

# A Poverty Outline for Saint John, NB

August 2014



# Introduction

These fact sheets offer a snap shot of recent data on poverty in Saint John, New Brunswick. This data has been collected by Vibrant Communities Saint John (VCSJ)/ Cities Reducing Poverty in partnership with the Human Development Council using 2010 Statistics Canada tax filer data.

When comparing these statistics with the 2006 tax filer data, a number of economic and social changes for Saint John can be observed. This comparison highlights both positive strides forward in the response to poverty in the city as well as brings attention to critical areas for improvement.

These factsheets highlight a number of population groups in Saint John that are experiencing poverty including:

- Children and Youth
- Lone-Parent Families
- Non-Family Persons
- Couple Families
- Seniors
- Persons and Families with Low-Income

The City of Saint John's poverty rate (after tax) was 18.8% in 2012, varying little from the 2006 poverty rate (after tax) at 19%.

In 2010 Saint John's poverty rate was 18.6%, only slightly less than it's 2012 level. Comparatively, the provincial average was 14.3% and the national average was 13.5% highlighting a notable discrepancy of poverty for residents in Saint John.

In some cases, Saint John is faring better than the provincial average, particularly when looking at the incidence of low-

income among seniors, non-family persons or the average income of couple families.

Conversely, the data sets also highlight a number of indicators where the city is falling behind the province, most dramatically among lone-income families and children.

## Terms and Methodology

The prevalence of low-income defined here uses the low-income measure (LIM), which considers income distribution and measures relative low income. The after-tax LIM (LIM-AT) represents households earning less than half the median income of economic families in the city. (Tamarack, Poverty Lines Model).

Comparisons made in this report apply LIM-AT measures and therefore are methodologically consistent in highlighting statistical changes over the years.

## Data

Data tables were produced by the Canadian Council on Social Development (ccsd.ca) Community Analytics Service, using data available from its Community Data Program (communitydata.ca).

# Fact Sheet #1 Poverty among Children and Youth

Children and youth in the data are defined as being between the ages of 0-17

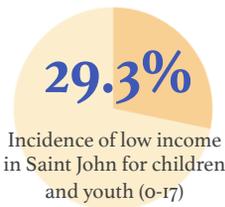
## Snapshot

Children and youth in Saint John are experiencing high rates of poverty. In fact, **3,650** Saint John children and youth are living in low income.

The poverty levels in this group have remained high. 28.2% of people under 17 lived in low income in 2006 (after tax). This number remained at 28.2% in 2010. Comparatively, the national average for child poverty in 2010 was 14.5%.

Child poverty leads to higher healthcare costs, increased spending on social support services, lost productivity and limited opportunities. It compromises people's dignity, mental health and well-being.

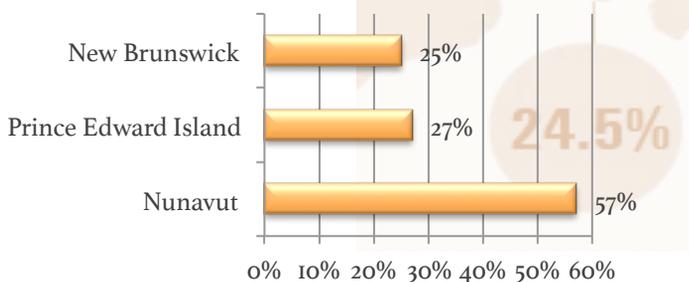
## Over a quarter of Saint John's children and youth live in poverty



Statistics Canada, 2012

Saint John has one of the highest child poverty rates in Canada. The city also has the highest percentage of children in low-income families, ranking last among 57 Cities Reducing Poverty communities.

## Highest percentage of children living in food insecure households in Canada



Tarasuk, V, Mitchell, A, Dachner, N. Research to identify policy options to reduce food insecurity (2013). Household Food Insecurity in Canada 2011.

Food Banks Canada reports that of the 19,524 people in New Brunswick assisted by a food bank in March of 2012, 32% were children.

“Recent research in Canada has shown that the experience of hunger leaves an indelible mark on children's physical and mental health, manifesting in greater likelihood of such conditions as depression and asthma in adolescence and early adulthood.”

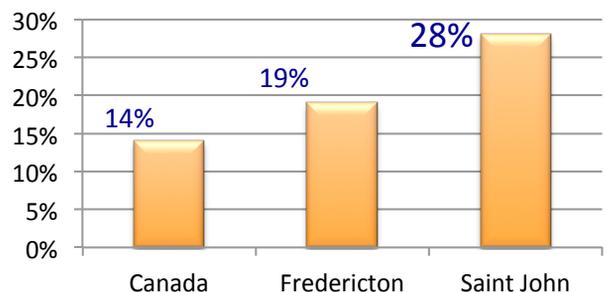
## Comparing the younger and the older

Saint John's children and youth remain one of the most vulnerable groups in the city

Children and Youth	Seniors
28.2%	6.9%

Incidence of low income (after tax) Statistics Canada, 2010

## Teen Pregnancy Rates - 2009 comparison



Health Indicators - Office of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, New Brunswick Department of Health (2011).

# Fact Sheet #2 Poverty among Lone-Parent Families

A lone-parent family is a family with only one parent, male or female, and with at least one child

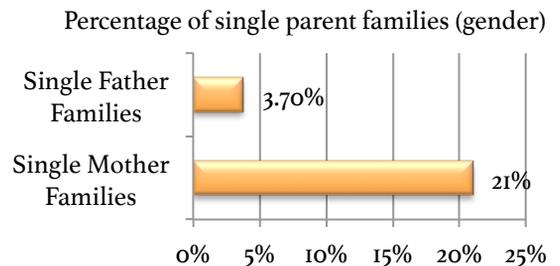
## Snapshot

Lone-parent families in Saint John are experiencing more poverty than any other group in the city. They have the second highest poverty rate out of 57 communities surveyed across Canada. Unfortunately this has been an historical trend, as looking back at 2006 data highlights that lone-parent families experienced the highest incidence of low income then as well.

There are **4,520** lone-parent families in Saint John, **1,830** are living in poverty

## Women are more vulnerable than men

Women are the face of most lone-parent families in Saint John. Single-mother families make up 21% of the population, whereas single-father families make up 3.7%.



Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

## Average Income

Saint John's lone-parent families have the second lowest average income (before-tax). Comparatively, couple families have an average income (before-tax) that is well over double that of lone-parent families.

Lone-parent families average income

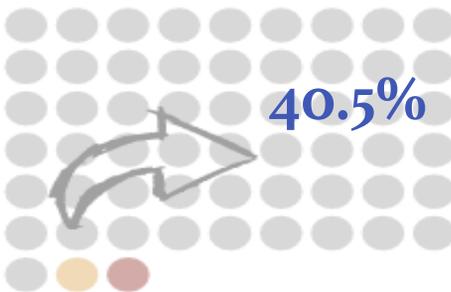
**\$37,442**

Couple families average income

**\$83,550**

Statistics Canada, 2010

## Incidence of low-income for lone-parent families in Saint John



-  Saint John, NB  
Second highest incidence of low-income
-  Charlotte County, NB  
Highest incidence of low-income

The only city/area encountering higher poverty for lone-parent families is Charlotte County, NB. Strathcona County, AB highlights the other side of the spectrum with only a 17.1% incidence of low income for lone-parent families.

Statistics Canada, 2010

## Life below the poverty line with Minimum wage

According to the 2012 Child Poverty Report Card on New Brunswick, the majority of lone-parent families of any size will live below the poverty line on minimum wage.

# Fact Sheet #3 Poverty among Non-Family Persons

A non-family person is an individual who is not part of a couple family or a lone-parent family

## Snapshot

Poverty for non-family persons in Saint John happens to be lower than the provincial average. However, at 29.2%, it is the second highest among population groups with low-income in Saint John.

## Average Income

The average income of non-family persons (before tax) is also only slightly higher for individuals living in Saint John (\$30,484), than the provincial average (\$29,331).

## Better than provincial average...barely.

Non-family persons is one of the few groups in Saint John doing better than the provincial average, although only by a very small margin.

New Brunswick	Saint John
29.4%	29.2%

Percent of non-family persons with income below the after-tax Low Income Measure

New Brunswick sits at the bottom of the pack among all provinces and territories for the percent of non-family persons with low-income. Saint John ranks 46 out of 57 Cities Reducing Poverty communities.

Percent of non-family persons with income below the after-tax Low Income Measure (Province/Territory)

Yukon	16.7%
Alberta	18.4%
Saskatchewan	21.5%
Northwest Territories	21.6%
Nunavut	23.2%
Prince Edward Island	26.2%
Manitoba	27.3%
Newfoundland and Labrador	27.6%
British Columbia	28.6%
Ontario	29.2%
Nova Scotia	29.3%
Quebec	29.3%
New Brunswick	29.4%

Statistics Canada, 2010

Percent of non-family persons with income below the after-tax Low Income Measure (City)

Saint John	29.2%
Hamilton	29.7%
Windsor-Essex	30.3%
Antigonish	30.4%
St. John's	31.0%
Trois Rivieres	31.1%
Sherbrooke	33.0%
Surrey	33.2%
Montreal-St. Michel	34.4%
Peel Region	34.4%
York Region	34.8%
Chaleur CIN	34.9%

Statistics Canada, 2010

# Fact Sheet #4 Poverty among Couple Families

Couple families defined in this data consist of a couple living together (whether married or common-law) at the same address, and any children living at the same address.

## Snapshot

There are 1,140 couple families with low incomes (after tax) in Saint John, and while they have a slightly higher incidence of low-income (7.7%) than the provincial average (6.3%), they are doing better in terms of average income.

Percent of couple families with income below the after-tax Low Income Measure (Province/Territory)

Yukon	4.7%
Newfoundland and Labrador	5.8%
Prince Edward Island	5.9%
<b>New Brunswick</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
Alberta	6.5%
Nova Scotia	6.5%
Quebec	7.1%
Saskatchewan	7.1%
Northwest Territories	7.4%
Manitoba	9.4%
Ontario	9.7%
British Columbia	11.0%
Nunavut	15.6%

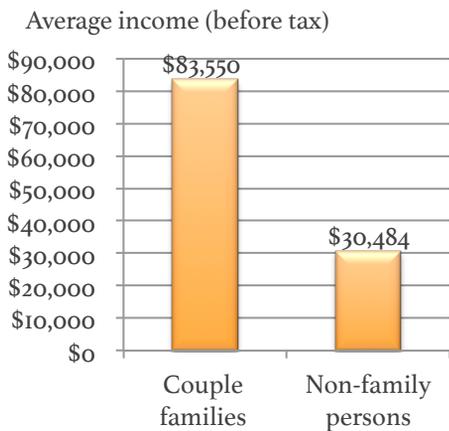
Statistics Canada, 2010

Percent of couple families with income below the after-tax Low Income Measure (City)

Charlotte County CIN	7.5%
Calgary	7.7%
<b>Saint John</b>	<b>7.7%</b>
Haliburton	7.8%
Winnipeg	8.0%
Hamilton	8.3%
Charlottetown	8.6%
Lethbridge	8.7%
London	8.9%
Abbotsford	9.6%
York Region	11.5%
Peel Region	13.7%
Surrey	14.1%
Windsor-Essex	14.1%
Montreal-St. Michel	14.3%

Statistics Canada, 2010

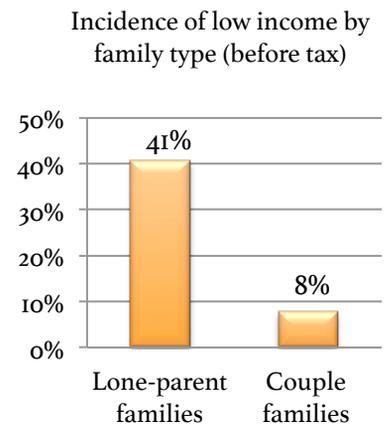
New Brunswick is doing relatively well in terms of having a lower incidence of low-income for couple families compared to some of its provincial/territorial counterparts. Saint John carries with it the same ranking it holds with non-family persons in the city, sitting at 46 out of 57 Cities Reducing Poverty communities.



Statistics Canada, 2010

## Average Income

Couple families are doing significantly better than other groups in Saint John. Their average income is \$83,550 (before tax). For non-family persons, their average income is \$30,484 (before tax).



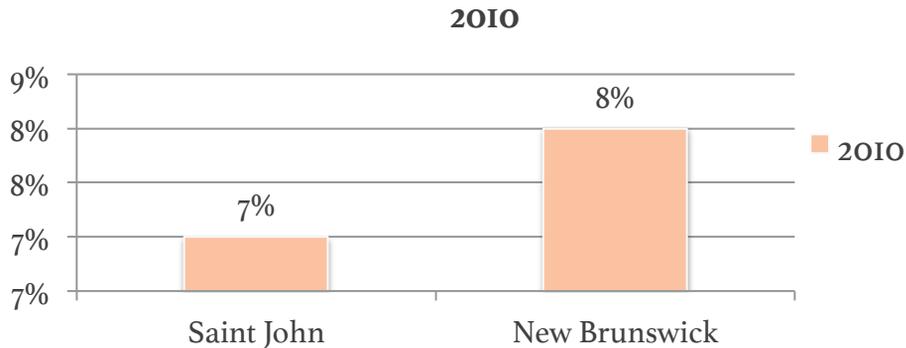
Statistics Canada, 2010

# Fact Sheet #5 Poverty among Seniors

## Snapshot

There are 750 seniors (65+) with low incomes (after tax) in Saint John and 9,490 in the province of New Brunswick. While both the province and city have seen reductions in the levels of poverty for seniors, Saint John's improvement has been significantly larger.

Percent of seniors (65+) with income below the after-tax Low Income Measure



Statistics Canada, 2010

Moncton	6.7%
Saint John	6.9%
Charlotte County CIN	7.0%
Quebec City	7.2%
Wood Buffalo	7.4%
Abbotsford	8.4%
Trois Rivieres	8.6%
Charlottetown	8.7%
Sherbrooke	9.4%
Antigonish	9.4%
Chaleur CIN	12.0%
Montreal-St. Michel	12.2%
Surrey	14.7%
York Region	16.5%
Peel Region	17.6%

Statistics Canada, 2010

Saint John sits in close proximity to other New Brunswick cities, ranking 44 out of 57 Cities Reducing Poverty Communities in incidence of low-income among seniors.

About 90% of New Brunswick residents over the age of 65 have adult literacy scores below Level 3 (which is the base minimum for a person to function in Canadian society). This leaves the bulk of older adults vulnerable to social isolation and poorer health outcomes.

Facts About Aging in New Brunswick – Government of New Brunswick (2013).

Most of Saint John's seniors live independently, highlighting an opportunity to support health promotion, prevention and healthy aging in the community.

# Fact Sheet #6 Poverty among Persons and Families with Low-Income

## Snapshot

In the city of Saint John, poverty is increasingly concentrated among five specific neighbourhoods, the Old North End, Crescent Valley, the South End, Waterloo Village and the Lower West Side.

Poverty is multi-faceted and touches many elements of everyday existence, including but not limited to housing, food security, labour force participation and education. Poverty in Saint John is highest among children and youth and lone-parent families while recent immigrants, seniors, persons with disabilities and aboriginal people encounter high levels of poverty in the province.

## Saint John has had little change in the number of individuals living in poverty since 2006.

Incidence of low income (after tax) by # of persons



## Saint John Residents

Saint John ranks in the bottom five (54 out of 57), in terms of highest percentage of low-income by number of persons.

Saint John has higher levels of low income than all other Atlantic cities including: Moncton NB; St. John's NL; Charlottetown, PEI and Halifax, NS.

Comparatively the province has an incidence of low-income at a slightly lower rate of 14.3% which was just lower than the 2010 national average of 14.9%.

Statistics Canada, 2010

## Saint John Families

Families in Saint John are experiencing even higher rates of low-income. They also stand at the bottom five in the Cities Reducing Poverty, however their incidence of low-income is **21.3%**.

The province has an incidence of low-income for families of 17.5% and sits in the middle of the pack between the lowest incidence in the Yukon at 11.8% and the highest in Nunavut at 24.9%.

Incidence of low income (after tax) by # of families

Sherbrooke	20.8%
Saint John	<b>21.3%</b>
Windsor-Essex	21.7%
Surrey	21.8%
Montreal-St. Michel	26.0%

Statistics Canada, 2010