

A Snapshot
of
Poverty in Canada

TRUE OR FALSE?

Canada only has “*relative poverty*” – that is, people only *feel* poor relative to others but actually have enough to live comfortably.



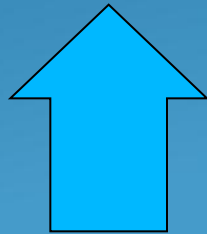
FALSE

In 2009, **11.7%** of Canadians lived below the poverty line and could not meet all of their basic needs.

POVERTY LINE

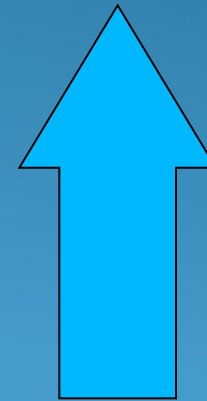
In Canada, average income over past 10 years:

18% increase . . .
(\$2,576)



. . . for **POOREST**
families

31% increase . . .
(\$50,115)



. . . for **WEALTHIEST**
families

TRUE OR FALSE?

Canada does not have an official government-supported poverty measure.

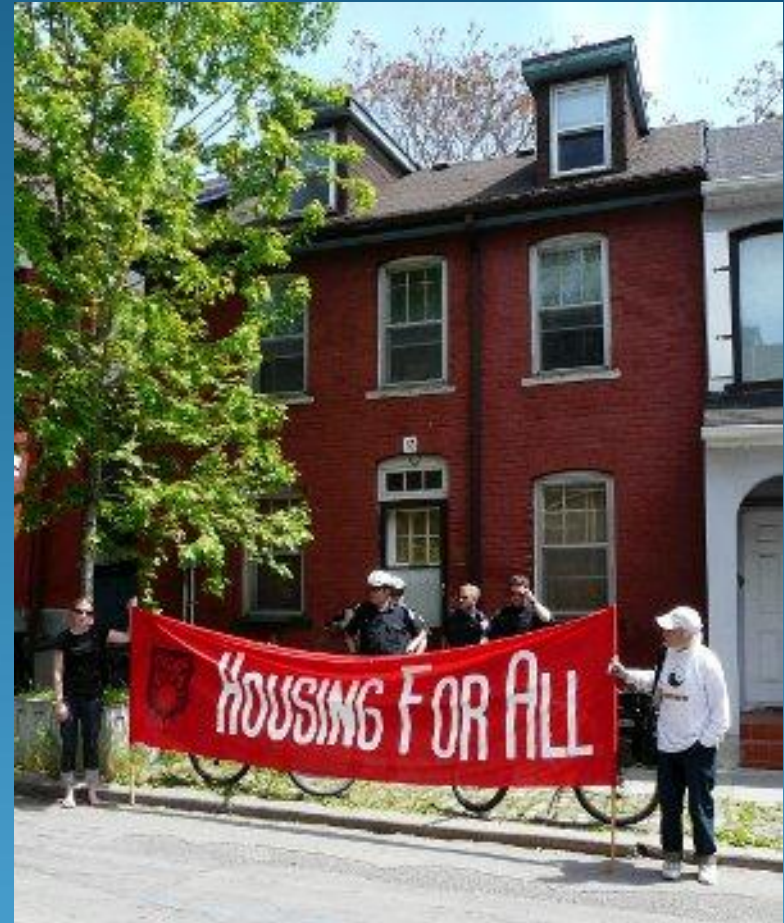


TRUE

At present, the government **has yet to agree on** a definition of poverty. . .

Low Income Cut-off

- LICO = poverty measure most commonly used
- Average spending on food, clothes, shelter = 35% of household income
- LICO or “poverty line” = **55% or more** of household income spent on basic necessities



And then there's "poverty depth" . . .

The average low income family lives on an annual income that is . . .

\$9,000 – \$11,000

. . . below the poverty line.



In 2009...



... hundreds of thousands of families saw their income cut, while the cost of living increased.

- Food prices **rose 4.9%** vs. core inflation of 0.3%
- Average rent (2-bdrm) **rose 2.3%** vs. core inflation of 0.1%

CHILD POVERTY

REPORT CARD

Child Poverty

	1980s	1990s	2000s
Australia	C	C	C
Austria	n.a.	n.a.	A
Belgium	n.a.	n.a.	B
Canada	C	C	C
Denmark	A	A	A
Finland	A	A	A
France	A	B	B
Germany	A	B	D
Ireland	n.a.	n.a.	D
Italy	B	D	C
Japan	B	C	C
Netherlands	A	B	B
Norway	A	A	A
Sweden	A	A	A
Switzerland	n.a.	n.a.	B
U.K.	B	C	B
U.S.	D	D	D

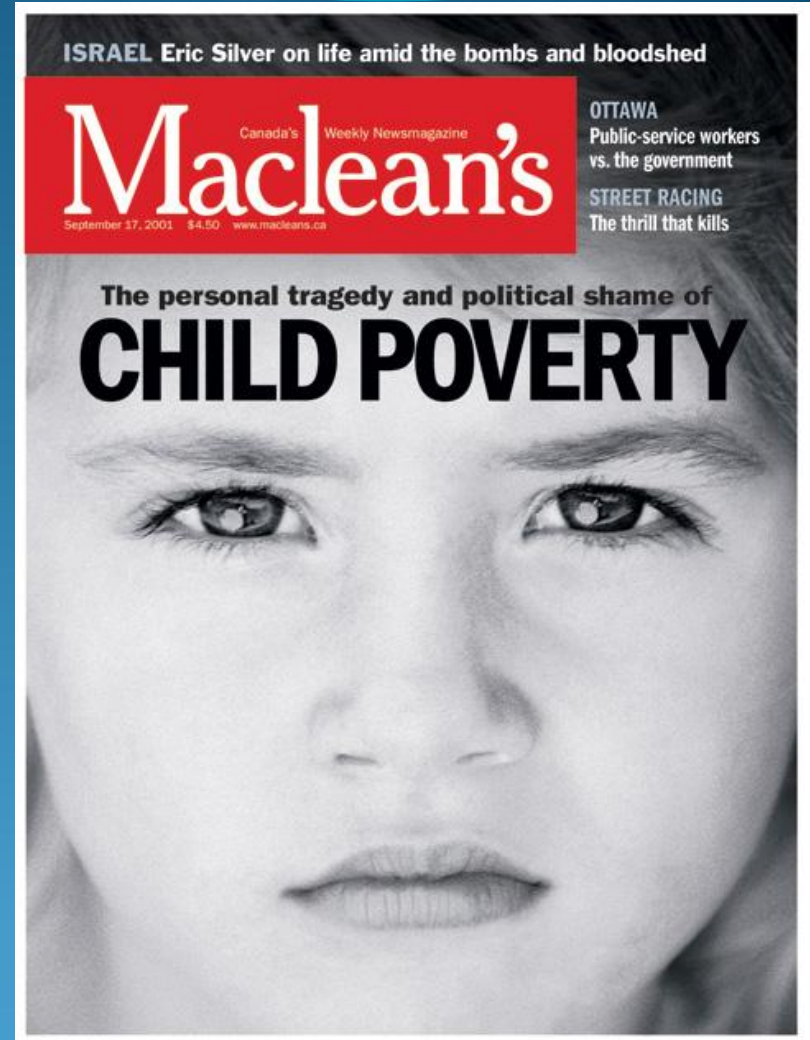
Source: The Conference Board of Canada.

The UN says . . .

- Canada's **child poverty rate** is consistently higher than most other wealthy nations
- Canada **ranks 19th** out of the 26 richest countries

In 1989 . . .

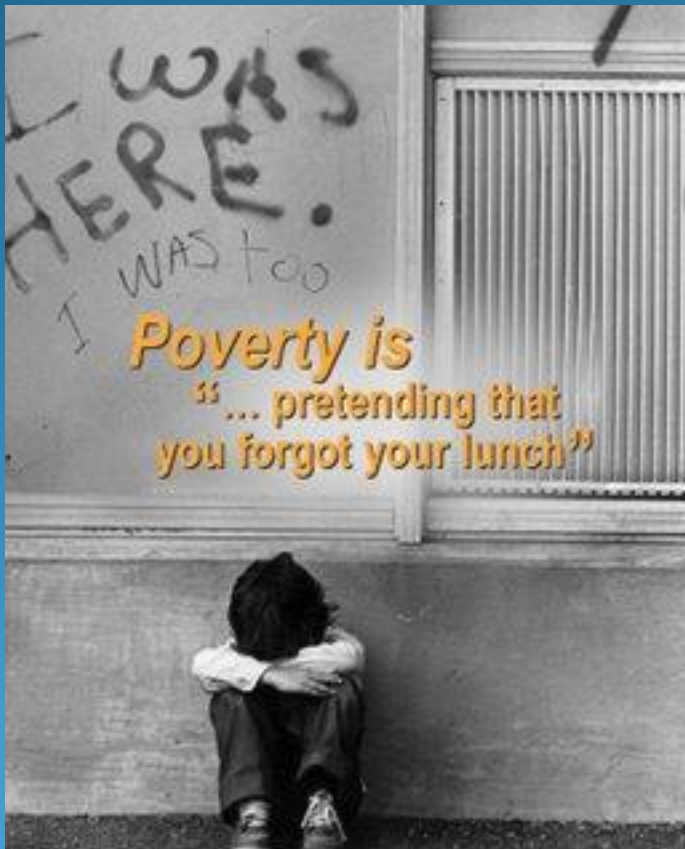
. . . the House of Commons **unanimously passed an all-party resolution** to eliminate child poverty by the year 2000.



The rate of child poverty **is the same now** as it was in 1989.

CHILD POVERTY

Children in grades 4/5 respond to
“What is Poverty?” ...



“Not getting to go to birthday parties.”

“Not being able to have sleepovers because we can’t buy snacks or give breakfast.”

“Not having your own backyard.”

“Being teased for the way you are dressed.”

40% of children living in poverty . . .

. . . come from a household where at least one parent has full-time employment



. . . though many earn **minimum wage** . . .

Legal minimum wage by province for 2009/2010:

Province	Minimum Hourly Wage
Alberta	\$8.40
British Columbia	\$8.00
Manitoba	\$8.50
New Brunswick	\$7.75
Newfoundland	\$8.50
Northwest Territories	\$8.25
Nova Scotia	\$8.60
Nunavut	\$10.00
Ontario	\$9.50
Prince Edward Island	\$8.00
Quebec	\$8.50
Saskatchewan	\$8.60
Yukon	\$8.58

The 'Working Poor' ...

“No matter where in Canada a family lives, **one person earning minimum wage full time for a full year** does not equate living above the poverty line.”



Persons economically vulnerable before the recession were **more likely to lose their job** . . .



This includes . . .

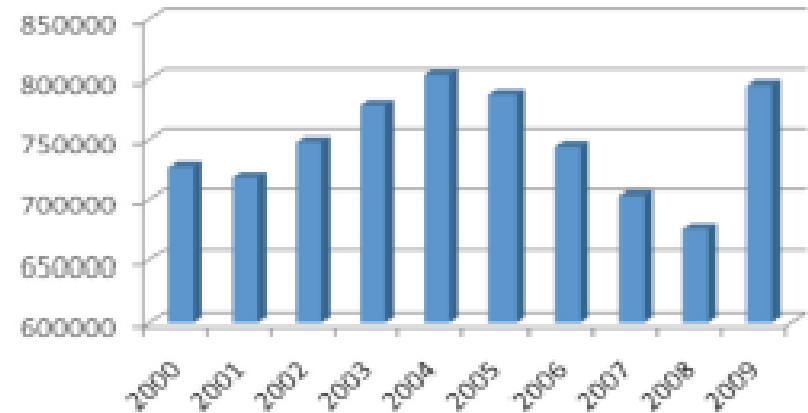
- Workers making \$10 an hour or less
- Employees with a high school education or less
- Recent newcomers
- Aboriginal Canadians

In March 2008 . . .

. . . 704,414 individuals
were assisted by food
banks



Food Bank Users, 2000–2009



That's a **6% increase** since 1997.

- 50% of food bank users in 2008 received social assistance cheques



What was the **2nd largest group** of food bank users?



- People with jobs

HEATING

Low-income families spend **13.7% of their household income** on energy . . . compared to **4%** of Canadians

Between 2003 and 2008, the average price of household heating fuel **increased by 89%** . . . forcing many families to choose between heat and food.



HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is spreading throughout Canada . . .



. . . increasingly affecting families with children.

Homelessness for families includes . . .



- Sleeping on the street
- Sleeping in emergency shelters, hostels, or transition houses
- Temporarily staying with others
- Renting a hotel/motel room by the month