

BAD CREDIT AS A BARRIER TO HOUSING

CHARLENE GAGNON, PROJECT MANAGER HOME FOR GOOD



HOME FOR GOOD

Collaboration Research Gender-Based Analysis Systems Change

Talk to women with lived experience of violence and homelessness

Share their stories with systems actors who can affect change

Reduce barriers through systems change and new solutions



PROJECT OVERVIEW



FINANCIAL BARRIERS

- Addictions
- Financial Abuse in Past Relationships
- Low Income Assistance Rates
- Housing Affordability
- Credit Problems



FINANCIAL INEQUALITY

“But women willingly **CHOOSE TO WORK** in lower-paying jobs.”



In Canada, **97%** of truck drivers are male; **97%** of early childhood educators are female.

Research shows male-dominated jobs often pay more than female-dominated jobs, even when education isn't a factor. Jobs tend to be undervalued when they involve work that is similar to the unpaid labour women have traditionally done at home.

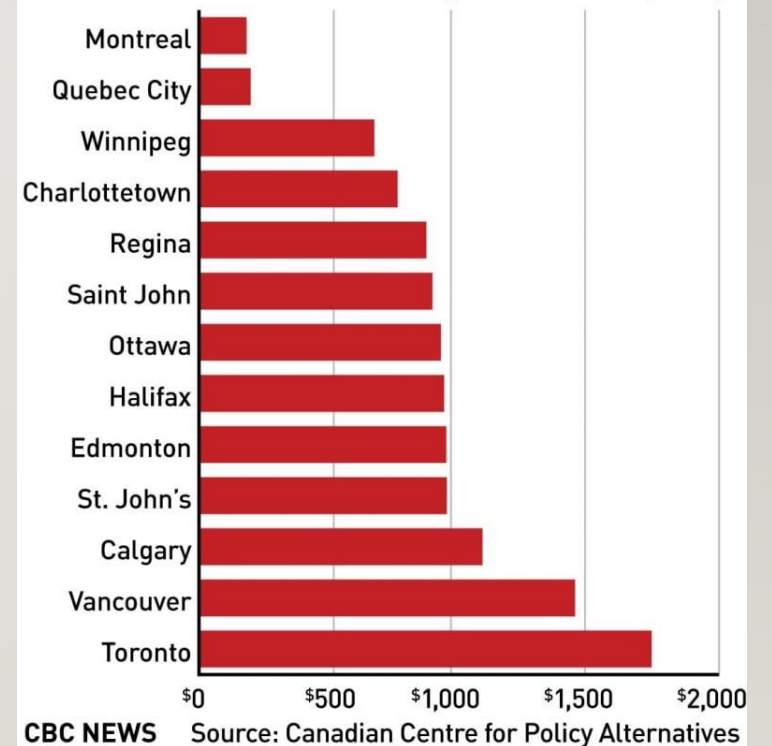


TRUCK DRIVERS
\$45,417

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS
\$25,334



Median cost of infant care per month by city



Source: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives/Oxfam Canada

FINANCES & SAFETY

- Financial barriers impact where you can live
- Building and neighborhood safety
- Balancing affordability and safety



STIGMA OF POVERTY

- 50% of women surveyed said that Bad Credit prevented them from attaining housing
- Shame associated with the kind of place they have to live in
- Acceptance of poor housing conditions as being all they deserved



CRIPPLING DEBT

- Difficulties reaching out for help – Where do I start?
- Shame of bad credit – I don't want to talk about my past
- Lack of education about credit and budgeting – I was never taught how to deal with money
- Dealing with utility arrears – even if landlords don't run a credit check, barriers to getting utilities hooked up

SYSTEMIC SOLUTIONS

- Financial barriers are both personal and systemic
- How can we address the systemic issues?
- Best time to initiate credit repair is when individual has housing security and is relatively stable
- Partnership with Credit Counselling Services of Atlantic Canada
 - Low barrier credit services
 - Reduce the stress of debt
 - Financial control and empowerment
 - Non-judgemental, trauma-informed approach to client relations