

40% of food bank clients in Ontario are children.

One in six children in Ontario live in poverty.

Over the past year, more than 77,000 allegations of abuse and neglect were investigated by Ontario's Children's Aid Societies. More than 27,000 children were in CAS care.

Almost 40% of women assaulted by spouses said their children witnessed the violence; in many cases the violence was severe.

One-third of children seeking mental health services in 2007 were still waiting at the end of the year.

A society is measured by the well-being of its children.

At a time of widespread economic uncertainty, the progress of Ontario's children threatens to be all but overlooked. That's precisely why standing up for them has never been more important than it is right now.

In this, our Ontario, too many of our children are denied the basics of a safe home and adequate food and clothing. Too many lack the nurturing family and community supports essential for them to succeed and thrive. Too many aren't developing in the essential ways they must, in order to reach their full potential. And it's been this way for too long, in good times as well as bad.

Today, on National Child Day, we ask all Ontarians to make our children and families, particularly our most vulnerable, a priority in our thoughts and actions. Their well-being is the true measure of our society. At a time when so much is uncertain, ensuring that our children continue to grow has never mattered more.

