

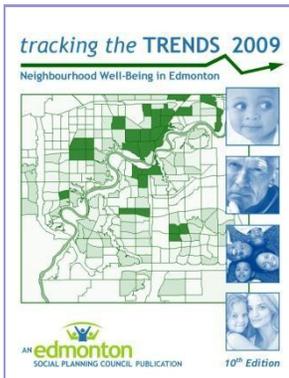
# Research Update

**November 2009**

## Research News

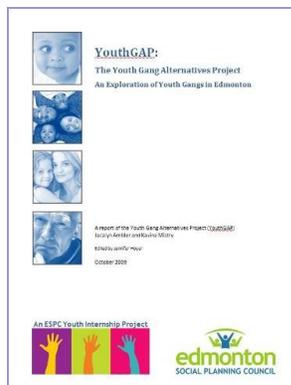
### Tracking the Trends 2009 is available!

This edition of the ESPC's flagship publication features an analysis of the **well-being of Edmonton neighbourhoods**, with data presented in detailed, full-colour maps.

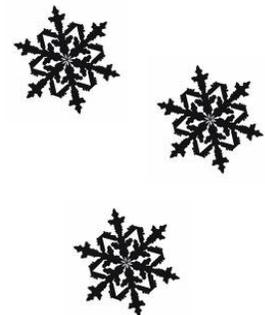


The publication also includes an updated and expanded Social Health Index. Visit [www\[.dot\]edmontonsocialplanning\[.dot\]ca](http://www.edmontonsocialplanning.ca) to order your copy!

### The YouthGAP Report is available!



The ESPC's youth interns, Jacalyn Ambler and Kavina Mistry, are proud to present the results of their work on the Youth Gang Alternatives Project. This report describes the youth gang problem in Edmonton and offers suggestions for treatment. Visit our website to download a copy.



Most publications described 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:

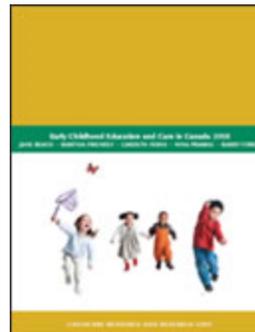
[socialresearchlibrary.ca](http://socialresearchlibrary.ca)

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



The Addiction and Mental Health Research Laboratory has launched **Know Mo**, a website dedicated to Albertans interested in accessing the best scientific evidence on addiction and mental health issues. Know Mo aims to be the knowledge mobilization hub for addictions and mental health information in Alberta. Check them out online at [www\[.dot\]knowmo\[.dot\]ca](http://www.knowmo.ca)

It's all about the kids: The **Childcare Resource and Research Unit** has made their report on *Early childhood education and care in Canada 2008* available free online. Check out their website at [www\[.dot\]childcarecanada\[.dot\]org](http://www.childcarecanada.org) to take a look



### Inside this Update:

<b>RESEARCH</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>REVIEWS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>OF INTEREST...</b>	<b>4</b>



The **Alberta Nonprofit & Voluntary Workforce Council** is working on a **Workforce Initiatives Inventory**, a forum for nonprofit organizations to share information about nonprofit workforce initiatives throughout Alberta.

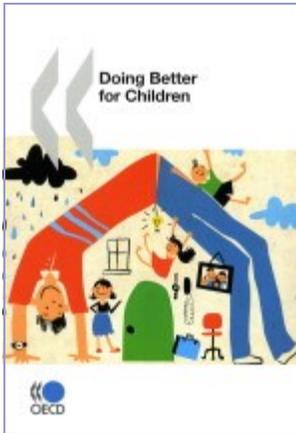
For more information, or to be included in the inventory contact the Alberta Nonprofit & Voluntary Sector Workforce Council at [mgrogan\[at\]calgarycvo\[.dot\]org](mailto:mgrogan[at]calgarycvo[.dot]org)



We're sad to see CPRN close their doors after 15 years of work. You'll be missed!

**Do you have news, information, or new research to share? Let us know and we'll include it in our next Research Update.**

Reviews



**“Why should we care about these issues? Because the health of our economy and society hinges on the well-being of today’s children.”**

**Doing Better for Children.**

Book published by the OECD, 2009.  
Available in the ESPC library as book or PDF.

Childcare workers and policymakers interested in child welfare should take a look at *Doing Better for Children*. This in-depth report examines the efforts OECD member countries are making to enhance the well-being of their children. The authors ask what government programs for children are achieving and investigate whether money is being spent wisely. Why should we care about these issues? Because the health of our economy and society hinges on the well-being of today’s children.

The scope of this book includes data on how 28 member countries, including Canada, distribute government social spending across the life cycle of a child. It is very helpful to look at Canada’s data in this context. The report also lets us look at how we measure up against our peer countries in relation to the proportion of resources they allocate to child well-being.

Doing Better for Children compares data across six areas:

- Material Well-being
- Housing and Environment
- Education
- Health and Safety
- Risk Behaviours
- Quality of School Life

Other important issues are also discussed. It turns out that more money is spent on the last third of childhood – the “facebook years” – than the first third – the “Dora the Explorer years”. By contrast, the authors conclude that spending on the first third of childhood is more effective. Following from this, policies regarding services for infants and very young children (under-3s) are compared across countries.

Another interesting theme is intergenerational inequality. Do children become their parents? Is social mobility an option for children today? It turns out that socioeconomic class plays a major role in determining social mobility.

Controversial conclusions are made with regards to family environment. The authors discuss whether family make-up has an impact on child well-being, and they state that staying together for the kids doesn’t necessarily create a better home environment than a single-parent family.

The authors report some difficulty collecting data due to a general lack of statistic-keeping for this age group. Despite this, they have compiled insightful data into easy-to-read tables and graphs.

Several general policy recommendations are made. They include the following:

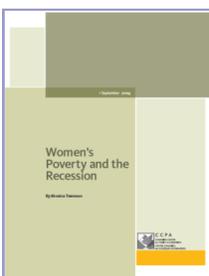
- Governments should invest more in early childhood than in later adolescence
- Early investment in disadvantaged children needs follow-up throughout their childhood
- Intergenerational inequality will most likely be broken by early investment
- Policies for child well-being need to address all the dimensions of their lives
- Politicians and policymakers need targets and timelines if goals related to child well-being are to be met.
- Comprehensive statistics on children need to be gathered regularly, both to monitor child well-being and to inform policy. At present, children are “statistically invisible” in many countries.
- Governments must be vigilant in tracking the effectiveness of programs and ensuring that funding is properly allocated.

A few specific and thought-provoking policy suggestions are made: Parental smoking should be reduced, especially during pregnancy. Educational funding should be reallocated towards disadvantaged children. Less money should be spent on post-natal hospital stays, older children, and single parents. Whether you agree with these statements or not, the report is worth a read.

**There’s nothing like some OECD policy recommendations for a good conversation starter!**

**Women’s Poverty and the Recession**

Report by Monica Townson, 2009.  
Published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.



The recession is on everyone’s mind these days. As stimulus packages are rolled out, governments aim to develop strategies for helping vulnerable groups within their communities. One thing we often forget, however, is that within every vulnerable population, women are hit harder than men.

**“...in all the vulnerable groups, poverty rates for women are higher than those for men.”**

This report highlights key issues related to women’s poverty while also discussing poverty in general. Townson asks whether stimulus programs incorporate prior anti-poverty strategies or place them on a backburner. She also points out that stimulus programs may actually increase the numbers of those living in poverty, especially women.

As an example of this, Townson points to the fact that our federal stimulus

Continued —>

package does nothing to address problems with the current Employment Insurance program. The majority of the unemployed do not qualify for benefits, and women are more likely to be denied than men. Women are also more likely than men to supplement their Employment Insurance with additional earnings, to make ends meet.

Poverty among women has many faces—including the immigrant, aboriginal, lone-parent, senior, or disabled. It can leave women lacking key resources:

- the income to participate fully in the social and political life of their community
- affordable child care, which in turn limits their employment opportunities and other activities
- the ability to save for retirement.

Women's poverty results primarily from two things: how women are treated when they are employed, and the situation they find themselves in when they're unemployed. Women earn an average of 65.7% of the wages their male counterparts do. In addition, women are more likely to find themselves in lower-paid positions or in non-standard work where benefits or job security are not available.

Most anti-poverty initiatives focus on specific programs that do not explicitly target women. For example, we have recognized that many children are poor because their parents are poor; we have implemented programs focused on child welfare, and we monitor these to see if they have had positive effects on the child. We forget, however, that poor children live in low-

income families often headed by lone-parent women, and we don't track whether these single mothers are benefiting equally from the programs. We focus on the "feel good" side of alleviating child poverty while forgetting that the poverty status of children hinges on their parents. In today's world, according to Townson, "it has become more acceptable to talk about child poverty than women's poverty".

**"...it has become more acceptable to talk about child poverty than women's poverty."**

What's the best solution? Townson provides key characteristics of effective strategies:

- They must be comprehensive and integrated so that all members of a population will benefit.
- They need to have clear and specific goals, targets, and timelines.
- Progress must be measured regularly and reported on publicly.
- The strategy must be transparent and publicly promoted
- Strategies must be developed with the participation of stakeholders
- Accountability must be built into the program.

Townson also suggests policies specifically related to women's poverty, including changes to Canada's EI system, increases in minimum wage, Guaranteed Income Supplements for single older women, and restoration of funding to child care programs. She also advocates for gender analysis of data gathered by program monitoring systems; women cannot be allowed to slip through the gap.

**Read this report** if you're interested in anti-poverty, women's issues, or child welfare.

Do you like to read? The **ESPC Book Club** does too!

Join us on January 13, 2010 as we discuss *All My Children*, by Gabrielle Roy. Email [library\[at\]edmontonsocialplanning.ca](mailto:library[at]edmontonsocialplanning.ca) or call 780.423.2031x354 for more information.

## Directories

*The Tough Times Handbook*. Directory produced by 211.

*Educational Programs for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders*. Directory from the Autism Society of Edmonton Area, 2008.

*ATA News Media Directory 2009/10*. The Alberta Teachers' Association, 2009.

## Housing and Homelessness

*Youth Homelessness in Canada: the road to solutions*. Report by Raising the Roof, 2009.

*Mortality among residents of shelters, rooming houses, and hotels in Canada: 11 year follow-up study*. Report by Hwang, Wilkins, Tjepkema, O'Campo and Dunn, 2009. British Medical Journal.

## Edmonton

*Edmonton TaskForce on Community Safety: Environmental Scan*. Report from the Edmonton TaskForce on Community Safety, 2009.

*Reach: building a culture of community safety in Edmonton in one generation*. Edmonton Taskforce on Community Safety, City of Edmonton, 2009.

*Who We Are: A snapshot of Edmontonians: setting the stage for consultation and planning*.

## Poverty and Economic Issues

*The economic crisis through the lens of economic wellbeing: special report*. Jean-François Arsenault and Andrew Sharpe, Centre for the Study of Living Standards with the Institute of Wellbeing, 2009.

*Hard hit: impact of the economic downturn on nonprofit community social services in Ontario*. Report from the Social Planning Network of Ontario, 2009.

*Why don't we want the poor to own anything? Our relentless social policy journey toward destitution for the 900,000 poorest people in Ontario*. Report by John Stapleton, 2009

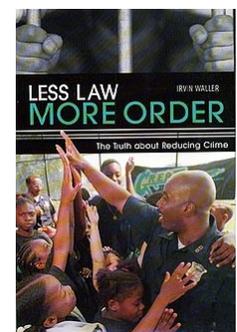
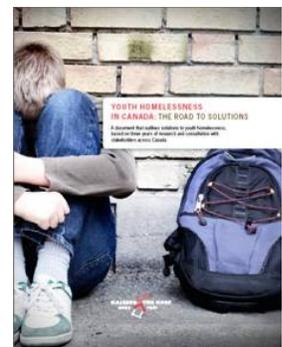
*The affordability gap: spending differences between Canada's rich and poor*. Report by Steve Kerstetter, 2009.

*Possibilities and prospects: the debate over a guaranteed income*. Report by Margot Young and James Mulvale, 2009.

*Poverty reduction policies and programs: extending the Alberta Advantage*. Report by Peter Faid, 2009

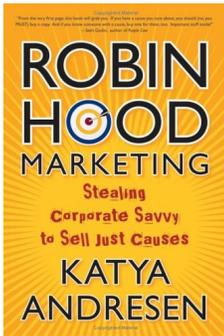
## Crime

*Less law more order: the truth about reducing crime*. Book by Irvin Waller, 2008.



Continued —>

## Resources, continued



### Non-Profits

*Caring Canadians, involved Canadians: highlights from the 2007 Canada survey of giving, volunteering and participating.* Report by Imagine Canada and Statistics Canada, published by the Minister of Industry, Canada. 2009.

*Social innovation in Canada: an update.* Report by Mark Goldenberg et al., 2009.

*Robin Hood marketing: stealing corporate savvy to sell just causes.* Book from Katya Andresen, 2009.

### Disabilities

*National report card 2008: inclusion of Canadians with intellectual disabilities.* Report from the Canadian Association for Community Living. 2008.

*Aging and Disability from research and knowledge to better practice: building strategies and partnerships for livable communities that are inclusive of seniors with disabilities.*

Synthesis papers from the Canadian Centre on Disability Studies and the Institute for Urban Studies, 2009. Includes:

- *Livable and inclusive communities for seniors with disabilities: transportation structures, and*
- *Analysis of housing for seniors with disabilities using a livable and inclusive community lens.*

### Women's Issues

*Women's Poverty and the Recession.* Report by Monica Townson, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. 2009.

*International human rights law and Aboriginal girls in Canada: never the twain shall meet?* Report by Rebecca Aleem, Justice for Girls International. 2009.

### Food Sustainability

*Re-framing the great food debate: the case for sustainable food.* Report from the new economic foundation. 2009.

### Seniors Issues

*Moving toward health service integration: provincial progress in system change for seniors.* Report by Margaret MacAdam, Canadian Policy Research Networks. 2009.

### Aboriginal Issues

*"With the appropriate qualifications": aboriginal people and employment equity.* Article by Patti Doyle-Bedwell, from the Journal of Canadian Woman Studies, vol. 26 no. 3-4 (Winter-Spring 2008).

*Why we need a First Nations education act.* Report by Michael Mendelson, 2009.

### Immigrants and Immigration

*Supporting immigrants and immigration to Alberta.* Report by Human Resources and Employment, Economic Development, Advanced Education, and International and Intergovernmental Relations Alberta. 2005.

*Report of the Auditor General of Canada: Chapter 2: selecting foreign workers under the immigration program.* Fall 2009.

### Children

*Doing Better for Children.* Book by the OECD, 2009.

*Literature review of socioeconomic effects and net benefits: understanding and addressing workforce shortages in Early Child Education and Care (ECEC) Project.* A report from the Child Care Human Resources Sector Council, 2009.

*Children & Cities: Planning to grow together.* Report by Juan Torres, 2009.

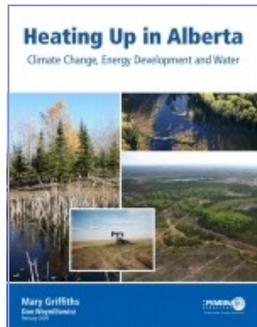
*"Caution! Kids at Play?" Unstructured time use among children and adolescents.* Report by Belinda Boekhoven, 2009.

### Other

*Heating up in Alberta: climate change, energy development and water.* Report by Mary Griffiths and Dan Woynilowicz, the Pembina Institute. 2009.

*EI: it should be there when you need it! An analysis of employment insurance in Alberta.* Report by the Alberta Federation of Labour. 2009.

*Climate Wars.* Book by Gwynne Dyer, 2008.



We want your input! How can this Research Update be made more useful for you? Contact us:

Suite 37, 9912-106 St  
Edmonton, AB  
T5K 1C5

Phone: 780-423-2031  
ext. 354  
Fax: 780-425-6244

**library[at]  
edmontonsocialplanning  
[dot] ca**

## Of Interest...

### Youth Internship Program



The ESPC **Youth Internship** program is inviting applications for projects beginning in January 2010. There's still time to apply—check out our website for more information, or email [library\[at\]edmontonsocialplanning.ca](mailto:library[at]edmontonsocialplanning.ca) for details.

### Did you know...?

We receive several subscriptions for periodicals in our library, from the *Stanford Social Innovation Review* to the *CCPA Monitor*. Some of these subscriptions date back for several years. Drop by sometime to browse our collection, or send an email to [library\[at\]edmontonsocialplanning.ca](mailto:library[at]edmontonsocialplanning.ca) if there's an issue or article you're trying to get your hands on.