



FAITH COMMUNITIES IN
ACTION AGAINST POVERTY



Poverty Free Ontario
Pulling poverty out by the roots

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

8:00 AM, Thursday, September 15, 2011

From Cornwall to Windsor, from Sudbury to Fort Erie
“LET’S VOTE FOR A POVERTY FREE ONTARIO”

Election-style signs are going up in communities across Ontario this morning, as a coalition of faith groups and community-based organizations call for making poverty eradication a priority concern in the provincial election campaign.

The Social Planning Network of Ontario (SPNO) and the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC) are co-sponsoring Poverty Free Ontario (PFO) as a non-partisan initiative to urge all political parties and electoral candidates to make a commitment for ending poverty in Ontario in this decade. The press conference in Toronto with various religious leaders will ask the provincial political party leaders to commit to a debate on poverty.

Media conferences being held simultaneously in up to 16 communities on Thursday morning, September 15 will be followed by a “sign blitz” as teams of local supporters place “*Let’s Vote for a Poverty Free Ontario*” signs on the grounds of participating organizations and individuals throughout their communities. A list of participating communities and contacts is attached to this release.

“Ontario’s poverty rate stands at 13.1%, the highest level in the last thirty years,” says Peter Clutterbuck, PFO Coordinator for the SPNO, “Community members and civic organizations in touch daily with the intolerable living conditions of low income Ontarians recognize that ending poverty is a major political issue. For example, in Cornwall, City Council has proclaimed September 15 as Poverty Free Ontario Day.”

“Leaders and communities from all faith traditions across the province are joining in this public and political awareness campaign,” states Michael Skaljin, Executive Director of ISARC, “Poverty amidst the wealth of our province even in harder economic times is morally indefensible and we expect that political parties and candidates running for office would not only publicly acknowledge the issue but make clear proposals about how to reduce and eliminate it within this decade.”

Poverty Free Ontario urges members of the public to ask candidates during the election campaign what they and their party will do to make a serious effort to end poverty in the province if they are elected.



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The Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition is a provincial network of faith groups dedicated to faith-based approaches to public policy reform in the areas of social justice and poverty elimination. www.faithtoendpoverty.ca

Poverty Free Ontario is an initiative of the **Social Planning Network of Ontario (SPNO)** working with local community groups across the province www.povertyfreeontario.ca

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Media Contacts:

Peter Clutterbuck, SPNO, 416-738-3228 and 416-653-7947, pclutterbuck@spno.ca

Bruce Sudds, ISARC, 416-931-3643, media@isarc.ca

[See list of participating communities attached]



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September 15, 2011

***Cross-Community Contact List
for September Election Events/Activities***

Belleville:

Community Forum on a Poverty Free Ontario
and sign blitz launch

10:00 AM, Monday, Sept. 12

New Hope Christian Fellowship

151 Cloverleaf Dr. West, Belleville

Contact:

Ruth Ingersoll

Community Development Council of Quinte
613-968-2466

ruth@cdcquinte.com

Cambridge:

Media conference and sign blitz launch

9:45 AM Thursday, Sept. 15

Forward Baptist Church, 455 Myers Road,

Cambridge

Contact:

Linda Terry

Laura VanderGriendt

519-623-1713

laura@socialplanningcouncil-cnd.org

Cornwall:

Launch of sign blitz (Sept. 8) and week long
program of community activities including All-
Candidates meeting and community concert.

Contact:

Michelle Gratton

Social Development Council of Cornwall &
Area

613-930-0211

mgratton@sdccornwall.ca

Kingston:

Media conference (**11:15 AM**) to launch PFO sign
blitz campaign followed by a silent vigil (**12:15
PM**), **Friday, Sept. 16 Sir John A. MacDonald Rm.,
Kingston City Hall**

Contact:

Jamie Swift [613\) 544-4525 ext.
144](tel:6135444525), jamie.swift@providence.ca

Tara Kainer [613\) 544-4525 ext.
113](tel:6135444525), tara.kainer@providence.ca

Justice, Peace and Integrity Creation Office,
Sisters of Providence

Kitchener-Waterloo:

Media panel launching the Sign Blitz

12 noon Thursday, Sept. 15,

First United Church, 16 William St W,

Waterloo. All-Candidates meetings on Sept.
15.

Contact:

Elisha MacWhirter

[519-579-1096](tel:5195791096)

elisha@waterlooregion.org.

Oakville:

Media conference with leaders from the
Interfaith Council of Halton, Voices for Change
Halton and the Halton Poverty Roundtable

10:00 AM Thursday, Sept. 15

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

304 Spruce Street, Oakville

Contact:

Pastor Daniel Phannenhour,

Interfaith Council, 905-845-1563



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Oshawa:

Short prayer vigil and media conference to launch a sign blitz

6:15 PM Thursday, Sept. 15

St. George's Memorial Anglican Church in downtown Oshawa, at the corner of Athol and Centre Streets (just east of Oshawa City Hall)

Contact:

Rev. Ted Glover

905-723-2533

tedglover@sympatico.ca

Parry Sound:

Contact:

Alex Chidley,

Chair, District of Parry Sound Poverty Reduction Network

achidley@cogeco.ca

Tami Boudreau

District of Parry Sound Poverty Reduction Network

705-389-3210

tamiboudreau@hotmail.com

Peel:

Contact:

Andre Lyn

Social Planning Council of Peel

905-629-3044

Atlyn35@hotmail.com

Port Colborne-Fort Erie:

Media conference to launch Sign Blitz

9:30 AM, Thursday, Sept. 15

Bridges Community Health Centre - Port Colborne Site

177 King Street, Port Colborne

Contact:

Mary Anne Feagan,

Bridges Community Health Worker

905-871-7621 x2246

Sault Ste. Marie:

Media conference to launch Sign Blitz dramatic performance of a play on homelessness

10:00 AM, Thursday, Sept. 15

Soup Kitchen Community Centre

172 James St., Sault Ste. Marie

Contact:

Precious Cedolia

705-943-5604

PA_Cedolia@shaw.ca

Sudbury:

Contact:

Annette Reszczynski

Social Planning Council of Sudbury

705-675-3894

areszczynski@spscudbury.ca

Toronto:

Interfaith media conference to launch Sign Blitz

9:30 AM, Thursday, Sept. 15

The Cathedral Church of St. James

65 Church St., Toronto

Contact:

Bruce Sudds

Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition

416-931-3643

media@isarc.ca

Welland:

Media conference to launch Sign Blitz and announce evening vigil

Thursday, Sept. 15

St. Kevin's Catholic Church, 307 Niagara St.,

Welland

Contact:

Fr. Jim Mulligan

905-735-5885

jtmulligan@stkevin.on.ca



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maryanne.feagan@bridgeschc.ca

Windsor:

Media Conference on Poverty Free Ontario

10:30 AM, Thursday, Sept. 15

All Saints' Anglican Church (330 City Hall Square W.)

Contact:

Adam Vasey

Pathway to Potential

519-966-8203 ext. 224

avasey@cogeco.net

York Region:

Media launch of Sign Blitz

10:30 AM, Thursday, Sept. 15

at Inn From The Cold Building

510 Penrose Street, Newmarket

Call (905)967-0428 ext 205 and ask for Adam for more details.

Contact:

Pat Taylor, Co-Chair of the Social Planning Council of York Region

905-503-0292

patricia.taylor@rogers.com

Tom Pearson, Chair, Poverty Action for Change Coalition (PACC)

289-221-0928

Provincial Contacts:

Peter Clutterbuck

Social Planning Network of Ontario

416-653-7947 cell 416-738-3228

pclutterbuck@spno.ca

Michael Skaljin

Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition

647-210-2620

execdirector@isarc.ca

Web Sites:

www.povertyfreeontario.ca

www.faithtoendpoverty.ca