




Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

June 2010



CANADA SOCIAL REPORT



The [Caledon Institute of Social Policy](#) regularly scans provincial and territorial government websites in order to follow policy and program developments related to our core work and interests. A partial list includes: disability, education, health, housing, income security, poverty reduction, recreation, seniors and youth. This tracking is intended to inform our analysis of policy trends. Monitors can be searched on the Canada Social Report website by date, jurisdiction and category.

Newfoundland and Labrador

HEALTH

Appointment of a new Provincial Mental Health and Addictions Advisory Council.

<http://www.releases.gov.nl.ca/releases/2010/health/0629n02.htm>

Nova Scotia

No updates this month.

New Brunswick

CHILDREN

Details released of 10 of 93 possible actions the provincial government will undertake in response to Hand-in-Hand: A Review of First Nations Child Welfare in New Brunswick (2009).

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/fcs/2010e0875sd.htm>

DISABILITIES

Launch of a new Disability Support Program, based upon the premise that every person with disabilities faces unique challenges. It provides individualized and flexible support to adults who have long-term disabilities to address their physical, social or mental health needs. Assistance could include home support, respite care, transportation, or assistive devices not covered under other programs. \$400,000 for a service capacity fund for the New Brunswick Disability Executives' Network whose members helped advise and develop the new program. NBDEN will develop criteria for the fund, determine how best to distribute it and design the accountability framework.

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/fcs/2010e0855sd.htm>

The Department of Social Development will provide \$288,800 a year to New Brunswick Association for Community Living for the next four years to hire four social inclusion facilitators to help persons with an intellectual disability seek supported living arrangements, to make connections to volunteer opportunities, build personal support networks and enhance community awareness about inclusion. The facilitators will be in the Edmundston/Grand Falls, Moncton, Fredericton and Bathurst regions.

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/fcs/2010e0873sd.htm>

Schools are becoming more accessible and responsive to students with special needs as a result of provincial investments in inclusive education.

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/edu/2010e0867ed.htm>

POVERTY REDUCTION

Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation expands – 22 members in all, three new members each from business, government and community and seven new members with lived experience of poverty. The board's



first tasks will include establishing local community inclusion networks and determining the details of prescription drug program for non-insured persons (program to be instituted by April 2012).

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/fcs/2010e1092sd.htm>

Hope is a Home is released – the first in a series of announcements focused on affordable housing and homelessness. It targets four development areas over the next five years, each with a set of objectives:

- reduce the core housing need in New Brunswick by 10 percent from the 10.3 percent identified in the 2006 Housing Census (Statistics Canada)
- significantly reduce chronic homelessness in New Brunswick
- improve the energy efficiency of housing occupied by low-income households
- ensure the transparent and effective delivery of provincial housing programs.

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/fcs/2010e1024sd.htm>

Stable funding will help shelter providers work with government departments and agencies, and nonprofit groups to help homeless individuals gain access to mental health, social assistance and supportive housing services. The province's emergency shelters will share \$250,000 this fiscal year, \$500,000 next year and \$750,000 in the third and subsequent years.

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/fcs/2010e1044sd.htm>

Efficiency NB has created a toolbox of resources to help municipalities and community groups educate residents about the importance and benefits of energy efficiency.

<http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/eec/2010e1035ee.htm>

Prince Edward Island

COMMUNITY

New Community Accounts system provides easy access to information such as: population by age and gender, population shifts, family structure, ethnic origin, mother tongue, household size and income, educational attainment, skills training, literacy levels, employment rates and health status.

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/finance/communityaccounts>

Québec

COMMUNITY

300 communities celebrate a fifth annual "Neighbours Day" on June 5 – modelled after French and European celebrations begun in 1999.

The original internet link to this item is no longer operational.

<http://fetedesvoisins.qc.ca/home.html>

Release of report *Adapter sa pratique professionnelle à l'égard des personnes handicapées*. The result of consultations with various professional groups and the *Conseil interprofessionnel du Québec*, it describes practices that must be adapted to better respond to the needs of people with disabilities.

https://www.ophq.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/centre_documentaire/Etudes_analyses_et_rapports/OPHQ_Rapp_AdapPratProfPH_Acc.pdf

POVERTY REDUCTION

Release of the province's social inclusion and poverty reduction plan for 2010-15. \$7 billion of investment in efforts to place a higher value on work, strengthen the social security net, protect the purchasing power of low-income residents and encourage greater regional and provincial mobilization of capacities. During phase one (2004-09), \$4.5 billion was invested, 208,000 less people were living on low incomes, social assistance levels dropped to their lowest since 1976 and 31 percent more revenue was available to families. Voluntary sector investment in housing and employment support will be important additions to the overall effort. Structural measures have been renewed including support for children, work benefit, adapted work benefit, the work benefit supplement and the annual review of minimum wage.

New measures include:

- construction of 3,000 additional social housing units and the renovation of low-income housing
- \$115 million to be raised by the Fonds quebécois d'initiatives sociales – a fund to finance projects that respond to regional priorities and realities
- increases in the Working Income Tax Benefit
- \$100 in monthly exemptions to mitigate rate increases and tax-exempt income in calculating child support benefits of last resort – to be coordinated with the Ministry of Education, Recreation and Sport.

http://www.mess.gouv.qc.ca/publications/pdf/ADMIN_Plan_de_lutte_2010-2015_en.pdf

SENIORS

\$20 million over five years to fund an awareness campaign about elder abuse. Initiatives include the installation of a telephone reference line, regional coordinators and the creation of a university research chair on the issue. The government will work with elder-focused organizations. *The original internet link to this item is no longer operational.*

<http://www.lapresse.ca/le-soleil/actualites/societe/201006/14/01-4289867-20m-contre-la-maltraitance-envers-les-aines.php>

Ontario

EDUCATION

\$2 million in the Southern Ontario Library Service and Ontario Library Service–North. Both agencies will support public libraries by offering electronic services, such as electronic databases. This type of access enhances local skills development, including the research and technology skills needed to succeed in a knowledge economy.

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/mcl/en/2010/06/strengthening-ontario-public-libraries.html>

SENIORS

New *Retirement Homes Act* received legislative approval (establishment of a regulatory authority, care and safety standards, and residents' rights).

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/oss/en/2010/06/stronger-protections-for-retirement-home-residents.html>

TRANSPORTATION

\$300 million for the Region of Waterloo to build rapid transit. The project includes light rail transit in both Waterloo and Kitchener, and bus rapid transit in Cambridge.

<http://www.news.ontario.ca/mto/en/2010/06/largest-transit-expansion-in-waterloo-history.html>

Manitoba

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

Canada's Supreme Court has ruled that the Crown has a legal duty to consult with Aboriginal peoples about any action or decision that might affect Aboriginal or treaty rights. Province invests \$5 million over five years in a new Crown-Aboriginal Consultation Participation Fund. Roundtable discussions on consultation and accommodation co-hosted by the province and the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs will strengthen the process for conducting Section 35 consultations with First Nations and other Aboriginal communities.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-06-01&item=8760>

DISABILITIES

A new video released by the Independent Living Resource Centre will help people with disabilities and their families better prepare for disasters (e.g., floods, wildfires, and electricity or gas outages during winter storms). The video includes a variety of formats including American Sign Language and captioning.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-06-01&item=8702>

EDUCATION

As part of All Aboard (poverty reduction strategy), \$660,000 for Student Success Initiative pilot project that will focus on supporting middle- and

high-school students to help them stay in school and graduate.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-06-01&item=8782>

FAMILIES

The Families First home visiting program has helped families develop stronger parenting skills and connect with community supports, according to a new evaluation report. The evaluation was based on data collected by home visitors and public health nurses between 2000 and 2007.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-06-01&item=8860>

HOUSING

\$7.5 million from the federal, provincial and municipal governments for four Aboriginal housing projects to provide affordable accommodation for Winnipeg's Aboriginal community.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-06-01&item=8944>

\$3 million in funding for two housing initiatives for Aboriginal people in Brandon.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-06-01&item=8945>

POVERTY REDUCTION

Winnipeg Regeneration Strategy (WRS) will be the blueprint for provincial efforts to revitalize the capital city. Building on Manitoba's investments under the recent tripartite Winnipeg Partnership Agreement and previous urban development agreements, the new five-year plan will concentrate on three priorities:

- Aboriginal capacity building to close the economic and social gap between urban Aboriginal people and other residents
- downtown renewal to encourage downtown living, identify and support key capital infrastructure projects and heritage preservation initiatives, and stimulate strategic social and economic initiatives in the downtown district
- development of inner-city resiliency to improve the physical, social, economic and environmental conditions and outcomes for the inner city through comprehensive approaches based on community economic development principles.

The first phase of the strategy began with provincial involvement in the recently launched, three-year \$20-million Downtown Residential Development Grant Program. Manitoba Budget 2010 includes \$3,428,000 under the Winnipeg Regeneration Strategy to assist successful programs formerly funded under the Winnipeg Partnership Agreement.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-06-01&item=8801>



\$575,000 for the transformation of a derelict Portage Avenue building into modern, multi-unit housing. City of Winnipeg will provide up to \$800,000 under the downtown economic development incentive grant for this project.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2010-06-01&item=8783>

Saskatchewan

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

The province released its First Nation and Métis Consultation Policy Framework. It outlines the process the government will use to fulfill its obligation to consult with First Nations and Métis communities on decisions or actions that may impact Treaty or Aboriginal rights.

The original internet link to this item is no longer operational.

<http://www.publications.gov.sk.ca/details.cfm?p=30532>

\$4,518,000 in 2010-11 to 35 community agencies offering community justice and Court worker programs, an increase of \$136,000 over the 2009-10 funding level. These community agencies provide alternatives to the court process, work with youth and assist Aboriginals accused through the court process.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

DISABILITIES

One-time capital funding of \$400,000 to the Saskatchewan Abilities Council to assist in the \$750,000 renovation of that organization's day-program facilities in Yorkton for people with intellectual disabilities. The funding is part of the province's four-year, \$76.9 million commitment to eliminate the waitlist of 440 Saskatchewan people with intellectual disabilities who require residential, day and specialized programs that meet their assessed needs.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

\$326,000 for affordable rental housing at two Wilkie Independent Living Services (WILS) group homes. The basement suites will help people with intellectual disabilities to live more independently and have access to occasional living supports.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

HEALTH

\$1.6 million in provincial and municipal funds for a 17-unit apartment building in a core neighbourhood of Saskatoon for singles and couples with mental illness.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

Effective July 1, dental implants will be covered in exceptional situations including tumours (benign and malignant) and congenital defects (cleft palate and metabolic disorders).

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

POVERTY REDUCTION

Province has approved Payday Loans Regulations to prohibit harmful lending practices (e.g., charging additional fees beyond the allowed interest rate, charging fees to prepay the loan before its due date, and lending more than 50 percent of the borrower's net pay during the term of the loan).

The original internet link to this item is no longer operational.

http://www.saskatoonhomepage.ca/payday-loan-regulations/itemid_21

Alberta

YOUTH

\$1.3 million for learning through the arts in Fort McMurray, \$75,000 for a comprehensive tool kit for improving the safety and security of residents of Wood Buffalo.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

British Columbia

EDUCATION

\$144 million and a new, six-step action plan will provide the 665 new classrooms needed to accommodate full-day kindergarten in September 2011. Full-day kindergarten will be available for up to 50 percent of children in 2010 and for every 5-year-old starting school in 2011.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010PR-EM0121-000700.htm

EMPLOYMENT

\$2 million in funding for an expanded SkillsPlus program. It brings essential skills training to the workplace, building them into everyday employee training and work practices.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010AL-MD0027-000773.htm

HOUSING

\$24.5 million to construct three new supportive housing developments in Nanaimo.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010HSD0059-000705.htm

INCOME SECURITY

Families with children under age 18 can now defer their property taxes at low interest rates through a new provincial program introduced in Budget 2010. To qualify, a person must have 15 percent equity in their home and be a BC resident who financially supports a child under age 18.

Eligible homeowners can defer all or part of the unpaid portion of their property taxes until they sell or transfer ownership of their home, or it becomes part of an estate. Interest will be charged on the deferred taxes at the bank prime rate of interest.

http://www2.news.gov.bc.ca/news_releases_2009-2013/2010FIN0029-000662.htm



Yukon Territory

EMPLOYMENT

Temporary wage subsidy introduced to encourage employers to hire people who have been unemployed for a long time or who are having difficulties entering the workforce. \$200,000 will be available for a maximum 26 weeks; participants must complete their work placements by March 31, 2011. The maximum subsidy per client will be 60 percent of the entry-level fair market wage for the job, and up to \$3,000 per client for costs associated with disabilities.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/2010/10-096.html>

POVERTY REDUCTION

Office of Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction is seeking input from citizens on their experiences with territorial programming in areas such as education, social assistance, shelters and employment. Sessions scheduled from May 31 to June 22.

<http://www.abetteryukon.ca/index.php>

Northwest Territories, Nunavut

No updates this month.