



# Monthly Newsletter



Working locally (Calgary, Alberta) to stop the cycle of poverty for the children

January 2010, Edition 45

## Volunteer Opportunity with children without poverty

I am looking for caring, community minded individuals interesting in mentoring a parent of one of the families we are helping in the Sustain a Family Program. 1-866-424-0109

## Many opposing statistics leave me confused on success against battling poverty

2010, a New Year that showed a lot of reflection on the past decade, showed me a lot of completely different statistics. While we hit economic struggle and strife after Calgary's/Canada's boom time in the past few years and while many non-profit organizations are citing difficulties in funding and providing services while their needs are at their greatest, the United Way Campaign in Calgary this past year is showing overwhelming support with breaking their targets for cash. I think many of the organizations struggling in Calgary are not supported by the United Way. Although the United Way fall campaign has come and gone, remember when you are corporate giving through the United Way you can direct your dollars to any non-profit, it does not have to be a United Way supported organization that you donate your dollars to. Then you direct your dollars to the organizations you want and still get the benefit of corporate matching that will assist United Way supported organizations in our communities.

Through the Christmas season leading up to the New Year, the Globe and Mail reported these two segments that speak opposites to me:

"The Millennium Development Goals (MDG) started the decade with enormous hope. In the largest-ever gathering of heads of states, 192 nations committed to confronting the most pressing social challenges of our time: extreme poverty, child mortality, HIV/AIDS, and achieving sustainable development (there are actually 8 MDG goals). The goals held the potential to transform the lives of the three billion people – almost half of humanity – who lived on less than \$2.50 a day. Ten years have passed, and we now mark the failure of most of these indicators. We are ending the decade with wealthy nations dragging their feet at the Copenhagen Conference while climate change ravages Africa, and a financial crisis triggered by Wall Street causing ripples around the world. Our failure to meet the

millennium goals is all too telling of the decade and the reality for most of the planet.” Craig Kielburger, Activist, Founder, Free the Children and Me to We.

“The Poverty Rate of the planet Earth in 2000 was 34 per cent – more than two billion of the world’s people were in absolute poverty, according to the United Nations. By this year, poverty had dropped to 25 per cent, or fewer than 1.7 billion people. Think of that the next time someone mentions the economic calamity that was the 2000s.” Globe and Mail

Ask yourself, are we/am I putting our/my funds/energy into the right ideas, concepts, locations, organizations, initiatives, and people to show us longevity and sustainability in our results? Are we being patient enough and consistent enough in our giving to make an impact? Imagine how much we spend in the world economy on measuring poverty. I won’t even ask how much you think we spend worldwide on war. I wonder if we could solve the problem, if we’d stop measuring it and just fix it. The only answer I can come up with is that our society places power, greed, self centered resolutions to health problems (it is not sexy or well funded to eliminate poor peoples diseases), and war as having higher value than helping those who are literally down on their luck and hungry. My humanity finds that difficult to live with.

## Hands in your pocket

The more stories and conversations I have with my families, and a reminder from a minister today was that we are all so close to each other, there is only a hair of difference from our story to that of the poor on our streets. It might be you there instead of them. It comes down to resilience, mental health and good decisions.

If you are interested in an excellent book for yourself or for your children in terms of building resilience, self esteem and self confidence, I recommend:

### **Growing up Resilient: Ways to build resilience in children and youth**

**By Tatyana Barankin and Nazilla Khanlou**

**It can be ordered off the CAMH (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health) website for less than \$12.**

To have people added/removed from the distribution list or to provide comments, please respond to:

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