

**NEWS EDITORS - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**BC'S CHILD POVERTY RATE STILL WORST IN CANADA FOR FIFTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR IN 2006**

British Columbia had the worst child poverty rate of any province in 2006 for the fifth consecutive year, Statistics Canada reported Monday.

The BC child poverty rate using Statistics Canada measures before income taxes rose to 21.9 percent, with 181,000 children living in poverty. The rate using after-tax measures rose to 16.1 percent, with 133,000 children living in poverty.

Michael Goldberg, provincial chairperson of First Call, the BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, urged the province to take the problem of child poverty seriously, rather than arguing that the current situation has improved markedly since the data were collected.

"We've heard that same old, tired, pointless argument from the provincial government year after year," he said. "It's time for the premier and the minister of employment and income assistance to start working to end child poverty rather than pretending it will go away on its own."

"It's also time for the official opposition to come forth with concrete ideas to fight poverty in addition to their announced commitment to raise the minimum wage. British Columbians shouldn't have to wait until the next election campaign to find out where the opposition stands."

First Call coordinating committee member Steve Kerstetter said the latest statistics are alarming whether you use the figures before income taxes or after taxes.

"How can anyone think allowing well over 100,000 children to live in poverty is acceptable public policy?" he said. "BC faces a challenge bigger than any other province, and it's time for the province to face that challenge."

The poverty statistics for 2006 do not include municipal poverty rates. However, detailed municipal information is available for 2005 in the census data released last week.

The list that follows has child poverty rates for every BC jurisdiction with a population of 10,000 or more. The areas mentioned are cities, towns or district municipalities.

The lowest child poverty rate in 2005 was the Greater Victoria municipality of Central Saanich, with a before-tax poverty rate of 5.1 percent. The highest rate was 31.4 percent in Richmond.

MUNICIPAL CHILD POVERTY RATES IN 2005		
Jurisdiction	Child Poverty Rate Before Income Taxes	Child Poverty Rate After Income Taxes
Abbotsford	16.7	11.7
Campbell River	21.6	13.5
Chilliwack	16.1	10.7
Coldstream	6.7	6.0
Comox	9.7	4.5
Courtenay	22.6	16.1
Cranbrook	19.2	12.0
Dawson Creek	13.0	7.1
Fort St. John	9.1	6.7
Kamloops	14.7	11.3
Kelowna	16.4	12.0
Lake Country	12.0	9.8

Mission	16.7	12.7
Nanaimo	21.6	15.5
North Cowichan	18.2	12.2
Parksville	17.8	15.7
Penticton	21.2	14.2
Port Alberni	24.2	11.9
Powell River	10.3	5.8
Prince George	18.0	12.7
Prince Rupert	29.6	22.5
Salmon Arm	12.4	8.5
Squamish	14.9	10.9
Summerland	11.8	10.1
Terrace	20.3	14.9
Vernon	22.7	15.6
Williams Lake	23.1	15.3
Within Greater Victoria:		
Central Saanich	5.1	4.6
Colwood	6.6	4.8
Esquimalt	21.9	17.5
Langford	11.0	9.5
North Saanich	9.6	7.6
Oak Bay	7.9	6.3
Saanich	12.9	9.3
Sidney	14.4	12.6
Sooke	16.4	9.4
Victoria	26.6	20.1
Within Greater Vancouver:		
Burnaby	29.2	24.4
Coquitlam	23.1	18.4
Delta	14.6	11.2
Langley (City)	22.9	17.9
Langley (DM)	10.6	7.9
Maple Ridge	17.9	13.5
New Westminster	21.7	18.2
North Vancouver (City)	22.5	19.7
North Vancouver (DM)	14.5	11.6
Pitt Meadows	14.6	10.0
Port Coquitlam	17.5	14.1
Port Moody	15.7	13.5
Richmond	31.4	26.0
Surrey	22.7	17.3
Vancouver	28.7	22.8
West Vancouver	19.5	17.5
White Rock	16.8	15.1

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For further information or to arrange an interview, please contact First Call.