

225986 Montani SDPR Response

SDPR Deputy Minister SDPR:EX SDPRDM@gov.bc.ca

To: Adrienne Montani adrienne@firstcallbc.org

Fri 2025-03-07 2:03 PM

Cc: OfficeofthePremier, Office PREM:EX <Premier@gov.bc.ca>

Ref: 225986

Adrienne Montani
Executive Director
First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition
adrienne@firstcallbc.org

Dear Adrienne Montani:

Thank you for your email of February 19, 2025, addressed to the Honourable David Eby, Premier, regarding First Call's 2024 BC Child Poverty Report Card. Your correspondence was forwarded to the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, and as Deputy Minister, I am pleased to respond.

First, I would like to commend First Call for its hard work and long-standing dedication to improving the lives and wellbeing of children and youth living in poverty in BC. I would also like to use this opportunity to thank you for your continued contributions to the Poverty Reduction Advisory Committee. The feedback you provide is vital.

Although Government has made significant progress towards reducing poverty in BC, we know that there is much more work to do.

As of 2022 (the latest available data), BC has reduced the overall poverty rate by 27.5 per cent and the child poverty rate by 36.8 per cent (based on 2016 Market Basket Measure levels). This means that there are 163,000 fewer people in poverty, including 50,000 children.

As you've noted, the ending of temporary COVID-19 pandemic benefits and unusually high global inflation have resulted in an increase in poverty rates.

In July 2024, BC released its updated [Poverty Reduction Strategy \(PRS\)](#), which outlines eight cross-government, critical action areas to help break the cycle of poverty.

We appreciate the insight and advice you provided in the development in the strategy. Many of the report's recommendations closely align with the PRS—for example, continuing to prioritize and invest in childcare, increasing access to affordable housing, and exploring options to update our British Columbia Employment and Assistance program.

The PRS also includes new, updated 10 years targets to reduce the overall poverty rate by 60 per cent, the child poverty rate by 75 per cent, and the seniors' poverty rate by 50 per cent.

I look forward to continuing to work with First Call as our government continues to make meaningful changes to reduce child and youth poverty in our province.

Thank you again for taking the time to write to share your report card and recommendations.

Sincerely,

Allison Bond
Deputy Minister

cc: Honourable David Eby, Premier