


NO
PLACE for
Poverty

*Everyone has a right to
housing, food and dignity!*



Anti-Poverty Election 2011
Tool kit

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Anti-Poverty Election 2011

Poverty as an Election Tool Kit

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Things To Do In Your Community

The NWT Election is a great chance to bring attention to poverty issues. You can make a difference!

1.A

Meet With Local People and Groups to Plan Election Activities

Contact people and groups to talk about what can be done locally to make poverty an important election issue. Discuss this package of materials to see what actions you can take. The toolkit contains a suggested list of people to invite to your planning meeting.

Ask Your Candidates to Make a Commitment

Candidates in the election will be listening to voters. Ask the candidates in your riding to promise that—if elected—they will make ending poverty one of the main accomplishments of their four years in office. There is a suggested letter included in this package that you can send to candidates. Feel free to change it to include your local concerns and issues.

Put Up Posters, Distribute Flyers, Send Emails

There are posters and flyers you can print to put up and hand out in your community. Email copies of the poster and flyers (on the enclosed CD) to the people you know. Ask people to ask their candidates what they will do about poverty.

Meet With Local Leaders

Your local group can talk to local leaders individually, or you can make a presentation to your Community Government and/or Band Council. This package has suggestions for information you can give to leaders.

Meet with Candidates

Ask the candidates in your riding to meet with your anti-poverty group to explain their positions on poverty and what they plan to do about it if they are elected.

Hold a Special Meeting to Talk About Poverty

Ask all the candidates in your riding to attend a special meeting to discuss their commitment to ending poverty. There are materials to help plan, advertise and hold a meeting.

Talk to the Media

Call reporters to talk about why ending poverty should be a major issue in this election. Talk about poverty on your community radio station, on phone-in shows or talk-back lines. You could also write a letter to the editor. Explain what your group is doing. You can look in this package for suggestions of things to say and information to share with others.

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1.B

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Checklist: Community People to Work With

To make poverty an issue in this election, lots of people need to ask the candidates for their positions. This will be easier and more effective task if people share the work.

Here's a suggested list of organizations to discuss poverty with in your community.

Maybe you want to invite them all to a meeting.

- Community Government leaders
- Chief and Council
- Regional Aboriginal Government Leaders
- Education Committee members
- Business people
- Interagency Groups
- Youth Group members
- Justice Committee members
- Local Housing Committee members
- Elders
- Church leaders and members
- Community Health Representatives
- Social Workers
- Teachers

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Talk to Community Leaders and Groups

1.C

A presentation to local governments and community groups will tell your leaders that:

- people in this riding and across the NWT are trying to make fighting poverty a major election issue
- they can help by calling on Territorial election candidates to make fighting poverty a priority of the next Assembly

Explain What You Are Doing

Describe your activities to make poverty a major election issue:

- raising awareness through advertising
- holding a public meeting
- asking candidates to promise action in response to written questions

Use the “Speaking Points for Public Meetings and Media Interviews” to explain the situation

Provide leaders and groups with written materials:

- Anti-Poverty Poster
- Anti-Poverty Flyer
- Poverty Facts
- Letter to Candidates
- Questions to Candidates

Ask leaders to talk to candidates about poverty in your community and the need for action.

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Speaking Points for Meetings and Media Interviews

1.D

- During this election, citizens across the NWT are asking all candidates to promise to end poverty.
- All candidates are being asked—if they are elected—to work to make ending poverty one of the top three priorities of the next Assembly.
- As Nelson Mandela said “Poverty is man-made, like slavery and apartheid.” Poverty in the NWT can be overcome. It is the basis of the NWT’s most crippling social problems.
- Leaving people in poverty increases our costs in health care, education and the justice system.
- 25 of the NWT’s key social justice organizations and four municipal governments have called on the Territorial Government to create an Anti-Poverty Strategy.
- At the October 2010 No Place for Poverty Anti-Poverty Workshop, more than 80 participants said eliminating poverty must become the GNWT’s top priority and governments must involve business and all citizens to make this happen.
- Six provinces already have Anti-Poverty Strategies. Yukon and Nunavut are working on strategies too.

All candidates are being asked to promise that—if elected—they will:

- Make an NWT Anti-Poverty Strategy a top priority of their term in office.
- Act immediately to make action on poverty one of the top priorities of the next Assembly.
- Work with their fellow Legislative Assembly Members to create an NWT Anti-Poverty Strategy that is integrated across departments and involves business and community groups.

*“Poverty steals from your soul leaving you with little or no hope. It robs you of all that can be good in life. It leaves you isolated, lonely and hungry”
(witness to the Senate Committee studying poverty in Canada, quoted in speech by Art Eggleton, Yellowknife, October 2010)*

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1.E

Anti-Poverty Election 2011 *Poverty Myths and Facts*

Myth People in poverty in Canada are just a little bit poor.

Fact The depth of poverty is increasing in Canada. And so is inequality...the difference between the rich and poor. The poverty gap is particularly great for lone parent households and single people including seniors.

Myth Canada is getting richer and the number of people in poverty is decreasing.

Fact Canadian wealth is increasing but mainly for the top 50% of Canadian households. The highest paid CEOs in Canada only need to work about 13 hours to earn what the average Canadian minimum wage worker earns in an entire year. Over the past decades, 10 to 16 per cent of Canadian households have lived in poverty.

Myth Getting a job is the key to avoiding poverty.

Fact Having a job lowers the likelihood of poverty. However, Canada has one of the highest rates of low-paid workers among industrialized countries. About one in six workers are earning poverty wages.

No minimum wage in Canada comes close to a living wage. The highest minimum wage pays about 66-75% of a living wage. The social safety net is as or more important than employment in poverty prevention and reduction. Changes in social policy have contributed to poverty since the early 1990s. A robust social safety net can reduce poverty in times of unemployment.

Myth Education is a way out of poverty.

Fact Family status is a more important factor than education. Poverty rates are greatest for single people and lone parent families even though these people might have a high level of education. Single people living in deep poverty span all age groups. In Canada, 48% are less than 35 years of age. Poverty initiatives need to pay attention to single individuals.

Myth Poverty is too expensive for Canadian society to fix.

Fact Canada's total poverty gap – the amount of money needed to bring all people living in poverty up to the poverty line – was 124 times lower than Canada's total economic output in 2007. We can make the choice to address poverty. It is cheaper to invest in eliminating poverty than to avoid the problem.

Myth The poor shall always be with us.

Fact Nelson Mandela said that "like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings."

- Investing in poverty is a strategy to reduce health costs.
- Poverty hinders prosperity and productivity.
- Poverty is a human rights issue. All Canadians have a moral and legal right to housing and food.
- Governments have a legal responsibility to provide housing and food security.

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1.F

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Anti-Poverty Workshop Highlights

More than 80 workshop participants from throughout the NWT met in Yellowknife from October 4 to 6, 2010.

Participants agreed there is an urgent need to eliminate poverty. Overwhelmingly, they said that public policies need to be connected and programs and services need to be integrated, community-based, and flexible to both prevent and eliminate poverty. Housing and child care are top priorities.

Workshop participants also agreed that processes from beginning to end must be inclusive and bring together people living in poverty, front-line workers, public and Aboriginal governments, businesses, the faith community, voluntary organizations and Non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

As next steps to the Workshop, they recommended:

1. All orders of government, private sector, and non-profit organizations collaborate on the creation of an integrated, fully-resourced strategy for eliminating poverty in the NWT.
2. Establishing an arm's length steering group to work on an anti-poverty strategy.
3. Creating legislation to establish an independent commission to address poverty in the NWT.
4. Action to influence political will and grow the movement to end poverty, including enacting legislation.
5. 'Whistle blower' legislation and an ombudsperson to enable government workers to speak out on ways to end poverty and on public policies and programs that contribute to poverty.

The proceedings and outcomes of the Workshop provide a basis for moving forward on poverty in the NWT and joining with anti-poverty efforts underway in other territories and provinces, and across the country. Alternatives North, YWCA Yellowknife, and the many groups and organizations that participated in the Workshop look forward to being part of these efforts.

www.alternativesnorth.ca/pdf/NoPlaceForPovertyReport_email.pdf

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Poverty Facts

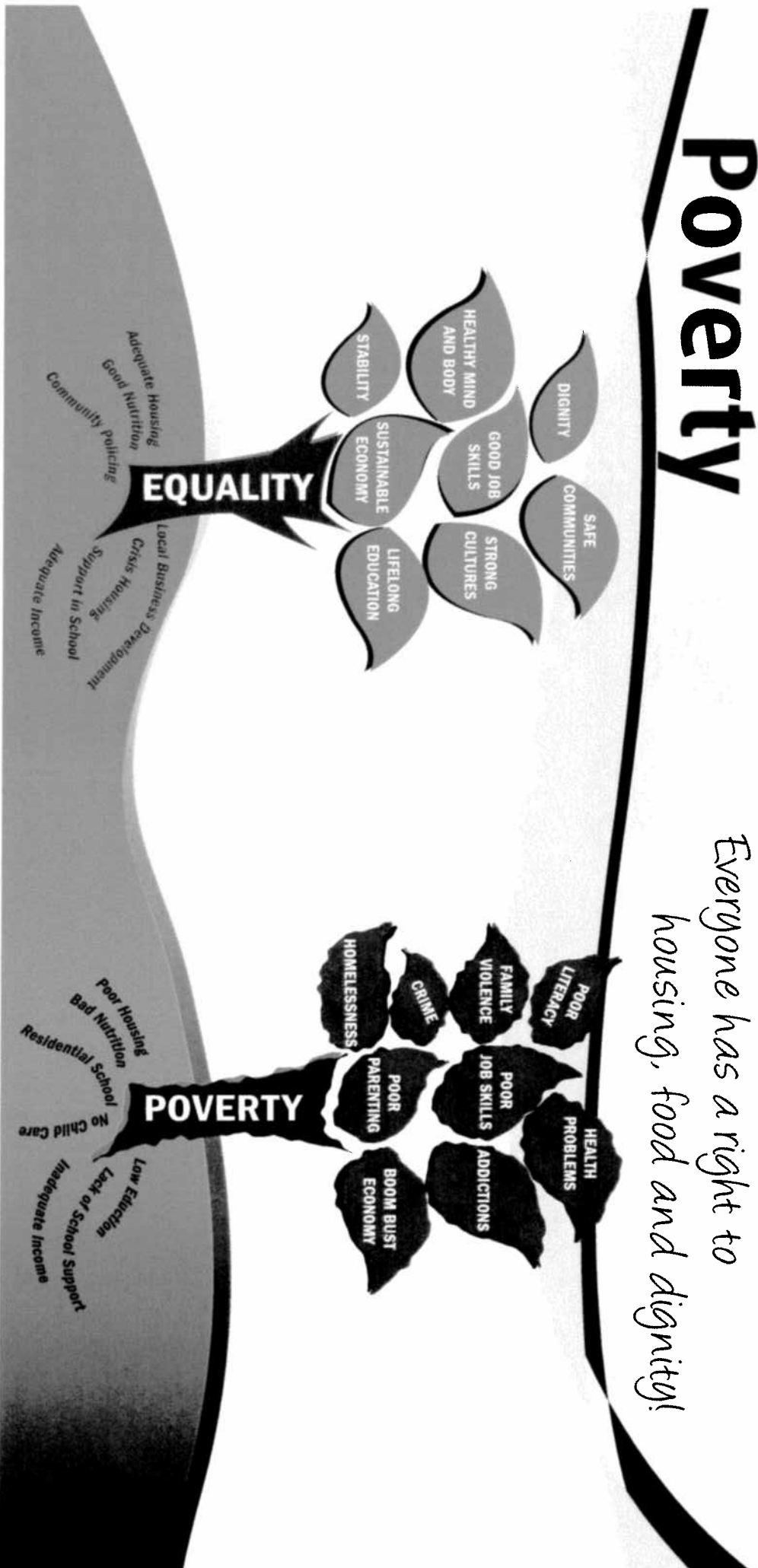
- The GNWT has no official definition of poverty
- In smaller NWT communities, up to 50% of households have a total income below \$30,000 (GNWT 2008)
- 40% of NWT households with a senior have incomes below \$30,000 (GNWT 2008)
- The NWT has the highest percentage of households in Canada with houses in need of major repairs, double the national average
- To rent or buy and operate a home in Sachs Harbor, a family needs a total income of \$103,000. In Gameti, it's \$84,000. Private housing is unavailable in most communities
- An NWT minimum wage worker makes about \$1,200 a month after taxes. A one bedroom apartment in Yellowknife costs \$1,365 a month
- NWT rates of ill health, criminal activity, substance abuse, family violence and illiteracy are among the highest in the country
- Approximately 1,000 women in the NWT are homeless—that's more than 5% of NWT women

1.6

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Ask Your Candidates

Will You Make Ending Poverty a Top Priority of the GNWT?



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Ask Your Candidates

1. Will you make an NWT Anti-Poverty Strategy a major priority of your term in office?
2. If elected, will you act immediately to make action on poverty one of the top priorities of the 17th Assembly?
3. Will you work with your fellow MLAs to create an NWT Anti-Poverty Strategy that is integrated across departments and involves businesses and community groups?

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- In smaller NWT communities, up to 50% of households have a total income below \$30,000. (GNWT 2008)
- 40% of NWT households with a senior have incomes below \$30,000 (GNWT 2008)
- The NWT has the highest percentage of households in Canada with houses in need of major repairs, double the national average.
- NWT rates of ill health, criminal activity, substance abuse, family violence and illiteracy are among the highest in the country.
- Approximately 1,000 women in the NWT are homeless – that's more than 5% of NWT women.

Ask Your Candidates

Will You Make Ending Poverty one of the Top Priorities of the Next Assembly?

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Get Out The Vote Campaign

Election Day is Monday, October 3.

A Get Out The Vote campaign aims to make sure each and every campaign supporter gets to the polls to vote. It all starts with knowing who your supporters are and keeping track of them with a list.

When you work on the activities suggested in the toolkit, start a list of the names, phone numbers and email addresses.

Supporters should be encouraged to vote in the advance polls. In communities with Returning Officers, people can vote anytime from September 21 until election day. Telling people to vote ahead of election day is also a reminder of the importance of voting.

You may decide to do both phoning and door knocking to "pull the vote". You can remind people to vote by distributing information leaflets from the toolkit the evening before Election Day. Use your phone and email lists to contact people a few hours before the polls close.

The more volunteers you have to help get out the vote, the more effective you will be.

Some supporters may need help getting to the polls. Campaign volunteers can help by offering rides, or by caring for children while the supporter votes.

If People Say Voting Doesn't Matter:

Some people don't plan to vote because they think voting won't make a difference. People often say the Government of the Northwest Territories does not represent them, that all politicians are the same and that new politicians will only act the same as the ones before.

The No Place for Poverty campaign aims to put politicians on the spot by making them take a stand on poverty. That way they can be reminded to keep their promise if they are elected.

This won't happen if people don't ask their candidates for a promise during the election and vote for the candidates who have given their formal pledge.

Every vote counts. Tell people to use their power as voters to change things for those most in need.

(Use this draft to prepare your letter to candidates)

Date

Candidate Name
Candidate Address

Election 2011: Your Commitment to Ending Poverty

As a candidate in the October 3rd Territorial Election, we ask for your commitment that—if you are elected—you will work to make ending poverty a major priority of the 17th Assembly.

In the last two years, a growing number of groups and local governments have called upon the Territorial Government to create an Anti-Poverty Strategy.

- 29 groups, including key social justice organizations and four municipal governments have joined in this call.
- In February 2010, the 16th Legislative Assembly passed a motion calling for the creation of an Anti-Poverty Strategy. In October 2010 more than 80 participants came to Yellowknife for the *No Place for Poverty* Anti-Poverty Workshop. They said eliminating poverty should be the GNWT's top priority and government must involve all citizens to make this goal a reality.

None of us can afford the costs of poverty. It is the basis of the NWT's worst social ills. Our citizens and our economy cannot prosper until the negative costs of dealing with poverty are exchanged for the positive benefits of human development. Other jurisdictions are defeating poverty using anti-poverty strategies. We can do it too.

As a candidate in (riding), we are asking for your promise that—if you are elected—you will:

1. make an NWT Anti-Poverty Strategy a major objectives of your term in office
2. act immediately to make action on poverty one of the top priorities of the 17th Assembly;
3. work with their fellow Legislative Assembly Members to create an NWT Anti-Poverty Strategy that is integrated across departments and involves business and community groups.

The call for an Anti-Poverty Strategy is loud and clear. We ask that you respond to this letter and formally announce your commitment to end poverty. The list of candidates who have made these commitments will be announced in the newspapers shortly before the election. Please send your response to the address below.

Best wishes and thank you for considering the economic and social benefits of ending poverty in the NWT.

(name)
(name of organization)

(name)
(name of organization)

Judge calls out politicians

Mike W. Bryant
Northern News Services
Published Monday, March 7, 2011

SOMBA K'E/YELLOWKNIFE - The NWT's top judge says politicians should spend less time focusing on the length of jail sentences and more on the root causes of crime in the territory.

Justice John Vertes' remarks come as criticism mounts in the legislative assembly over what have been perceived as overly lenient sentences for violent offenders in recent months.

For one MLA, Kam Lake's Dave Ramsay, the most recent outrage is the five-year sentence handed out to Inuvik resident Claude Harry last month for the beating death of Angus Kikoak, whom Harry killed after a night of drinking in December 2009.

The judge in the case, Rene Foisy, had given Harry double-time credit for the year he spent in pre-sentence custody, which means he has approximately three years left to serve in his sentence. Harry had 19 previous convictions for assault.

"The public has the right to criticize, MLAs have the right to criticize," said Vertes in a rare interview outside of court last week.

"But I think our political leaders - at all levels - have a responsibility to look at these root causes because we have an extremely high crime rate. It's affecting everybody in the territory, and simply focusing on sentencing is not the answer."

Governments need to ask themselves what is being done to address the problems that lead to crime, such as poverty, unemployment, lack of opportunities and housing, and mental health issues in the territory, particularly among the aboriginal community, said the senior judge of the NWT Supreme Court.

"We know that sending away people for longer periods of incarceration, mandatory minimum sentences, do nothing to deter crime," said Vertes.

"If they did the United States would be the safest country on Earth but their crime rate is eight times that of Canada's."

The rate for violent crimes nationally is going down, but is increasing in the Northwest Territories, said Vertes. The incarceration rate, meanwhile, is the highest in the country, and 85 to 90 per cent of those inmates are aboriginal, he said.

That the NWT population is young while Canada's is growing old accounts for much of this discrepancy, said Vertes. Most crimes are committed by young men of 18 to 25 years in age, and there are more than 3,100 of them in the Northwest Territories, according to the NWT Bureau of Statistics.



Justice John Vertes, senior judge for the NWT Supreme Court, says politicians should focus less on jail sentences and more on root causes of crime. - Mike W. Bryant/NNSL photo

Justice John Vertes on the record

On politicians:

"Politicians can talk about all the benefits that the diamonds have brought and what pipelines will bring, but the point is, they are not addressing, in my opinion, what's happening at the community level."

On sentencing minimums:

"I think the basic principle is that judges have been given a discretion because you have to be able to look at the specific circumstances of the case, and the circumstances of the offender, and then try to come up with a sentence that is proportionate to the seriousness of the crime."

On perceived inconsistencies in sentencing:

"I think it's fully understandable for people who are victims of crime to feel that any sentence that the court gives is insufficient, and we're quite sensitive to that. But we also have to keep in mind other factors, and many of these factors are ones that have been laid down by politicians."

On two-for-one remand credits:

"Over the years appellate courts across the country said the general rule of thumb is two-for-one. Why? Because the conditions are more difficult for remand prisoners than for serving prisoners."

On programs for parolees:

"Thirty years ago we had a residential halfway house for parolees in this town. It was called Arctic House, with trained people working in there, providing job training and life skills. What do we have now? We have, thank goodness, the Salvation Army, that provides the beds, but what about the programs?"

On criticism of the courts:

"I'm not immune to the commentary that goes on and people speak to me about it."

What else is happening, the judge asked. There remains NWT communities without police officers, social workers, and probation officers. There is no longer a halfway house for parolees providing job training and life skills, and drug and alcohol addiction is as rampant as ever. "I walk every day to work back and forth through downtown (Yellowknife), and I see what's happening in this city, and I question how many of our civic leaders do," said Vertes.

"So where is the attention being given to what's happening down at the community level? The need for rehabilitation services, the need for probation services, the supervision services."

Vertes insisted that courts are strict where required. The starting point for sexual assault offences in the territory is typically three years in prison, he said, adding though that sometimes "it's a little lower and sometimes it's a little higher."

As for the Truth in Sentencing Act brought into force by the Conservative government last year - a law meant to eliminate two-for-one credits given to offenders for time served in pre-sentence custody - Vertes said the real question people should be asking is what happens after the court process, when inmates are facing the prospect of parole.

"If they meant truth in sentencing in that the public should know what a person is sentenced to, how long that person will be in jail on an accurate basis, well then the real question is to address laws respecting parole and conditional release," said Vertes.

"Parole, except in very rare cases, is out of the hands of the courts. It's in the hands of the parole board and correctional authorities. That's under a different statute altogether."

Vertes said he understands why victims and their families are upset when certain sentences are handed out but there are many factors at play, including the prospect for rehabilitation of the offender, the high rate of incarceration for aboriginals, and the likelihood that a person charged with a crime will re-offend.

"It's not unusual to have family members of victims and victims express a desire for severe sentences and feel the sentence imposed by the court is not severe enough," said Vertes.

"On the other hand, we also have family members, community members of offenders, come forward to say this act was out of character, this person is really a good man, he's a good provider. Please don't send him to jail."

Ramsay, the MLA who has been the most critical of court sentences in the legislative assembly of late, said he too recognizes that governments need to address the root causes of crime, but courts must ensure the public is protected from violent offenders, particularly those with long criminal histories.

Ramsay said courts should not hesitate in seeking a dangerous offender designation when confronted with these types of offenders.

"How many people have to get hurt, maimed or killed before action is taken and people are put away and have that dangerous offender attached to them," said Ramsay.

NWT Justice Minister Jackson Lafferty and Health and Social Services Minister Sandy Lee were not available for comment at press time.

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Supporting Organizations

1. Alternatives North, Aggie Brockman, 873 4588, abrockman@ssimicro.com
2. City of Yellowknife, Mayor Gord Van Tighem, 920 5693, gvantighem@yellowknife.ca
3. NWT Native Women's Association, 873 5509, exdirector@nativewomens.com
4. YWCA Yellowknife, Lyda Fuller, 920 2777, Ext 310 lyda@ywcanwt.ca
5. Roman Catholic Diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith Suzette Montreuil, 920 2765, suzette@hotmail.com
6. Centre for Northern Families 873 2566, arleneh10@hotmail.com
7. Union of Northern Workers, Todd Parsons, pres@unw.ca 873 8230
8. NWT Literacy Council, Helen Balanoff, 873 9262, helen@nwtliteracy.ca
9. Inuvik Inter-Agency Committee, Alana Mero, inuvikinteragency@northwestel.net
10. NWT Council of Persons with Disabilities, Michelle Gillis, 873 8230, nwtcpded@arcticdata.ca
11. Status of Women Council of the NWT, Annemieke Mulders, 920 8994, am@statusofwomen.nt.ca
12. John Howard Society, Lydia Bardak, 920 4276, lydia_jhsnwt@theedge.ca
13. Yellowknife Seniors Society, Vivian Squires, Executive Director, 873 9475, ykseniorsociety@theedge.ca
14. Yellowknife Homelessness Coalition, Dayle Handy, 669 3409, homelessness@yellowknife.ca
15. Hay River Soup Kitchen, Bev Gibb, 874 2101, bevgi@ssimicro.com or bev@norlandinsurance.com
16. North Slave Metis Alliance, President Bill Enge, 873 6762, general@nsma.net
17. Hamlet of Tuktoyaktuk, Mervin Gruben, Mayor, 977 2286, mgruben@egruben.com
18. Public Service Alliance of Canada Aboriginal People's Committee, Sandra Lockhart, Chair, 873 5670, slockhart60@yahoo.ca



Alternatives North



YWCA
YELLOWKNIFE



19. Association of Social Workers in Northern Canada (NWT), Sandy Little, Secretary, 920-3192, slittle@auroracollege.nt.ca
20. Town of Hay River, Kelly Schofield, Mayor, 874 6522, townhall@hayriver.com
21. Side Door Youth Centre, Garry Hubert, 766 3273, edsidedoor@theedge.ca
22. Public Service Alliance of Canada NWT Area Council, Frank Walsh, 669 4367, frank88walsh@theedge.ca
23. NWT Association of Communities, Yvette Gonzalez, Executive Director, 873 8359, yvette@nwtac.com
24. NWT Seniors Society, Barb Hood, Executive Director, 920 7444, seniors@yk.com
25. NWT Regional Women's Committee, Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), Lorraine Hewlett, Chair, 920-3137 (wk), 766-4604 (hm), lorraine_hewlett@theedge.ca
26. Territorial Farmers Association, France Benoit, Board Member, 873 1101, france@francebenoit.com
27. Northern Territories Federation of Labor, Mary Lou Cherwaty, President, 873 3695, President@ntfl.yk.com
28. Ecology North, Shannon Ripley, 873 6019, shannon@ecologynorth.ca
29. Hamlet of Fort Resolution, Elizabeth-Ann McKay, Mayor, 394-4556, bessann_mckay@yahoo.ca

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GNWT Employees Can Participate in the Election – The Rules

Here's what the GNWT says about participation by employees in election activities:

"The Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) encourages its employees to become involved in the political process that shapes and guides the creation and administration of our laws and our social, educational and other systems.

WANT TO PARTICIPATE?

Under the guidelines set out by the Code of Conduct, you are free to participate in political activities, including belonging to a political party, supporting a candidate for elected office and actively seeking elected office, as long as the political activities are clearly separated from the activities related to your employment.

Employees may be returning officers or polling clerks, subject to approval from their Deputy Head to engage in this form of outside employment, service, or volunteer activity.

ARE YOU RESTRICTED?

If you fall into the category of a "restricted employee" (relating to the Public Service Regulations), additional restrictions on political activity apply.

Restricted employees include:

- deputy ministers, assistant deputy ministers and heads of secretariats of the Executive Council;
- division directors, assistant directors and regional superintendents;
- chief executive officers of GNWT corporations or agencies; and
- staff of the Department of the Executive, other than secretarial staff, clerical staff, or executive assistants to elected Ministers.

CAMPAIGN MATERIALS

Under the Code of Conduct, employees should not display or distribute campaign literature or other promotional material in any office or premises belonging to or in the possession of the GNWT, except leased residential premises. Employees can wear campaign buttons on the outerwear they wear to and from work, but buttons should not be worn in the office, outside of this allowance.

CHECK THE RULES

If you are participating in political activity, whether running for office, or supporting a candidate, make sure to review Sections 83 to 91 of the Code of Conduct for the rules and regulations on political activities. "

The Code can be found at www.hr.gov.nt.ca/policy/documents/CodeofConduct.pdf

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News Release

Advocates lobby for 2011 Territorial Election to Focus on Poverty

Yellowknife, 23 August 2011: The 29 supporters of the No Place for Poverty alliance are today launching their “Anti-Poverty Election 2011” Toolkit for use by anti-poverty champions across the Northwest Territories in the upcoming election.

The purpose of the toolkit is to engage community members in talking about poverty where they live, and to ask candidates in every riding to pledge to make working on poverty their top priority in the next Legislative Assembly.

The tool kit has been sent to more than 100 community “champions” throughout the Northwest Territories. The kit includes myths and facts about poverty in the NWT, material for generating discussion and a letter to present to candidates asking them to pledge to make poverty a priority, as well as poster and flyer templates for hosting a community meeting.

The public launch of the Anti-Poverty Election 2011 Toolkit will take place Tuesday, August 23rd at 11:00 a.m. at the Baker Community Centre in Yellowknife.

“We’ve been talking about the need for a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy for almost two years and we really need to see some action,” says Aggie Brockman, of Alternatives North, about the impetus to create the election toolkit. “We want to make sure that the anti-poverty strategy is a top priority for the next assembly,” she says.

All candidates in the upcoming territorial election will be asked to pledge they will make a government-wide anti-poverty strategy a major objective of their term, and a key priority for the 17th assembly. They will be asked to work collaboratively on the strategy with business, labour and community groups. All candidates will be sent letters to sign in the first part of September. Written responses are due by September 19th at 4:00 p.m. at noplaceforpoverty@gmail.com or by fax to 873-5497 or by Canada Post to Box 444, Yellowknife NT X1A 2N3.

...more



Alternatives North

The No Place for Poverty alliance will report results as they come in on Facebook and Twitter. As well, ads in regional papers and mail drops to small communities will tell voters where their candidates stand on making poverty a priority in the next assembly.

About the No Place for Poverty alliance: A group of social justice, women's groups and labour organizations got together in December 2009 to present the government with existing research that showed poverty is a major issue in the NWT. A workshop that included 81 delegates from 20 NWT communities in October last year produced a list of recommendations to government, including the need to begin collaborative work on an anti-poverty strategy. While Premier Roland promised to develop a discussion paper on the strategy in February 2010, and consultation took place last winter, the government's paper or consultation results have not yet been made public.

Anti-Poverty Election 2011 Toolkits are available online at www.alternativesnorth.ca

For more information about the Anti-Poverty Election 2011 Toolkit, please contact Aggie Brockman at 873-4588 or at abrockman@ssimicro.com

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August 8, 2011

DISTRIBUTION LIST

No Place for Poverty—Election 2011 Toolkit

We're pleased to provide you with some resources to help make poverty a major issue during the campaign leading up to the October 3, 2011 territorial election.

Many NWT citizens live in poverty, without adequate housing, dignity and the means to participate in community life. That's why 29 organizations and municipal governments have called on the GNWT to put in place a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy. This call was reinforced by the *No Place for Poverty* Anti-poverty Workshop, held in Yellowknife last October.

This election is our opportunity to make sure the new Members of the Legislative Assembly are committed to long term actions that will make the NWT No Place for Poverty. It's an ambitious target that will take efforts across all government departments, requiring much political will.

You can help encourage that political will!

This toolkit contains information that you can use to encourage territorial election candidates to pledge that—if they are elected—they will work to make poverty a priority for the next Assembly. Use this information to inform yourself about the facts and plan your local activities.

We appreciate your time and efforts to highlight the issue of poverty during the election. If you need further information or help, please don't hesitate to contact Julie Green at YWCA Yellowknife at 920 2777, Extension 303 (collect calls accepted) or email info@alternativesnorth.ca

With your help, poverty can be overcome. Thank you for joining in the movement to make the NWT No Place for Poverty!



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NO PLACE for Poverty

*Everyone has a right to
housing, food and dignity!*

Anti-Poverty Election 2011

Holding a Community Anti-Poverty Meeting

Why Hold a Public Meeting?

- A special meeting stresses the importance of poverty as a major election issue
- It invites candidates to state their position, and makes them say where they stand
- It allows anti-poverty supporters to gather and show there is strong community support
- It attracts media attention, which raises the profile of the issue

The objectives of the meeting are to:

- get candidates to share their ideas about the seriousness of poverty in your community, and in the NWT
- explain what they will do to fight poverty if they are elected
- state their position on the three questions contained in the Letter to Candidates

Who to Invite?

- Candidates. Contact the candidates and try to pick a date when all candidates can attend at one time
- Community leaders: Mayors, Councillors, Chiefs and Band Councillors, Regional Government leaders
- Local media
- Representatives from the toolkit list of groups "Checklist: Community Groups to Call"
- All people in your community, by advertising the meeting

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Plan a Public Meeting

Many community people have strong skills in organizing and holding public meetings. Ask a member of your local group who has these skills to organize your meeting.

1. Contact the candidates and set a date. If all candidates are not available at one time, pick the date most candidates can attend.
2. Book a room, such as the local government or Band council chamber, community hall or recreation centre room, anywhere large enough for people to gather with enough seating.
3. Advertise the meeting: Use the poster sample in the toolkit and put up posters around town.
4. Advertise on community or regional radio with a free public service announcement.
5. Ask all your group members to send emails or make phone calls or visits to their community contacts. Send people the poster and ask them to post it in as many places as possible.
6. Invite community leaders to the meeting: Use the toolkit checklist and call as many leaders as possible. (Tool kit Page 1.B)
7. Call local or regional media and tell them you are holding a meeting. Use the Speaking Points in the toolkit to explain the purpose of the meeting. Have one person be the spokesperson who deals with media. (Tool kit Page 1.D)
8. Use the toolkit Draft Meeting Agenda to plan how you will hold the meeting. Select a person from your group to host the meeting and act as the "moderator". (Tool kit Page 2.C)
9. Have a supply of the Anti-Poverty flyer, Anti-Poverty Poster Flyer, Questions for Candidates and the Letter to Candidates at the meeting for people to read.

Supply all candidates with a copy of the toolkit "Questions to Candidates". Tell the candidates they will be asked to answer these questions at the meeting. Ask the candidates who can't attend to send their written response so you can read their answer at the meeting.

Hold Your Public Meeting

The toolkit contains a Draft Agenda that suggests a format for the meeting. It is a suggestion for how to organize your meeting that you can adapt and change to suit your purposes.

You don't have to hand out the Agenda, it is your plan for the way the meeting will be held.

Candidates Meeting

Candidates are Invited to Explain

**How They Will Work
to End Poverty.**

Time

Place

Ask the Candidates

Will You Make Ending Poverty
the Top Priority of the GNWT?

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2.C

Anti-Poverty Election 2011

Candidates Meeting Draft Agenda

1. Welcoming comments: *(Name of your host)*

- Welcome candidates to the meeting
- Welcome the community leaders attending the meeting
- Welcome the audience and thank them for coming to discuss this important issue

2. State the objectives of the meeting:

- to get candidates to share their ideas about the seriousness of poverty in the (name) riding, and in the NWT.
- to ask candidates to explain what they will do to fight poverty if they are elected.
- to get answer to the Questions to Candidates that were supplied to candidates in advance of the meeting.

3. Give opening remarks

Use the Speaking Points for Meetings and Media Interviews to explain the issue, and why it is important during this Territorial election. You can change the speaking points to stress local facts about poverty.

4. Open the Meeting to Questions to Candidates

Ask the "Questions to Candidates" one question at a time, with each candidate answering the questions in turn. Read the responses from candidates who didn't attend at the end of each round of questions.

Ask each of the candidates to speak briefly on the question.

5. Invite Questions from the Audience

Invite people in the audience to ask questions of the candidates.

6. Close the Meeting

Thank the candidates for coming and end the meeting.

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Anti-Poverty Election 2011

Questions for Candidates

2.0

- 1.** Why is Poverty an important issue in this riding and in the NWT, and should it be a major priority for Territorial Government action?
- 2.** Will you make creation of an NWT Anti-Poverty Strategy one of the major objectives of your term in office? Please explain how.
- 3.** Will you act immediately upon taking office to establish action on poverty as one of the top priorities of the next Assembly, and how?
- 4.** Will you work with your fellow Legislative Assembly Members to create an NWT Anti-Poverty Strategy that is integrated across departments and involves business and community groups? Please explain how.