

Study reveals housing crisis for Toronto's low-income families

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A University of Toronto study has found that low-income families in Toronto who reside in aging apartment buildings face a lack of adequate and affordable housing places, placing many residents at risk of homelessness.

The researchers found that nine out of ten of these families live in [housing](#) that is overcrowded, precarious, unaffordable, or in poor condition. Families sacrifice groceries and transportation to pay rent; parents and children crowd into one-bedroom apartments; and infestations and disrepair are rife. These conditions affect health, well-being, and children's development.

"Although some residents see their current housing situation as a temporary sacrifice on their way to home-ownership, many more are stuck in sub-standard housing conditions with nowhere else to go," says lead researcher Emily Paradis from the University of Toronto's Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work. When families lose their housing due to eviction, violence, and other factors, they often double up with other families in a state of hidden homelessness, she says.

The report recommends a coordinated response at the federal, provincial, and city levels, including four key interventions: a national housing strategy; a provincial housing benefit; inclusionary zoning; and strengthened enforcement of landlord obligations and tenant rights.

The crisis affects many groups of Torontonians, especially persons who

are racialized, immigrants, and single mothers. "Poverty and discrimination work together to shut these groups out of adequate housing," says Gopi Krishna, Executive Director of Scarborough Housing Help Centre and member of the project's advisory board.

While previous studies have looked at housing problems in certain neighbourhoods, among specific groups, or within particular sectors such as Toronto Community Housing, this research shows that the housing crisis for low-income families is unfolding across Toronto in private rental as well as [social housing](#). The research was funded by the Government of Canada's Homelessness Partnering Strategy.

"I hope this report will make governments pay attention," says Rubena Naeem, a tenant member of the project's advisory board. "We need new affordable housing now."

More information: To view the full study and executive summary, see: neighbourhoodchange.ca.

Provided by University of Toronto

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