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Child Poverty Remains High in Halton

Burlington – A new report from the Campaign 2000 coalition fighting child poverty states Ontario's child poverty remains high at 11.8% - that's 324,000 children.

In Halton, local Campaign 2000 partner Community Development Halton commented on the report.

"Here in Halton the latest information from the 2006 Census shows that our child poverty rate is 7.8%. Today we're in much more challenging economic times and we're concerned that child and family poverty in Halton will increase," said Dr. Joey Edwardh, Executive Director of Community Development Halton. "Residents of Halton are not immune to the job loss occurring in the financial and manufacturing sectors." She continued: "Unemployment, family separation and stress produces family and child poverty. Kids are poor because their parents are poor."

The Ontario Government has stated it will be announcing its Poverty Reduction Strategy in December, following extensive public consultation which included a meeting here in Oakville on June 27, 2008.

"We'll be looking closely at the Government's poverty reduction plan to see how it benefits people in Halton. At the community level there's a limit to how much we can do to solve poverty. Now, more than ever, we need the provincial and federal governments to step up to the plate with a solid plan and investments in the spring budget," said Dr. Edwardh.

Community Development Halton supports the recommendations of the 2008 Ontario Report Card on Child & Family Poverty from Campaign 2000. The report outlines five areas for the Ontario government to act: raise the minimum wage to \$11 by 2011 with indexation and develop a Good Jobs

For Immediate Release
November 21, 2008

Strategy; fix social assistance, increase and index rates to support people moving out of poverty; fund more affordable housing, child care spaces, and post-secondary education and training.

These measures should be part of a multi year Poverty Reduction Strategy with a target to cut poverty levels in Ontario by at least 25% over 5 years. This would mean lifting 80,000 children out of poverty across the province by 2012.

"We can and must reduce child and family poverty in our province. Quebec brought in a poverty reduction plan and cut their child poverty rate by 50% over ten years. If they can do it, Ontario can do it," said Dr. Edwardh

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For further comment please contact:

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To view the report, see www.campaign2000.ca/on/index.html



END CHILD & FAMILY POVERTY IN CANADA