



## **Children challenge 25-year old broken government promise**

**OTTAWA, Nov. 5, 2014.....**There are always multiple pressures on the economy and political agenda, but 25 years later, why has the promise not been kept to end child poverty? Twenty-fifth anniversaries are times for celebration, but this anniversary of failure has prompted a renewed program by children, for children with children to seek answers from government at a Summit in Ottawa, November 18-19, 2014, and to ask The House to re-commit to a concrete plan.

KEEP THE PROMISE (KTP) is an innovative, inter-generational initiative launched in 2013 to re-ignite public commitment to the 1989 unanimous motion in the House of Commons to end child poverty in Canada by 2000. In fact, since that time, child poverty has increased.

This renewed initiative will provide children and youth an opportunity to learn about the impact of child poverty and to give voice to their ideas/solutions to solve it. Within a very few years, many of them will be of voting age. What will they be thinking as they cast their ballots?

Young people from across Canada will gather in Ottawa to attend workshops and participate in a Town Hall with invited members of Parliament to discuss child poverty, and ask them why more than 3.5 million Canadians, nearly 10%, still live in poverty. And, why, of the 6,871,000 children in Canada, 1,168,000 are living in poverty-- that's 17%. And, 40% of the indigenous population in Canada are children living in poverty--that's 171,000 children. At least 10% of the 200,000 homeless in Canada are kids, and of the 527,000 immigrant and refugee children in Canada, 174,000 live in poverty -- that's 33%.

It's a moral issue; Canada is better than this. Nearly 1 in 7 children still live in poverty and there is no national strategy to end this condition.

According to KTP Co-Chairs, Mary-Jo Leddy, OC (Founder of Romero House, Toronto) and Arthur Bielfeld, CM, (Rabbi Emeritus, Temple Emanu-El, Toronto), KTP is grounded in the conviction that the best advocates for children are other children who have a basic sense of fairness.

Thanks to our partnership with the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF), teachers in selected schools across Canada are engaging their students in thinking about these issues of child poverty, human rights and social justice.

In 2015/16, Canada projects a budget surplus of \$7.78 billion, the equivalent of seven F-35 jet fighters. The surplus means that the federal government will have the ability to honour the 1989 promise, supported unanimously by all members in the House of Commons. It's a question of political will.

KTP is supported by the CTF, Campaign 2000/Family Service Toronto, the Children's Aid Society of Toronto, First Nations Child & Family Caring Society and the Canadian Association of Jews & Muslims, among others.

For more information, visit the KTP web site at [www.keepthepromise.ca](http://www.keepthepromise.ca) - Follow on Twitter @KTPCanada #KTPCanada

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**Note for media:**

Backgrounder, Fact Sheets, Biographies, Photos and other resource materials are available at [www.keepthepromise.ca/resources-page](http://www.keepthepromise.ca/resources-page)