

WHAT ABOUT THE CHILDREN?



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Poverty can have devastating effects on children. As a clinical psychologist, it is disheartening for me to see how living in poverty can profoundly affect a child's development. Research has shown that children born into poverty are more likely to have lower birth weight, higher infant mortality and poorer health than children who are better off financially. It would appear that family income is strongly related to children's ability and achievement. All other things being equal, children who live in poverty suffer the worst outcomes.

Campaign 2000 recently reported the 2006 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Canada. It was a poor report card. Campaign 2000 reminded us that, "In 1989, the House of Commons unanimously resolved to 'seek to achieve the goal of eliminating poverty among Canadian children by the year 2000.'" However, the gap between the rich and poor continues to widen, with close to 1.2 million children (almost one child out of every six in Canada) still living in poverty.

"POVERTY IS:

- '...FEELING ASHAMED WHEN MY DAD CAN'T GET A JOB'
- '...PRETENDING THAT YOU FORGOT YOUR LUNCH'
- '...BEING TEASED FOR THE WAY YOU ARE DRESSED'
- '...BEING AFRAID TO TELL YOUR MOM YOU NEED GYM SHOES'
- '...HEARING MOM AND DAD FIGHT OVER MONEY'
- '...HIDING YOUR FEET SO THE TEACHER WON'T GET CROSS WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE BOOTS'

Grade 4 & 5 children in North Bay"

It would appear that some children are more vulnerable to poverty. For example, Statistics Canada indicated that, "Approximately half (52%) of low income children in Canada live in female lone parent families. According to the 2001 census, 49% of children in recent immigrant families and 34% of children in racialized families are poor." It was also shown that, "Forty percent of off-reserve Aboriginal children live in poverty.... The child poverty rate for children with disabilities is 28%." These data are shocking indeed.

Members of The Catholic Women's League of Canada have been persistent in voicing their concerns about child poverty

to every level of government. Annually, League members' concern about children living in poverty has been a focus during meetings with the federal government. Resolution 2004.02 Children Living in Poverty has been emphasized repeatedly, urging governments to "take... action to eliminate child poverty... by identifying and addressing the root causes." While the federal government has introduced some important initiatives in child benefits, including early learning and child care services and affordable housing, some have been stalled and others have been rescinded. †

WELCOME to New and Reactivated Councils

REACTIVATED COUNCILS

- Immaculate Conception, Tisdale, Saskatchewan
- Immaculate Heart of Mary, Edmonton, Alberta
- St. John Brebeuf, Winnipeg, Manitoba
- St. John Vianney, Windsor, Ontario

NEW COUNCIL

- Resurrection, Regina, Saskatchewan

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Parish Councils Celebrating Anniversaries

50 YEARS

- Our Lady of the Foothills, Hinton, Alberta
- St. Jerome, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario
- St. Raphael, St. Raphael's West, Ontario