



Canada Social Report
Provincial/Territorial
Policy Monitor

January 2013



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

No releases this month.

Nova Scotia

INCOME SECURITY

The provincial minimum wage will rise by 1.5 percent on April 1, 2013, to \$10.30 an hour. The minimum wage for someone who has less than three months' experience will increase to \$9.80 an hour. Minimum wage increases now occur annually and are based on the previous year's national Consumer Price Index.

<http://novascotia.ca/news/release/?id=20130131004>

New Brunswick

CHILDREN

The province is investing \$52,000 in an After School Hours grant program which provides \$1,000 to successful applicants. The program supports fun, pro-social, affordable opportunities for all school children.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2013.01.0064.html

EMPLOYMENT

The province has created the One-Job Pledge initiative to help businesses create quality jobs and new opportunities for recent graduates. Under the program, businesses that qualify will receive a one-year wage incentive when they hire a permanent, full-time employee who graduated from a post-secondary institution in the past four years. These businesses must pay a minimum salary of \$14 per hour. The initiative will allow the reimbursement of 70 percent of the salary to a maximum \$10 per hour for 52 weeks.

http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/news_release.2013.01.0073.html

Prince Edward Island

EMPLOYMENT

Launch of the Workforce Development Fund, which is designed to support training solutions identified by private sector businesses and/or industry. A partnership between Skills PEI and Innovation PEI, the fund has three components:

- Workforce Learning: skills assessments for employees, skill gap analysis for industry and/or program development material
- Workforce Innovation: training costs, certification process costs and/or a portion of employee wages while participating in training
- Workforce Exposure: participant allowances/wages and/or a portion of employer-related cost.

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/newsroom/index.php?number=news&newsnumber=8765&dept=&lang=E>



Québec

No releases this month.

Ontario

ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

Working with Aboriginal partners, Ontario will develop a multi-year Aboriginal Children and Youth Strategy. It will focus on building community-driven, integrated and culturally appropriate supports to help Aboriginal children and young people grow up healthy and reach their potential. <http://news.ontario.ca/mcys/en/2013/01/taking-action-to-help-aboriginal-children.html>

EDUCATION

The province is making permanent its annual \$9.5 million funding of Pathways to Education Canada. Pathways offers academic, financial and social supports to high school students from low-income communities in Ottawa, Kitchener, Hamilton, Kingston and Toronto.

<http://news.ontario.ca/tcu/en/2013/01/helping-more-students-stay-in-school-and-graduate.html>

HEALTH

As of December 18, 2012, Ontario will update the Special Diet Allowance program to include people on social assistance who have Prader-Willi Syndrome or unintended weight loss due to chronic renal failure. This benefit will help affected individuals with the additional costs of a special diet. Eligibility is verified through an assessment by an approved medical professional.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mcss/en/2013/01/changes-to-the-special-diet-program.html>

POVERTY REDUCTION

Through the new Microlending for Women in Ontario program, six nonprofit organizations will receive funding to support 800 low-income women who are seeking to start their own business. Organizations will offer financial literacy training, entrepreneurial mentoring, skills development and life skills support. Women who become business ready through these programs will be eligible to receive small loans, or microloans, to start their own business. Close to 400 microloans will be given out across the province.

<http://news.ontario.ca/owd/en/2013/01/helping-women-entrepreneurs-succeed.html>

RECREATION

The Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund (which replaces the Healthy Communities Fund) is accepting applications for 2013-14. The fund helps local, regional, and provincial sport and recreation organizations to implement innovative programs and services that:

- increase opportunities for participation in sport and recreation

- educate Ontarians about the important role physical activity plays in their health
- provide training in areas such as coaching, youth development, and volunteer development.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mtc/en/2013/01/ontario-providing-more-opportunities-for-sport-and-recreation.html>

SENIORS

The province will implement many of the recommendations in the *Living Longer, Living Well* report over the coming months, starting with measures to:

- match every older Ontarian who wants one with a primary care provider through Health Links (the province's information system for seniors and others with complex conditions) and new physician incentives to care for high-needs patients
- improving access to home care by expanding personal support worker services through community support agencies for low-needs patients.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mohltc/en/2013/01/providing-better-care-for-older-ontarians.html>

Post-hospital, restorative care will be provided through 250 more short-stay beds in long-term care homes across the province – a 50 percent increase – helping about 1,500 seniors annually. This will help seniors who require additional care after hospital treatment to return home sooner. Other new investments include:

- training 200 personal support workers to help care for residents with dementia and challenging behaviours
- improving resident safety, quality of care and abuse prevention through new staff training and development
- providing specialized supplies and equipment for patients with complex needs.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mohltc/en/2013/01/helping-older-ontarians-get-home-sooner.html>

YOUTH

In response to the recently-released report from the Youth Leaving Care Working Group, the government is investing in new resources and supports for young people currently in or leaving the care of Children's Aid Societies, including:

- raising the minimum monthly financial support to youth ages 18 to 21 to \$850 – an increase of \$187
- providing \$500 per month to youth ages 21 to 25 enrolled in OSAP-eligible (Ontario Student Assistance Program) postsecondary



education and training programs

- introducing new mentorship opportunities for young people in care
- enhancing training for caregivers
- funding up to 50 new youth in transition workers to support young people leaving care.

<http://news.ontario.ca/mcys/en/2013/01/help-for-young-people-in-and-leaving-care.html>

Manitoba

CHILDREN

Manitoba's first children's advocacy centre opened in downtown Winnipeg. It provides children who are victims of serious abuse single location access to programs and professionals that can help them navigate the child protection and justice systems with minimal trauma. The children's advocacy centre model is proven to improve the collection of evidence, increase the number of charges laid, and lead to a higher rate of convictions and more stringent sentences for abusers. The provincial government is providing \$339,000 in ongoing annual funding to support the new centre, a non-profit community organization.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=month&item=16372>

GOVERNANCE

The province is providing new tools for municipalities as they develop their amalgamation plans in consultation with citizens. In the 2012 Speech from the Throne, the province announced that it would work with all municipalities to begin a process of municipal amalgamations. Manitoba municipalities were asked to identify potential partnerships by the end of January, commit to those partnerships by the end of March and finalize amalgamation plans by the end of this year.

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2013-1-01&item=16461>

EDUCATION

The province will increase funding for Manitoba schools by \$27.2 million or 2.3 percent in 2013. Highlights include:

- new resources for anti-bullying programs and continuing support for stay-in-school initiatives
- additional resources for numeracy to help students in early and middle years build strong foundational skills in math
- additional resources for early childhood literacy to help students get a strong start in reading
- increased supports for northern students and students from remote communities.\

<http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2013-1-01&item=16432>

Saskatchewan

No releases this month.

Alberta

HEALTH

The University of Alberta, University of Calgary and University of Lethbridge will each receive \$3 million in grant funding over three years to expand campus mental health services and develop models of care that can be used on campuses across Alberta. The Alberta Students Executive Council will receive \$1.5 million over three years to support all post-secondary students' associations in implementing mental health programs.

The \$10.5 million in funding will help expand campus mental health services through additional staff, including psychologists, physiologists, clinical social workers, physicians, psychiatric nurses, counsellors and mental health practitioners. Early initiatives include the development of mental health curriculum and the piloting of a mental health triage program. The grants will also pay for staff training on mental health issues.

<http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=3352944E370AE-F03F-0F4A-22170BF973A0B317>

RECREATION

Lethbridge will host the Alberta 55 Plus Winter Games in 2015. The games provide an opportunity for Albertans age 55 years and older to compete in a province-wide winter sports competition. Formerly called the Alberta Seniors Games, the event is coordinated by the Alberta Sport, Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation in partnership with the Alberta 55 plus Association.

<http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=335163AF-C1D64-D779-26E2-B60EBDC7BBA19F6E>

SENIORS

The province is providing \$70,800 to the University of Alberta, the Alberta Association of Seniors Centres and the Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton to carry out a year-long study. The research will look at ways to ensure seniors' centres are financially sustainable and are able to offer the programs and services required by the growing seniors' population needs.

<http://alberta.ca/release.cfm?xID=335515DDC6F-BE-928D-98A0-782A38CDF89393C3>

British Columbia

No releases this month.

Yukon Territory

CHILDREN

The Yukon government is partnering with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection in order to promote and distribute a number of the centre's



programs and educational materials. Starting in 2012-13, the government will contribute \$75,000 over three years to the centre and will explore further partnership opportunities.

The Canadian Centre for Child Protection is a charitable organization dedicated to the personal safety of children. Its goal is to reduce child victimization by providing the following programs and services:

- Cybertip.ca – a tipline to address the online sexual exploitation of children
- MissingKids.ca – a missing children resource and response centre
- Kids in the Know – an interactive child safety education program
- Commit to Kids – a sexual abuse prevention program for child serving organizations.

<http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/13-011.html>

Nunavut

HOUSING

The territorial government announced changes to the Public Housing Rent Scale that are aimed reducing disincentives to employment and supporting the goals of poverty reduction:

- rent will be assessed on the income of the two primary leaseholders only
- the new method for calculating rent is based on a step scale that is similar to federal income tax
- the minimum rent threshold will be indexed to Nunavut's minimum wage
- Elders will only pay rent on the portion of their income over their community's Core Need Income Threshold (CNIT). Currently, Elders over CNIT are assessed rent on their full income
- maximum rents are to be reviewed to encourage tenants over-CNIT to transition out of public housing.

The internet link to this item is no longer operational.

Northwest Territories

No releases this month.