a long way to go to ensuring the best possible start for young Canadians. The report puts it well, “it is clear that if the movement towards out-of-home child care is to fulfil its potential for benefit rather than harm, then the level of debate and investment in availability, quality and equity will have to be increased not marginally but substantially”.

For child care advocates and those working with youth and children, this report will be most useful. Not only does it demonstrate how and why early childhood services and care work, but it clearly illustrates that our current government response to the needs of children is lacking when compared to the efforts in our peer countries.

Let’s continue to work together to encourage them to do better!

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](#).

The Dynamics of Child Poverty in Sweden

Report by Matthew Lindquist and Gabriella Sjogren Lindquist, Swedish Institute for Social Research, 2008.

Review by Cheryl Melney

Sweden is well-known internationally for being a forerunner in progressive and comprehensive social policy. That is why you might find it interesting to read this evaluation of child poverty in Sweden published by Stockholm University. In this paper, authors Matthew J. Lindquist and Gabriella Sjogren Lindquist acknowledge Sweden’s success in combating child poverty, but also at-

tempt to turn a critical eye towards Swedish child poverty intervention programs.

The authors question the reasons for Sweden’s low levels of child poverty. They examine three different approaches to combating child poverty: low unemployment and higher low-end wages; Sweden’s progressive tax system; and a variety of government transfers. Through their research, the authors find that child poverty is being addressed **most** significantly by government financial transfers to parents. The authors agree that this is not ideal, and that Sweden needs to further develop the other two approaches to fighting child poverty.

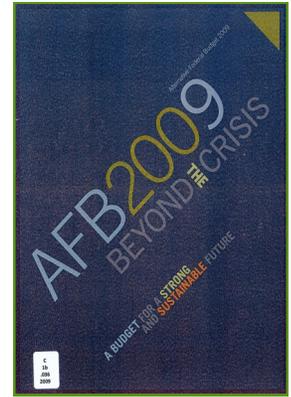
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They also find that child poverty is the most prevalent when children are in their earliest years, due to several reasons which the authors go on to explain. The writers suggest that this trend indicates the needs to focus anti-poverty strategies especially at young children.

This paper is important to Canadians working on child poverty issues for several reasons. It notes that, compared to many European countries, Canada and the United States have the highest numbers of children living in poverty. Despite many commitments and initiatives from Canada's social policy leaders and creators, Canada still lags behind peer countries when it comes to addressing child poverty issues.

This report shows us some good examples of how to address child poverty through government transfers. One very interesting Swedish policy harmonizes child support payments so that regardless of their former spouse's income, all single parents receive the same amount of monthly child support. Low incomes families with children can apply for housing subsidies, and daycare is also heavily subsidized. The writers offer many more examples of Sweden's government transfers within the paper. It also shows us some shortfalls about relying solely on government transfers, and gives ideas about other ways to fight child poverty. Lastly, this paper highlights different risk factors that often increase the likelihood of child poverty, and gives some suggestion to how these can be addressed. If you are interested in child poverty issues in Canada, this paper will be of interest to you.



Resources

Poverty and Low Income Issues

Low Income in Canada, 2006-2006: Using the Market Basket Measure. Report by Human Resources and Social Development Canada, October 2008.

Why Have Real Wages Lagged Labour Productivity Growth in Canada? Article by Andrew Sharpe, Jean-Francois Arsenault and Peter Harrison, Centre for the Study of Living Standards, Fall 2008.

Environmental Justice in Canada: It Matters Where You Live. Report by Michael Buzelli, Canadian Policy Research Networks, December 2008.

An Analysis of Pollution and Poverty in the Great Lakes Basin. Report by Pollution Watch, November 2008.

Disentangling the Web of Women's Poverty and Exclusion: an Information Tool. By the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 2006.

When Working is Not Enough to Escape Poverty: An Analysis of Canada's Working Poor. Report by Human Resources and Social Development Canada, August 2006.

The Dynamics of Child Poverty in Sweden. Working Paper by Matthew Lindquist and Gabriella Sjogren Lindquist, Swedish Institute for Social Research, 2008.

Welfare Incomes, 2006 and 2007. Report by the National Council of Welfare, Winter 2008.
World Report 2009: Events of 2009. Book in PDF by Human Rights Watch, 2009.

More than a Pretty Picture: Using Poverty Maps to Design Better Policies and Interventions. Report on CD-ROM by the World Bank, 2007.

Poverty Reduction Strategies

Reducing Poverty: An Action Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador. Report by the Minister of Human Resources, Labour and Employment, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2006.

Family Security in Insecure Times: The Case for Poverty Reduction Strategy for Canada. Article by Campaign 2000, December 2008.

A Poverty Reduction Plan for BC. Report by Seth Klein, Marjorie Griffin Cohen, T Garner, Iglia Ivanova, Marc Lee, Bruce Wallace, and Margot Young, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, January 2009.

Work and the Economy

Encouraging Work and Supporting Communities: Final results of the Community Employment Innovation Project. Report by the Social Research and Development Corporation, November 2008.

Now It's Our Turn: A common sense plan for a strong economy and a fair society. Report by the National Union of Public and General Employees, December 2008.

Making Public Services a Priority: How Canada can beat tough times. Report by the National Union of Public and General Employees, December 2008.

Work-Life Conflict in Canada in the New Millennium. Report by Linda Duxbury and Chris Higgins, Health Canada, 2008.

Leadership for Tough Times: Alternative Federal Budget Fiscal Stimulus Plan. Report by Armine Yalnizyan and David Macdonald, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, January 2009.

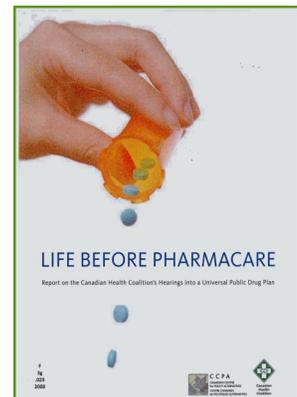
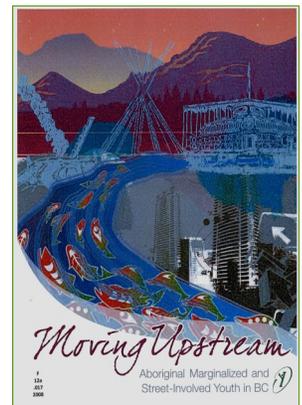
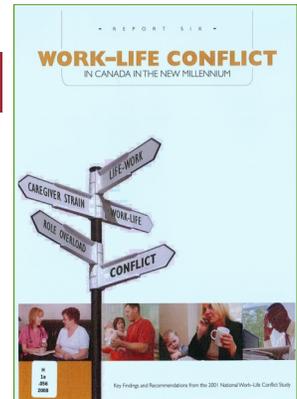
Alternative Federal Budget 2009: Beyond the Crisis – A budget for a strong and sustainable future. Report by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, January 2009.

Aboriginal Issues

Aboriginal People Living Off-reserve and the Labour Market: Estimates from the Labour Force Survey, 2007. Report by Statistics Canada, December 2008.

Understanding the Aboriginal/Non-Aboriginal Gap in Student Performance: Lessons from British Columbia. Commentary by John Richards, Jennifer Hove, and Kemi Afolabi, CD Howe Institute, December 2008.

Moving Upstream: Aboriginal Marginalized and Street-Involved Youth in BC. Report by The McCreary Centre Society, December 2008.



Resources, cont.

Food Security

Freedom from Want: The Human Right to Adequate Food. E-book by George Kent.

Ontario Hunger Report 2008: The Leading Edge of the Storm. Report by the Ontario Association for Food Banks, December 2008.

Building the Bridge: Linking Food Banking and Community Food Security. Report by Andy Fisher, Community Food Security Coalition, February 2005.

Local Food Procurement Policies: A Literature Review. Report by Marla MacLeod and Jennifer Scott, Ecology Action Centre, Nova Scotia, May 2007.

Alberta Retail Food Prices: Selected Communities, June 2008. Report by Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development, June 2008.

Housing

Housing NOW, Edmonton CMA. Article by the Canadian Housing and Mortgage Corporation, Fall 2008.

Current Housing Research: Social, Economic and Technical Research, Vol. 15 No. 2. Directory of Housing Research published by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, January 2009.

Housing Policy Options for Women Living in Urban Poverty: An Action Research Project in Three Canadian Cities. Report by Status of Women Canada, February 2001.

Streets to Homes: Overview. Powerpoint presentation by the City of Toronto Shelter, Housing and Support Administration, May 2008.

Still on Our Streets...Results of the 2008 Metro Vancouver Homeless Count. Report by the Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness, September 2008.

Canadian Housing Observer: With a feature on housing need. Report by the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, December 2008.

Social Housing Wait Lists and the One-Person Household in Ontario. Report by Suzanne Swanton, Canadian Policy Research Networks, January 2009.

Non-Profit Organizations

Satellite Account of Non-profit Institutions and Volunteering, 1997-2005. Report by Statistics Canada, December 2008.

Robin Hood Marketing: Stealing Corporate Savvy to Sell Just Causes. Book by Katya Andresen, 2006. Nonprofit Internet Strategies: Best Practices for Marketing, Communications, and Fundraising. Book by Ted Hart, James Greenfield, and Michael Johnston, 2005.

Strategic Communications for Nonprofit Organizations: Seven Steps to Creating a Successful Plan, 2nd ed. Book by Sally Patterson and Janel Radtke, 2009.

Child Care

The Child Care Transition: A league table of early childhood education and care in economically advanced countries. Report by UNICEF, December 2008.

Early Learning Prevents Youth Violence. Report by Richard Tremblay, Jean Gervais and Amelie Petitclerc, Centre of Excellence for Early Childhood Development, November 2008.

Child-Care Policy and the Labor Supply of Mothers with Young Children: A Natural Experiment from Canada. Article by Pierre Lefebvre and Philip Merrigan, published in the Journal of Labour Economics, 2008.

Other Topics

Community Roles in Policy. Report by Sherri Torjman, Caledon Institute for Social Policy, January 2009.

The Changing Profile of Adults in Custody, 2006/2007. Report by Statistics Canada, December 2008.

Social Return on Investment: Key Questions and Answers. Report by the New Economics Foundation and the City of Edmonton, 2008.

A Pension in Every Pot: Better Pensions for More Canadians. Report by James Pierlot, CD Howe Institute, November 2008.

Immigrants and Victimization, 2004. Report by Statistics Canada, December 2008.

Research Links

First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada www.fncaringsociety.com

The purpose of the Caring Society is to promote the well being of all First Nations children, youth, families and communities with a particular focus on the prevention of, and response to, child maltreatment. Check out their online journal, the [First Peoples Child & Family Review](#).

Poverty Mapping

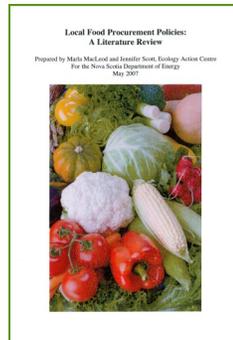
<http://go.worldbank.org/9CYUFEUQ30>

The World Bank provides a collection of resources on poverty mapping. Poverty mapping can be used to better understand wellbeing and poverty within a region. This website includes information on how poverty maps are built, what they can be used for, and links to other information and documents regarding the measuring, analyzing, and responding to poverty.

Imagine Canada's Nonprofit Library Commons

<http://nonprofitscan.imaginecanada.ca>

Imagine Canada's Nonprofit Library Commons is a superb collection of Canadian nonprofit resources. Topics include research, promising practices and tools on philanthropy, grant making, voluntary action, corporate citizenship and nonprofit management, and other topics. About 80% of the collection is available for free online. You'll love it!



I want your input! How can this Update be made more useful for you? Contact [Erin](#) at:

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