

## Where are you on the Deprivation Index?

December 02, 2009

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One in eight Ontario children is living in poverty, according to a [new provincial measure released Wednesday](#) that looks at whether families can afford items on a list of basic necessities.

Families not able to afford two or more items from a list of 10 indicators on the Ontario Deprivation Index are considered as "having a poverty level standard of living," the McGuinty government says in its first annual report on Ontario's poverty reduction strategy.

### **The indicators are:**

Do you eat fresh fruit and vegetables every day?

Are you able to get dental care if needed?

Do you eat meat, fish or a vegetarian equivalent at least every other day?

Are you able to replace or repair broken or damaged appliances such as a vacuum or a toaster?

Do you have appropriate clothes for job interviews?

Are you able to get around your community, either by having a car or by taking the bus or an equivalent mode of transportation?

Are you able to have friends or family over for a meal at least once a month?

Is your house or apartment free of pests, such as cockroaches?

Are you able to buy some small gifts for family or friends at least once a year?

Do you have a hobby or leisure activity?

In 2009, 12.5 per cent of Ontario children were lacking two or more items.

That's slightly higher than the 11.7 per cent of children in families living below the 2007 Low Income Measure (LIM), which is 50 per cent of the median provincial income after tax.

The indicators are not intended to be a comprehensive list, but rather a sample of items that are common to most Ontarians but out of reach for poor households.

"Fighting poverty means looking beyond income and examining the realities of life for our most disadvantaged families and children," says the report.

"The Ontario Deprivation Index is a new measure that tells us how the Poverty Reduction Strategy is ensuring more families can afford a standard of living that many Ontarians take for granted."

Deprivation indexes are used along with income measures to track poverty in Ireland, the United Kingdom and Australia.

Ontario is believed to be the first jurisdiction in North America to adopt a deprivation index.

Its list was developed by Daily Bread Food Bank and the Caledon Institute of Social Policy through surveys and focus groups. Data was collected in March and April this year by Statistics Canada through the Labour Force Survey.

As with the income indicators, the next Deprivation Index data for Ontario will be 18 to 24 months behind.