



# Child and family poverty in Alberta 2004

**FACT SHEET** November 2004

**“This house seeks to achieve the goal of eliminating poverty among Canadian children by the year 2000.”**

*House of Commons unanimous all party resolution  
November 24, 1989*

The Edmonton Social Planning Council joins Campaign 2000 in its annual reporting of child poverty in Canada. This fact sheet uses data compiled by Campaign 2000 and its partners across the country. See Campaign 2000's 2004 Report Card on Child Poverty in Canada for more information and analysis ([www.campaign2000.ca](http://www.campaign2000.ca)).

On the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the national pledge to end child poverty, 1,065,000 children in Canada, 98,000 children in Alberta, still remain in poverty.

13.3% or 98,000 children in Alberta live in poverty

### Child Poverty in Alberta

	2000	2001	2002
Alberta	14.5%	13.8%	13.3%
Calgary	11%	11.1%	14.8%
Edmonton	22.9%	19.3%	18.1%

Source: Statistics Canada's *Income Trends in Canada, 2002*

Note: Campaign 2000 uses Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-Offs (LICO pre-tax) to determine the poverty/low income rates.

A popular misconception is that poor children live mostly in families dependent on social assistance. The reality is that 57.9% of poor children in Alberta live in families where the parent(s) worked all year. That means there are 56,700 children who, despite living in working families, are still living in poverty.

The majority (57.9%) of children living in poverty in Alberta live in working families

### Number of poor children living in working families

	Full-time, Full-year working families		Full year work equivalent families	
	Proportion of children living in low income	Number of children living in low income	Proportion of children living in low income	Number of children living in low income
Alberta	31.3%	30,700	57.9%	56,700
Canada	26.9%	286,500	44.7%	476,500

Source: CCSD using Statistics Canada *Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics*

Note: Full-time, full year = at least one parent working full time all year. Full year work equivalent = combined total of weeks worked by all adults in family is 49 weeks

The majority (68%) of children living in poverty in Alberta live in two-parent families

### Child poverty in Alberta by household type

Number of persons under 18 living in two parent families living in low income	67,000
Number of persons under 18 living in female lone-parent families living in low income	30,000
Total number of persons under 18 living in low income	98,000

Source: Statistics Canada's *Income Trends in Canada, 2002*

The poverty rates for aboriginal, visible minority and immigrant children in Alberta ranges from 26%-41%, significantly higher than the 13.3% average.

While the overall child poverty rate in Alberta is 13.3%, some social groups are disproportionately affected by poverty. Aboriginal children, as well as children in visible minority and immigrant families are two to three times as likely as the general population to be living in poverty.

### Child poverty rates among select social groups in Alberta

Aboriginal Identity	Visible Minority	Immigrant	Immigrated in 1996-2001
35.8%	26.7%	33%	41.6%

Source: Statistics Canada's *Canada Census, 2001*

There are 38,000 pre-school age children living in poverty in Alberta.

### Poor children by age in Alberta

	0-5 year olds	6-17 year olds
Percent of children in this age category living in low income	16.9%	11.7%
Number of children in this age category living in low income	38,000	60,000

Source: CCSD using Statistics Canada's *Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics*

### Solutions to address child poverty in Alberta and Canada

Campaign 2000 recommends that governments in Canada commit to a Social Investment Plan. Recognizing that child poverty is a multi-faceted problem that requires multi-faceted solutions, Campaign 2000 recommends five major initiatives:

- More good jobs at living wages including raising the minimum wage to \$10 an hour.
- An effective child benefit system that includes raising the current child benefit to \$4,900 per child.
- A universally accessible system of quality early learning and child care.
- Significant expansion of affordable housing.
- A renewed national social safety net.