

We believe in a poverty-free Ontario.
A place where everyone can live in dignity
and enjoy a good standard of living.

Action on **Poverty Reduction. It starts with a plan.**

The Government of Ontario is committed to a Poverty Reduction Strategy with targets and measures to ensure “opportunity that is accessible to all.” (Throne Speech, November 2007)

We are asking our government for a plan to reduce Ontario poverty levels by 25% in 5 years and by 50% before 2018. We call this the ‘25-in-5’ campaign.

Poverty reduction makes social and economic sense. We believe in an inclusive Ontario, where everyone can develop their talents and contribute to thriving communities. We want a province with a vibrant economy and shared prosperity.

Serious action on poverty reduction is possible. The U.K. has reduced poverty by nearly 25% in the past 5 years. Quebec, as well as Newfoundland & Labrador, both have ambitious plans to tackle poverty. *It’s Ontario’s turn.*

For Ontario, it starts with a plan. A plan that brings hope and shared prosperity for **all** Ontarians: *in urban neighbourhoods; in rural communities; among Aboriginal peoples; within racialized and newcomer communities; among single female parents; and persons with disabilities.*

We call on leadership from the Province, working with all orders of government. Working with all sectors and especially with people living on low incomes, we can create opportunities, remove barriers and provide supports so that all Ontarians can live with dignity.

Ontario’s poverty reduction plan should address three priorities:

1. **Sustaining employment** means assuring a living standard above poverty for any adult who works full time throughout the year. It means fair pay and stable working conditions for all Ontarians.
2. **Livable incomes** mean dignity for all Ontarians — including those unable to work.
3. **Strong and supportive communities** mean affordable housing, early learning and child care, public education and community programs that help people connect.

25-in-5: Network for Poverty Reduction includes more than 100 provincial organizations and people committed to action on eliminating poverty.

For more
information visit
www.25in5.ca

**25 in 5: Network for
Poverty Reduction**



An action plan for our provincial government

The Ontario government should outline its concrete multi-year plan for investing in these **3 priorities**:

1

Sustaining employment Full time work should lift Ontarians out of poverty. Rights must be protected in the workplace. All Ontarians should have coverage for dental, drug and vision care.

How to get there?

- Poverty-proof the **minimum wage** for full time earners.
- Update and enforce **employment standards** for all workers.
- Create strong **employment and pay equity** programs.
- Expand access to **dental, drug, and vision** coverage.
- Make **training and education** real, meaningful and easy to access.
- Call on Ottawa to enrich the **Working Income Tax Benefit**.

2

Livable incomes All Ontarians deserve good living standards. Parents deserve the resources they need to raise their children in safety and love – free of the fear and stigma of poverty. Our financial institutions and services should help safeguard our living standards, not prey on the most vulnerable.

How to get there?

- Close the gap between life on **social assistance** and moving out of poverty.
- Make it easier for people with disabilities to get access to the **Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP)**.
- Enrich the **Ontario Child Benefit**. Remove rules that claw benefits back from people on social assistance.
- Tighten the regulation of **payday lending** and other financial services.
- Call on Ottawa to expand coverage of **Employment Insurance (EI)** and enrich the **Canada Child Tax Benefit**.

3

Strong and supportive communities Ontario should be a province of inclusion and opportunity – for all.

How to get there?

- Make **housing** easier to afford. Build it to suit to people's needs. Keep it in good repair.
- Make **early learning and child care** both universal and affordable.
- Build a **public education** system that focuses on equitable outcomes.
- Fund vibrant **community-based programs** that connect and enrich us.
- Support **public and community transit**. Improve access. Make it affordable.

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What you can do about poverty reduction

How to be a part of the 25-in-5 solution:

TALK ABOUT IT Talk to your friends and family about these priorities and plans. Are there other actions that would help make things better where you are? E-mail your views to us at **25in5@cpsc.toronto.on.ca**.

SIGN UP for the government's poverty reduction consultation process. Log on to **www.25in5.ca** and follow the links to tell Minister Matthews that you want to be part of the discussion or write to:

Hon. Deborah Matthews, Minister for Ontario's Poverty Reduction Plan
Ministry of Children and Youth Services
14th Floor, 56 Wellesley St. W.
Toronto ON M5S 2S3
Tel : 416-212-2278 TTY 1-800-387-5559
dmatthews.mpp@liberal.ola.org

Make sure to copy us at **25in5@cpsc.toronto.on.ca** so that we can keep track of the number of requests. The more people who take part in these consultations, the better!

URGE the government to set the goal of at least 25% reduction in poverty in 5 years and at least 50% reduction by 2018. Share this with Minister Matthews at the address above. E-mail your thoughts to Premier McGuinty at **dmcguinty.mpp@liberal.ola.org** or call his office at 416-325-1941 or TTY 416-325-7702.

SEND the 25-in-5 declaration to your Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP). Better yet, get a group in your community to meet with your MPP. Tell your MPP that you support 25-in-5 and that you expect the government's Poverty Reduction Strategy to be comprehensive and bold. Tell them you expect the consultation process to be inclusive and focused on solutions. You can get your MPP's contact information from **www.ontla.on.ca**.

SPREAD THE WORD Build support in your community for poverty reduction. Talk to your city councillor, Chamber of Commerce, union, faith group, school board, public health department and any other groups you can think of. Hold a meeting in your neighbourhood and pass out the 25-in-5 declaration. Start a poverty reduction working group in your community. And, **please tell us** how you are using this information to get a discussion going.

GET INVOLVED in poverty reduction activities already underway in your area. Visit **www.25in5.ca** or find us on **www.facebook.com** to link up.

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