



Jimmy Pratt Foundation and Choices for Youth Release Report Card on Child and Family Poverty

September 29, 2025 (Newfoundland & Labrador) – Choices for Youth and the Jimmy Pratt Foundation are pleased to announce the release of the 2024 Newfoundland and Labrador Child and Family Poverty Report Card.

The release of the 2024 Newfoundland and Labrador Child Poverty Report Card marks the third year that Newfoundland and Labrador has joined the national initiative led by Campaign 2000 to demonstrate the reality of child poverty across the country.

The 2024 report draws on data from 2022 tax filings and the 2020 census to analyze child poverty across Newfoundland and Labrador. For the first time, the report incorporates insights and experiences shared by more than 100 community organizations, through consultations facilitated by the Community Sector Council of Newfoundland and Labrador, offering an on-the-ground perspective on child and youth poverty.

“This report is a call to action. Child poverty is rising in every province and territory, with Newfoundland and Labrador seeing the steepest increase among children under six. Poverty is a human rights issue,” says Kim Dreddy, Executive Director of Jimmy Pratt Foundation. “More than 100 organizations dedicated to supporting children and families have shed light on the pervasive impact of poverty in their communities, affecting education, socialization, health, and emotional well-being. Families urgently need a guaranteed income, affordable child care, housing, and transportation plus equitable support for Indigenous and newcomer communities.”

Key findings include:

- **25% of children under six in NL live in poverty** – the highest recorded in Canada. This is four points higher than the 21% reported last year. Racialized children experience poverty at **31%**, double the national rate of 15.5%.
- Housing and food insecurity are escalating. **Rents have risen 23.1% since 2020**, with vacancy rates at historic lows. In 2022, **26% of households reported food insecurity**, up from 19% in 2018. Families in rural and Indigenous communities face additional challenges due to transportation barriers, high food prices, and systemic discrimination.
- Youth mental health indicators have also raised alarms. Between 2015 and 2022, the proportion of youth who **rated their mental health as “very good” or “excellent”** **dropped by 35%**, compared to an average decline nationally, of 23%

The positive contributions of recent government initiatives, including the launch of a **three-year Poverty Reduction Strategy in 2023**, backed by a **\$41 million annual investment**, and expansion of the school food services and grocery gift card pilots are important steps toward addressing child and youth poverty in NL.

“Poverty is reshaping the environment in which the children and youth of Newfoundland and Labrador are growing up. Beyond lacking access to essentials like food and shelter, many children are experiencing a deeper sense of disconnection from their peers and communities, a reality echoed in the stories shared by organizations across the province,” says Nivethine Mahendran, Project Officer with Choices for Youth. “Newfoundland and Labrador’s children face some of the poorest mental health and well-being outcomes in the country. Despite these challenges, community organizations continue to work hard to meet the needs of vulnerable populations. With enhanced investments in strategic areas, such as a guaranteed basic income, community housing, and wrap-around services, our province can meaningfully address child and family poverty.”

Beginning March 2021, the Government of Canada has committed to allocating funding as part of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care agreement. This investment brings an estimated 800 million dollars over 10 years to Newfoundland and Labrador to support the reduction of fees for child care spaces down to an average of 10 dollars a day and create new early learning and child care spaces. There remain opportunities for continued progress, particularly in strengthening access to housing and wrap-around supports, early childhood education, and ensuring consistent, long-term funding for community organizations.

Read the [2024 NL Child and Family Poverty Report Card](#)

-30-

Media Contacts:

Katie Keats
Manager of Fund Development & Communications
Choices for Youth
kkeats@choicesforyouth.ca

Kim Dreddy
Executive Director
Jimmy Pratt Foundation
kim@jimmyprattfoundation.ca

Colin Corcoran
Chief Executive Officer
Community Sector Council of Newfoundland and Labrador
colin@cscnl.ca