



Child Poverty and the Child Care Solution

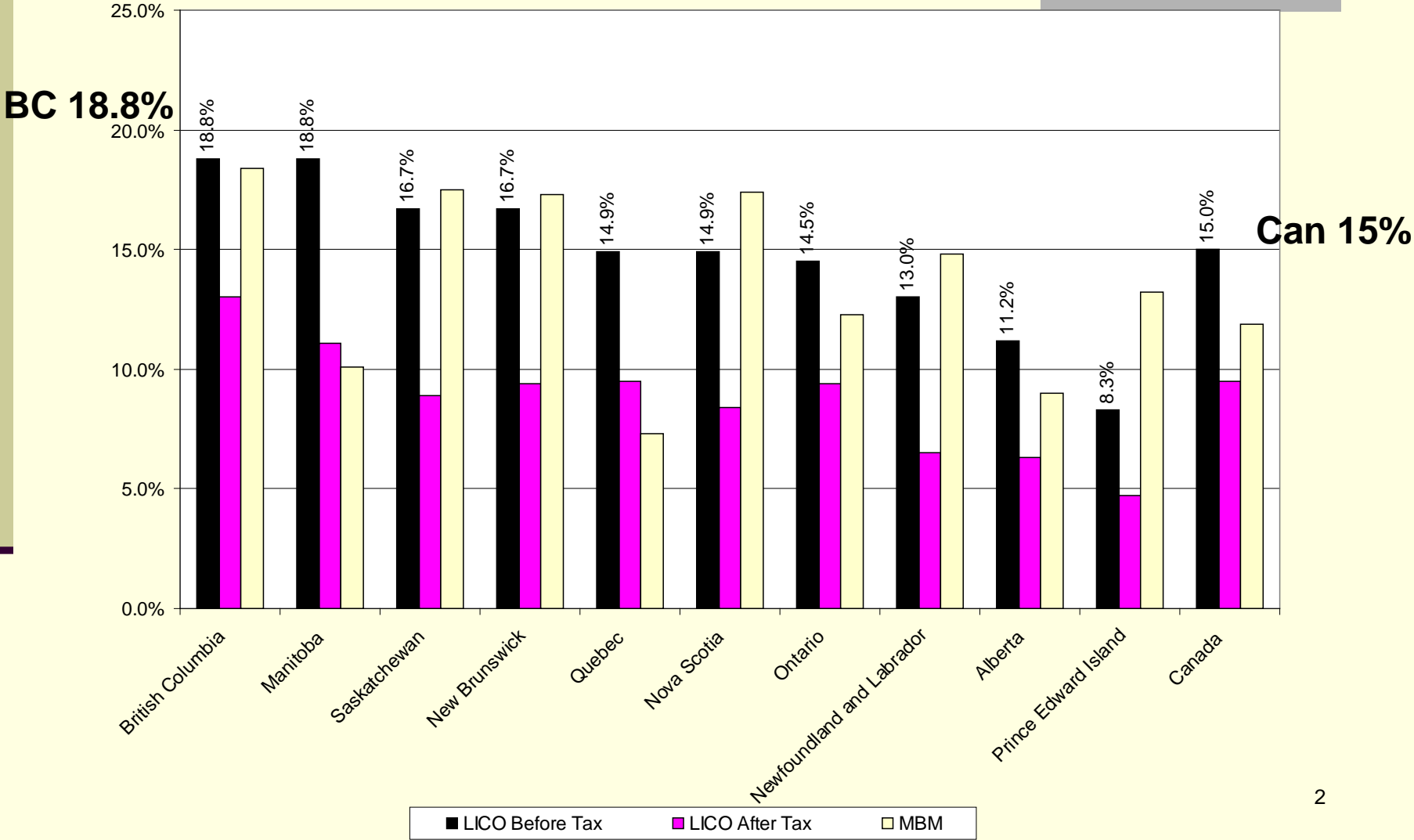
Presentation by Adrienne Montani, Provincial Coordinator

First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition

To CUPE Child Care Forum

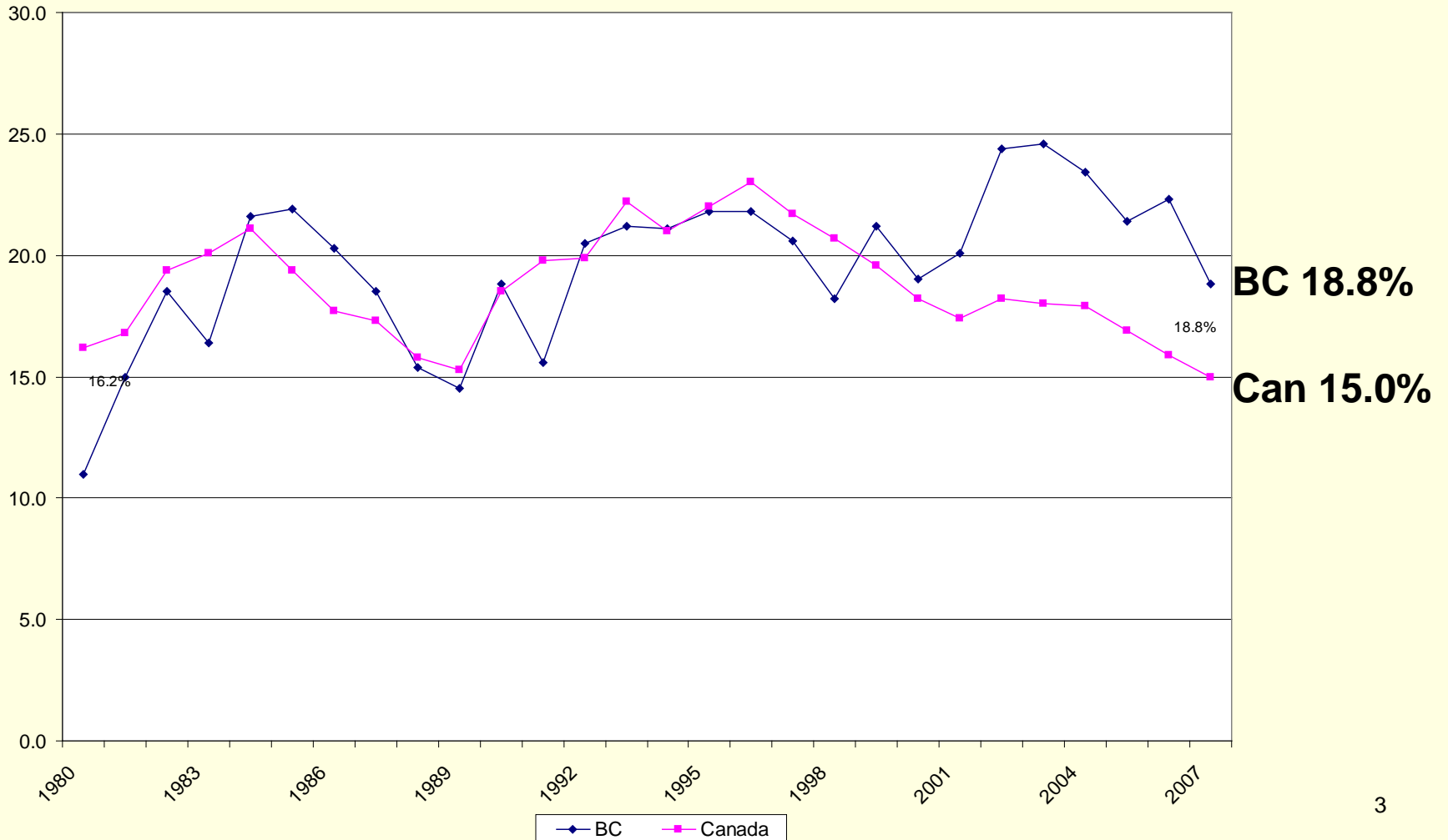
November 24, 2009

Child Poverty Rates by Province 2007, 3 Measures



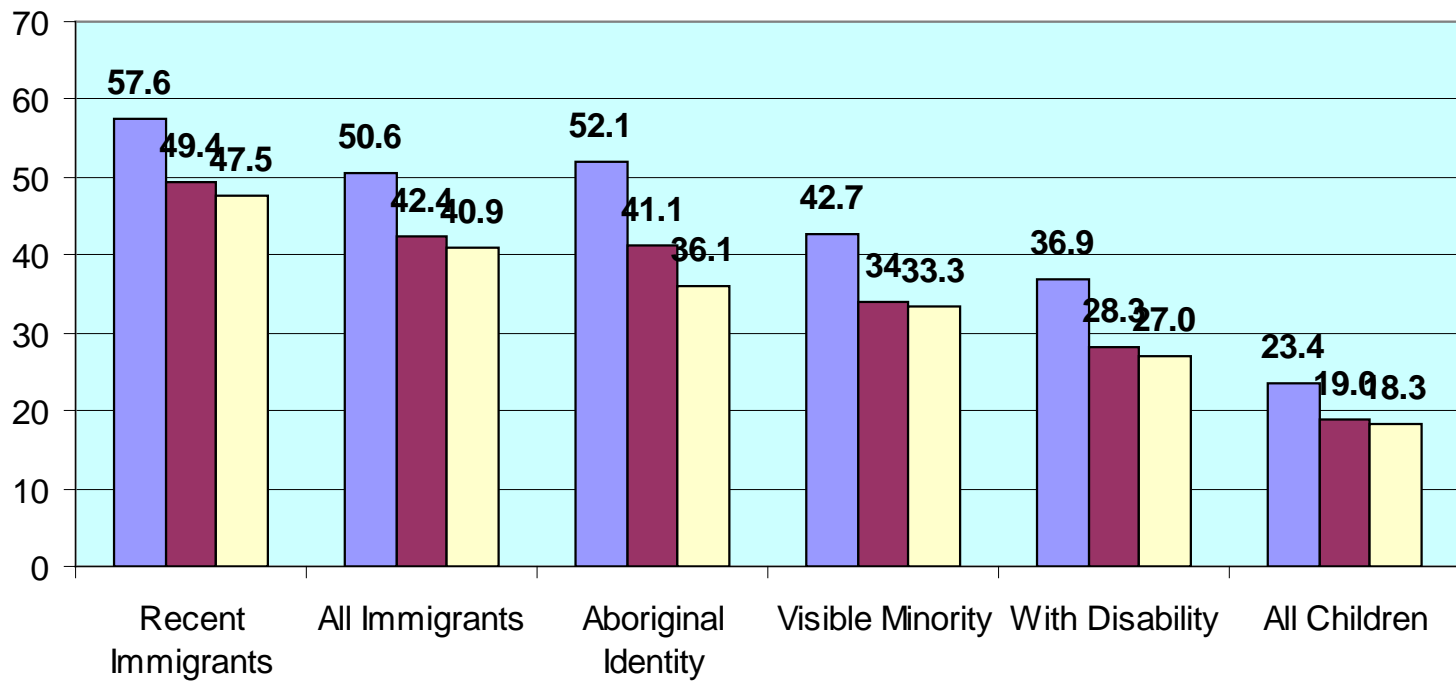
Child Poverty Over the Years, 1980-2007

(LICOs Before Tax)



Particularly Vulnerable Groups

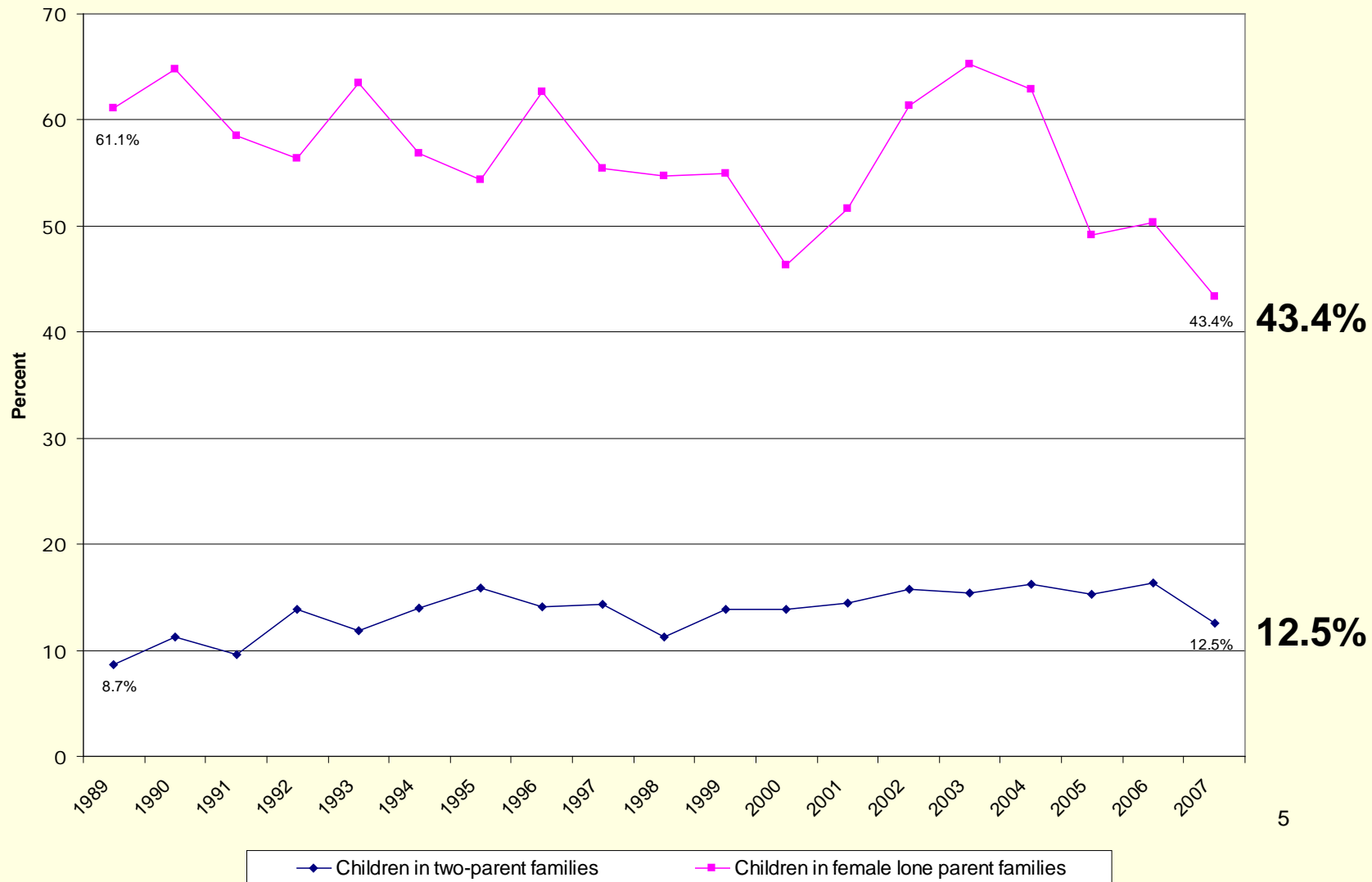
Child Poverty Rates for Select Social Groups for Children 0-14 in Canada, 1995-2005



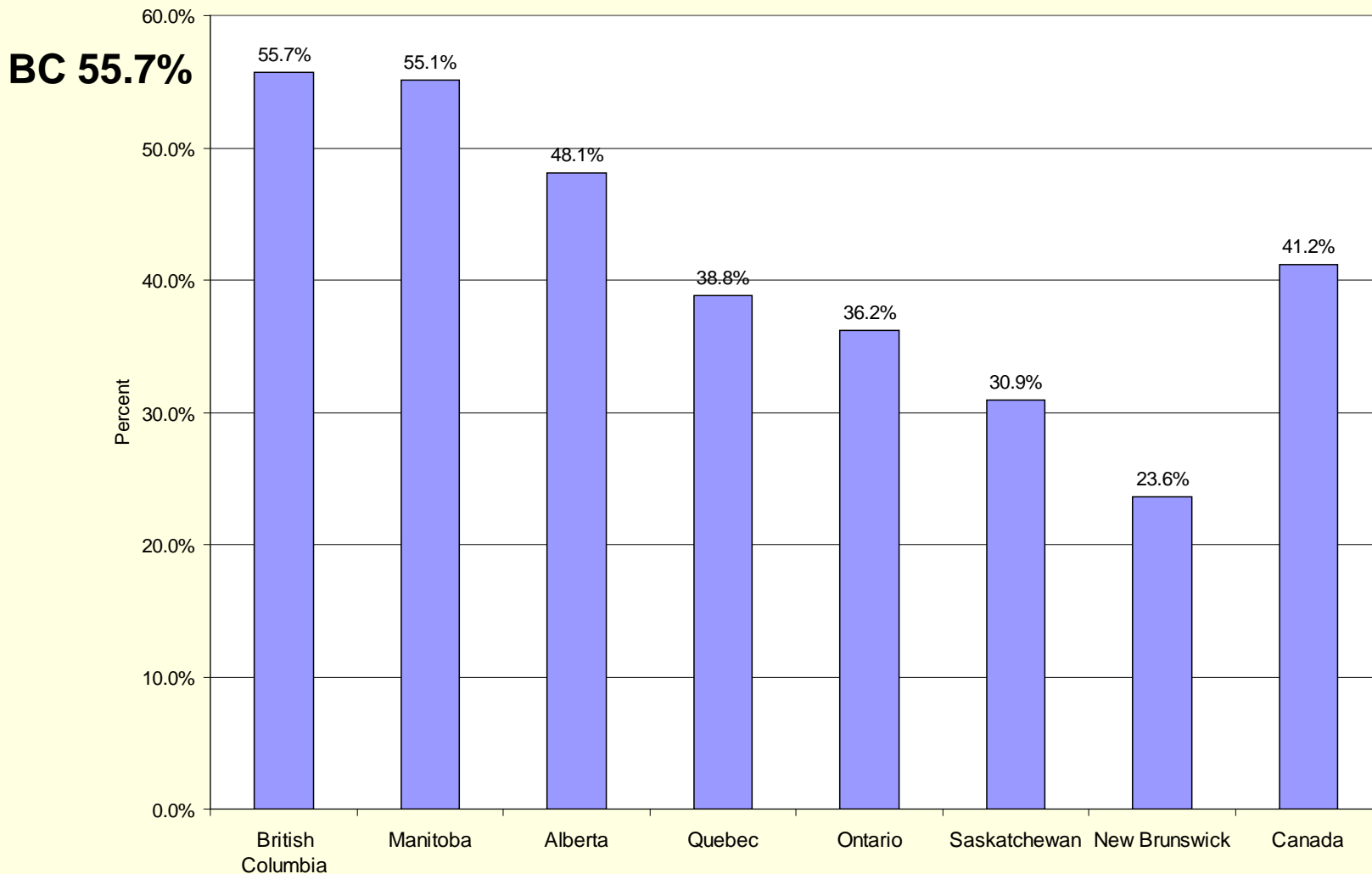
Source: StatsCan...

■ 1995 Census ■ 2000 Census ■ 2005 Census

The Feminization of Poverty: Poverty Rates by Family Type 1989-2007



Poverty rate among children with one or more parents employed full-time full-year by province, 2007



Working more and earning less





- BC's minimum wage at \$8/hr. -- now the lowest in the country.
- The cost of living is rising faster than most people's earnings.
- People are working harder just to stay in place and many feel they are only 1 or 2 paycheques away from poverty.

Living Wage Calculation: Metro Vancouver

■ Food	\$652.16
■ Clothing & Footwear	\$191.64
■ Shelter (including utilities)	\$1258.69
■ Transportation	\$522.69
■ Other	\$569.57
■ Childcare	\$982.00
■ Medical Expenses	\$241.00
■ Parent Education	\$83.00
■ Contingency Amount	\$195.00

Growing Inequality in BC 1989-2007

Changes to average income over the last 18 years:

- Wealthiest top 10%:  \$40,233
- Fourth poorest 10%:  \$ 3,829
- Third poorest 10%:  \$ 4,885
- Poorest 10%:  \$ 889

Consequences of Inequality

- Income inequality leads to health disparities (nutrition deficits, physical activity deficits, stress-related conditions, etc., for poorer people)
- Creates higher costs for health care, education, justice/corrections, and community social services
- Undermines healthy child development

More Consequences of Inequality

- Poverty and inequality eats away at both individuals and at society and community
- Undermines social inclusion and cohesiveness, leads to exclusion from recreation, sports, and social and civic life
- Causes stress across the income spectrum

And more.....

- Reduces choices, lowers high school completion (drop-out rates are double), and opportunity for advanced educational attainment (which in turn perpetuates poverty)
- Loss of economic competitiveness and productivity when people are marginalized and excluded.

Poverty is NOT inevitable.

There are choices and solutions.

- Poverty is very **expensive** and **offensive** in such a wealthy society.
- Poor quality or no access to childcare is **expensive** and a **denial of children's rights**.
- BC needs a poverty reduction plan with targets and timelines.
- Universal, publicly-funded, high quality childcare is a key part of any poverty reduction plan.

Elements of a Poverty Reduction Plan we can all advocate for...

Public policy options include:

- Raise and index welfare rates, restore earnings exemptions, and easier eligibility
- A publicly-funded quality child care system
- Raise and index the minimum wage
- Living wage commitment from employers
- Stop contracting out jobs to lower wage contractors
- Increase federal child tax benefits

Advocate for.....

- Increase the stock of affordable housing
- Rescind cuts to Employment Insurance
- Remove barriers to post-secondary access for lower income people
- Enforce and enhance employment standards
- Create a comprehensive community mental health plan
- Public coverage for dental care and prescription drugs

Information Sources on Income Inequality and Poverty

www.firstcallbc.org

www.campaign2000.ca

www.livingwageforfamilies.ca

www.policyalternatives.ca

www.bcpovertyreduction.ca

www.raisetherates.org