

To:

The Right Honourable Mark Carney, Prime Minister of Canada

The Honourable Members of the Cabinet

The Honourable Secretaries of State

Members of the House of Commons

**Re: Passage of Bill S-212, An Act respecting a national strategy for children and youth**

Dear Prime Minister, Ministers, Secretaries of State and Members of Parliament,

Campaign 2000: End Child and Family Poverty is a diverse, national coalition of community-based organizations which came together in response to the 1989 unanimously adopted House of Commons resolution to end child poverty by the year 2000. We conduct research, engage communities and advance evidence-based, achievable policy solutions to some of the most pressing issues related to poverty in Canada.

We write to urge the Government of Canada to champion the swift passage of Bill S-212, *A National Strategy for Children and Youth Act through the House of Commons*. The Senate has done its part. The federal government and all parties must now make this legislation a priority.

We recognize that the government is facing many urgent and competing pressures, including the economic uncertainty and rising costs created by the trade war. These challenges demand serious attention. They also make it more important, not less, to invest in children and families who are least able to absorb further hardship. Such investments are not only socially responsible, they are economically sound. Adequate incomes and robust public services support healthy development, enable parents to participate in the labour market, build strong communities and future-proof our workforce.

Campaign 2000's 2025 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty in Canada, *Investing in Tomorrow: A Future Without Poverty*, shows why, twenty-five years after the goal to eradicate child poverty, action cannot wait. Rates of child poverty rose for the third consecutive year. Child poverty has more than doubled since 2020, according to Canada's official measure, to 10.7%, or 802,000 children. According to annual tax filer data, nearly 1.4 million children, or 18.3%, lived in poverty in 2023.

Poverty is deepening and its impacts remains profoundly unequal. Families with children were living, on average, more than \$15,000 below the poverty line and 2.5 million children across the provinces lived in food insecure households. More than half of children living on First Nations reserves lived in poverty, nearly half of children in lone-parent families lived in poverty and 99% of young people under the age of 18 who did not live in families lived in poverty.

These outcomes are not inevitable. They are the result of policy choices, inadequate supports and systemic inequities. Failing to invest now carries avoidable costs, weakens productivity and in effect, drags on the economy.

We are concerned that without significant new investments, Canada is unlikely to meet its 2030 commitment to reduce poverty by 50% under Opportunity for All, Canada's Poverty Reduction Strategy.

Bill S-212 provides a practical and urgently needed framework for change. It would require the federal government to work with provinces and territories, First Nations, Inuit and Métis leaders, partners, families and children and youth themselves, to develop a coordinated national strategy with measurable objectives, an action plan and regular reporting to Parliament. This is the kind of rights-based, cross-jurisdictional leadership Canada requires on all issues related to children and youth.

We urge the Government to publicly support Bill S-212, allocate the parliamentary time needed to advance the legislation through second reading and committee, and work across party lines to secure its passage without delay.

Sincerely,

**The Campaign 2000 Steering Committee:**

- |                                                                                                        |                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Leila Sarangi, Campaign 2000: End Child and Family Poverty                                          | 9. Kate Kehler, Social Planning Council of Winnipeg                         |
| 2. Chris Brillinger, Family Service Toronto                                                            | 10. Anita Khanna, Ex Officio Campaign 2000                                  |
| 3. Mary Boyd, MacKillop Centre for Social Justice and PEI Coalition for a Poverty Eradication Strategy | 11. Brad LaFortune, Public Interest Alberta                                 |
| 4. Kimberly Dreddy, Jimmy Pratt Foundation                                                             | 12. Brittany Lambert, UNICEF Canada                                         |
| 5. Lesley Frank, Acadia University                                                                     | 13. Adrienne Montani, First Call Child and Youth Advocacy Society           |
| 6. Sid Frankel, University of Manitoba                                                                 | 14. Laurel Rothman, Ex Officio Campaign 2000                                |
| 7. Martha Friendly, Childcare Resource and Research Unit                                               | 15. Diana Sarosi, Oxfam Canada                                              |
| 8. Randy Hatfield, Human Development Council of Saint John                                             | 16. Christine Saulnier, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives Nova Scotia |

**Endorsed by:**

- |                                                                                                           |                                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 17. Advancement of Women Halton                                                                           | 43. Kingston Community Health Centres                      |
| 18. Adverse Childhood Experiences & Resilience Coalition of Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington (ARC) | 44. Mazon Canada                                           |
| 19. Algoma Family Services                                                                                | 45. National Council of Women of Canada                    |
| 20. Bereaved Families of Ontario-Toronto                                                                  | 46. National Council of Youth in Care Advocates (NCYICA)   |
| 21. Canadian Arab Federation                                                                              | 47. NCWC EF                                                |
| 22. Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives                                                               | 48. OCASI - Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants |
| 23. Canadian Child Care Federation                                                                        | 49. Ontario Children's Advancement Coalition               |
| 24. Canadian Paediatric Society                                                                           | 50. Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care                |
| 25. Child Care Now                                                                                        | 51. Ontario Public School Boards' Association              |
| 26. Childcare Resource and Research Unit                                                                  | 52. Open Policy                                            |
| 27. Children First Canada                                                                                 | 53. Oxfam Canada                                           |
| 28. Children's Mental Health of Leeds & Grenville                                                         | 54. PEI Coalition for a Poverty Eradication Strategy       |
| 29. Choices For Youth                                                                                     | 55. Prosper Canada                                         |
| 30. Colour of Poverty - Colour of Change                                                                  | 56. Right To Food                                          |
| 31. Daily Bread Food Bank                                                                                 | 57. Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton       |
| 32. Edmonton Social Planning Council                                                                      | 58. Social Planning Toronto                                |
| 33. Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO)                                                     | 59. Socialcommons.canada                                   |
| 34. Ending Sexual Violence Association of Canada                                                          | 60. South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario                    |
| 35. EveryMind Mental Health Services                                                                      | 61. South Asian Women's & Immigrants Services Inc          |
| 36. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph of Canada                                                         | 62. The Change Lab                                         |
| 37. First Call Child and Youth Advocacy Society                                                           | 63. The Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic (CSALC)   |
| 38. Grandmothers Act to Save the Planet (GASP)                                                            | 64. The Fed Family Lab                                     |
| 39. Hard Feelings Mental Health                                                                           | 65. Toronto & York Region Labour Council                   |
| 40. Inclusion Canada                                                                                      | 66. Toronto Community for Better Child Care                |
| 41. Income Security Advocacy Centre (ISAC)                                                                | 67. Treetop Children's Centre                              |
| 42. Jane/Finch Community and Family Centre                                                                | 68. Under One Sky Friendship Center                        |
|                                                                                                           | 69. UNICEF Canada                                          |



**FAMILY SERVICE TORONTO**  
For People. For Change.

**CAMPAGNE 2000**  
**METTONS FIN À LA PAUVRETÉ**  
**DES ENFANTS ET DES FAMILLES**

**CAMPAIGN 2000**  
**END CHILD & FAMILY**  
**POVERTY**

- 70. West Scarborough Community Legal Services
- 71. Women's National Housing & Homelessness Network
- 72. Workers' Action Centre
- 73. Working For Change
- 74. Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition
- 75. Yukon Food for Learning Association
- 76. YWCA Canada
- 77. YWCA Toronto