

Ontario's Poverty Reduction Strategy Indicators

The Strategy's indicators measure outcomes that are either indicative of the state of poverty in Ontario today or that are proven risk factors that increase a person's chances of experiencing poverty later in life.

Data for all indicators are measured and reported on an annual basis except for #4. Current and historical data can be found at:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/poverty-reduction-strategy-annual-report-2016>, including more detailed descriptions of the results and what they mean.

1. Child Poverty Target (PRS Fixed Low Income Measure 50 or "LIM-50")

Why it matters: Children living in poverty are less likely to perform well in school and grow up to find stable employment, and are more likely to experience physical and mental health issues. The government set a target in 2008 to reduce child poverty by 25 percent in five years.

Measure: The percentage of children living in households where income is below 50% of median income, adjusted for family size. Fixed to a base year of 2008 and adjusted for inflation.

Poverty thresholds: LIM 50 for a 2 person household in 2013 was \$28,512; for 3 people it was \$34,920

Source: Ministry of Finance, based on Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey.

2. Depth of Poverty (PRS Fixed Low Income Measure 40, or "LIM-40")

Why it matters: Children living in deep poverty are among the most vulnerable and face the most barriers to exiting poverty.

Measure: The percentage of children living in households where income is below 40% of median income, adjusted for family size. Fixed to a base year of 2008 and adjusted for inflation.

Poverty thresholds: LIM40 for a 2 person household in 2013 was \$22,810; for 3 people it was \$27,937

Source: Ministry of Finance, based on Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey.

3. Birth Weight

Why it matters: Babies born to low-income families are more likely to be below or above normal weight, and babies with birth weights outside the normal range may face risk factors that can increase their chances of poverty later in life.

Measure: Percentage of newborns born at what is considered to be a healthy weight

Source: Better Outcomes Registry and Network, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario.

4. School Readiness

Why it matters: Children have a better chance to succeed as students and later in life when they attend school ready to learn.

Measure: The Early Development Instrument (EDI) measures the percentage of children aged five to six who demonstrate they are on track across five domains of child development and are ready to learn at school.

Source: Offord Centre for Child Studies.

5. Educational Progress

Why it matters: Students who achieve early success in school are more likely to continue to perform well academically, go on to postsecondary education and secure meaningful employment.

Measure: Percentage of students in Grades 3 and 6 who score in the highest two levels on province-wide reading, writing and math tests.

Source: Education Quality and Accountability Office.

6. High School Graduation Rates

Why it matters: Students who graduate high school are more likely to find meaningful employment and will have greater earning potential throughout their lives compared to those who do not graduate.

Measure: Percentage of students entering high school at the same time who graduate within five years of having started Grade 9.

Source: Ontario School Information System.

7. Ontario Housing Measure

Why it matters: Children without a stable place to call home are less likely to succeed in school and may experience stress and other mental health challenges.

Measure: Percentage of households with children under 18 that have incomes below 40 percent of the median household income and spend more than 40 percent of their income on housing.

Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, based on Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey.

8. Youth Not in Education, Employment or Training

Why it matters: Young people who are not in school or training and who do not have a job are at risk of becoming stuck in a cycle of poverty.

Measure: Percentage of young people aged 15-29 who are not in education, employment or training.

Source: Ministry of Finance, based on Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

9. Long-Term Unemployment

Why it matters: A person's ability to find a job becomes increasingly difficult the longer that they remain unemployed, making it difficult to overcome poverty.

Measure: Percentage of adults in the labour force aged 25-64 who have been unemployed for 27 weeks or more.

Source: Ministry of Finance, based on Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

10. Poverty Rates of Vulnerable Populations

Why it matters: Vulnerable populations represent more than half of the people in Ontario living in poverty.

Measure: Percentage of adults in five populations considered to be vulnerable who have a household income of less than half the median. The vulnerable groups include: newcomers, persons with disabilities, female lone parents, unattached individuals aged 45 to 64 and Indigenous people living off-reserve.

Source: Ministry of Finance, based on Statistics Canada, Canadian Income Survey.

11. Homelessness Indicator

Why it matters: This indicator will track progress on our goals to eliminate chronic homelessness in Ontario in 10 years.

Measure: The indicator is defined as the rate of chronic homelessness per 10,000 people.