

**NOVA SCOTIA**  
*in the*  
**NEW MILLENNIUM**

---

**Address to Inter-Departmental Meeting on  
Working Together to Serve our Children**

*Meeting called by: The Association of Nova Scotia Educational Administrators:  
“Role of Schools and Partners in Community Building”*

*Hotel Halifax, June 17, 1999*

**Part I: The Ingredients -- Courage, Vision, Insight and Pragmatism**

Thank you for coming here today. Your willingness to be here is a real testimony to your bravery! Because we are definitely here today to make trouble. To challenge some sacred cows in a profound way. Literally to open Pandora's box!

This takes tremendous *courage*. Because what we'll discuss today definitely threatens our habitual patterns – in particular the decision-making silos with which we're so familiar: -- where we are comfortable on our own turf, with our own budgets, our own departments, our own familiar hierarchies, our own territory and power base, and above all, our own particular expertise. By being here, we're literally willing to start giving up a way of doing business that's become familiar, secure, and confirms our personal career paths.

What makes us willing to take this daring step is a shared *vision*. And that too brings us together today. There is no better historical moment than the cusp of a new millennium to envision the legacy we are leaving our children, and the society we want them to inhabit. It's a moment that truly invites us to leave our habitual short-term preoccupations behind for a moment, and to consider the world we've created for our children, and the future we want for them.

In the work I do, we call that way of thinking “sustainable development,” which means we'll live in such a way that the next generation will not be worse off than the present one. It's a fancy, academic term for being committed to our children. For public servants, as you are, with a mandate literally to serve the public, that commitment extends not only to your own children but to all Nova Scotians and their children.

I'm always struck by the remarkable non-partisan consensus that exists on what makes a good society, a society that can benefit all its members: Peace and physical security, a clean environment and healthy resources, economic security, health, creativity, and strong communities. A society with less poverty, greater wisdom and freedom, in which people genuinely care for each other and for the most vulnerable. This, surely, is a shared vision. No political party of any stripe officially stands for more crime, a degraded environment, or for more poverty, disease, or inequality. We actually *know* where we want to go. We already agree on the Nova Scotia we want to inhabit in the next millennium.

**And yet....**We are profoundly uncertain that we are moving in the right direction. So there is a third quality that brings us together here today – *intelligence and insight*. We have serious doubts about the world we are leaving our children. We know it is a world not as rich as the world we inherited – we have less topsoil, fewer forests, fewer fish in the oceans, a lot less plant and animal species, a lot more pollution, and a climate that is changing rapidly and dangerously.

We know that our children inhabit a society that is much less peaceful and secure than ours was a generation ago – they are three times as likely to be victims of crime as we were 30 years ago. Unemployment is three times higher than it was 30 years ago, and

youth unemployment even more so. Jobs are much more insecure than they used to be. There is way more debt, and student debt is at record levels.

We have 50% more Nova Scotian children living in poverty than 10 years ago, and more than 70% of Nova Scotian single mothers now live below the low-income cut-off. The poor are getting poorer -- the poorest 40% of Nova Scotians have lost 24% of their real income after taxes and transfers in the last 10 years. Communities are disintegrating, and voluntary community service is down more than 7% in 10 years. At the same time social service spending for the most vulnerable Nova Scotians is down 22% per capita. Stress levels are up, and downsizing has produced longer working hours for many, while many more can't get the hours they need to make ends meet.

There is no blame here. I really don't believe any political party or leader or institution wants to go this way, or is deliberately undermining our well being. But when even the most conventional economists predict that this is the first time since the Industrial Revolution that the next generation will be worse off than the present one, we have to stop and wonder why! Think of it: Our parents took for granted that we would be better off than they were, just as their parents did before them. For the first time, as we enter the new millennium, we are not at all certain that we are leaving a better future for our children. A recent U.S. poll found that three-quarters of Americans had more possessions than their parents. Less than half reported that they were happier than their parents.

Something about our political and economic system, and in our social priorities and our social structure is not working the way it ought. Something in our producer ethic that "bigger is more efficient" also seems to undermine communities. And something in our consumer ethic that "more is better," that *having* more makes us "better off", is not producing the satisfaction it promises.

So, in addition to the courage and vision that brought you here, some fundamental shared insight and intelligence also unites us today – the willingness to explore what is not working and why. We will only be willing to give up our habitual and comfortable patterns if we see clearly and acknowledge the flaws in the way we do business. We would not even have come together if we were convinced that we are serving our children adequately.

For example, school itself, considered in isolation from the community, is a silo. As it stands, the educators among us must be profoundly uncertain whether our current schooling is truly educational. I'll pick here the most provocative argument I know, and the one closest to my own experience in 20 years as an educator.

Twenty-six years in the public school system convinced John Taylor Gatto, New York State Teacher of the Year, that mass-schooling actually damages children and that both its theory and structure are fatally flawed. Education, he says:

*Should make a unique individual, not a conformist; it should furnish you with an original spirit with which to tackle the big challenges; it should allow you to find values which will be your road map through life; it should make you spiritually*

*rich, a person who loves whatever you are doing, wherever you are, whomever you are with; it should teach what is important, how to live and how to die.*

Well-schooled people, he says, are irrelevant:

*They can sell film and razor blades, push paper and talk on telephones, or sit mindlessly before a flickering computer terminal, but as human beings they are useless. Useless to others and useless to themselves.*

Gatto's book, *Dumbing Us Down*, argues that in actual practice, the *structure* of our school system and its hidden assumptions teach a set of lessons and values that contradict the goals of true education. He says mass public schooling actually destroys communities, is designed primarily for crowd control and constant surveillance, and teaches emotional and intellectual dependency, confusion, deception, indifference, class position, and a superficial and fragile, *conditional* self-esteem.

The children he teaches, he says, have almost no curiosity, cannot concentrate, are indifferent to the adult world, are cut off from the past and future, are cruel to each other, laugh at weakness, are uneasy with intimacy, are materialistic, and mask their timidity and passivity with surface bravado and aggressiveness. *Not*, he says, because they are bad. On the contrary, he says, genius is "an exceedingly common human quality" natural to us all; that children are completely endowed with insight, wisdom, justice, resourcefulness, courage, originality and all the hallmarks of human excellence.

Nor does he blame teachers:

*Thousands of humane, caring people work in schools, as teachers and aides and administrators (he writes), but the abstract logic of the institution overwhelms their individual contributions. Although teachers do care and do work very, very hard, the institution is psychopathic.*

Schools literally "dumb us down," Gatto argues, and teachers are hired "not to enlarge children's power, but to diminish it."

Whether we'd say it quite like that, I'm not sure, and time today does not allow a discussion of the community-based alternatives Gatto proposes. But I don't know a single good educator that hasn't in a quiet and reflective moment asked him or herself, as Gatto puts it, whether "education and school are...mutually exclusive terms." Maybe we can get together another time to begin the "ferocious national debate" Gatto advocates on schooling, community, and education.

But really all of us might ask the same question about our work and endeavours in each of our separate fields of expertise. Are any of us, in our specialized silos, whether in health care, or economic development, or justice, technology, or community services, really capable of regarding a child as a whole human being and serving him or her effectively? Take a typical child in northend Dartmouth or Glace Bay. Each of us, with the very best of intentions, pure motivation, and hard work, has made a career of carving out snippets of that child's life:

- The health care worker might treat the child's illness.
- The employment counselor might work with his unemployed parents.
- The community service worker will administer the welfare payments.
- The science and technology secretariat will put computers in the classroom.
- The teacher tries academic remedies for poor classroom performance.
- The justice official handles the child's criminal behaviour.

But we know well that:

- Health interventions have not prevented asthma rates among children from going up, and do not touch the economic and social determinants of health.
- Employment counseling has not prevented jobs becoming more insecure.
- Welfare payments have not stopped child poverty rates going up 50%.
- Computers, access to more information, and performance grading, have not translated into greater wisdom and understanding.
- Justice interventions have not stopped school violence or teenage alienation.
- Consolidated schools have not prevented the break down of communities and families, and may well, in the eyes of many Nova Scotians, accelerate the process.

In short, are we actually fulfilling our mandates and achieving our goals in practice? Are we serving our children as well as we might? Are we creating a better world for them? Is our work and *public service* actually building the Nova Scotia we want to inhabit in the next millennium?

That we are willing to acknowledge our uncertainties, to ask these tough questions and face up to the failings of the system we know is tremendous good news. Two and a half thousand years ago, Plato wrote that "wisdom begins when a person sees that he does not know what he always thought he knew." If we get no further today than a heartfelt confession that we cannot handle the challenges our children face in our habitual ways, we will have made enormous progress.

Our departmental silos have kept us imprisoned as surely as the chains in Plato's cave. The more we split ourselves into specialized pieces, the more fragmented our lives and communities become, the more we diminish the wholeness of our humanity and the more we sense our lives are out of control. If we can just begin to see those chains, and to look beyond them to the way our world is completely inter-connected, we have already made an enormous leap. From that understanding we can truly begin to work together.

Finally, in addition to courage, vision, and insight, I think there is a fourth quality that unites everyone in the room today, and brings us all together. That is *pragmatism*. We're not going to overturn our materialistic consumer ethic overnight. Nor are we going to restructure our whole school system in one fell swoop or abolish our existing structures of government. What we are going to do today is to begin *somewhere*: -- to take one modest but concrete step in a new direction. If it is pointing the right direction, even one gradual, practical move has tremendous power and can unleash a well-spring of creative energy and intelligence.

Let me stay with Plato for a moment. In his Allegory of the Cave, he compares our social illusions and deceptions with shadows projected onto a screen in a cave. A whole society, chained from childhood to face that one direction, is trained to regard those illusory images as reality. Accustomed to dim shadows from childhood, the prisoners would be blinded if they suddenly were freed and taken out of the cave into the bright sunlight. The path to freedom, therefore, is a gradual one, loosening the chains and becoming slowly accustomed to the light entering the cave. Nevertheless even the first step – doubting the illusory images projected onto the screen, and facing a new direction – is a revolutionary step that makes the journey to freedom inevitable.

All of you are practical people, not academics or philosophers, thank heaven! So the work today is profoundly pragmatic. This is not just a talking shop today, but the beginning of a concrete strategy for action. To build a good society in the new millennium, to ensure a brighter future for our children, we simply want to take one practical step in the right direction. How to take that step is completely up to you in the discussion groups that follow this morning and this afternoon. There is no one correct step. What works in Halifax may not be appropriate in Cape Breton-Victoria or in the Annapolis Valley or on the north shore. No one knows better than those actually live and work in each region what is needed there and what will work there. That's where the practical part comes in.

But every initiative that comes out of the day will be stitched together with a common understanding and a common vision. At the very least, we begin by recognizing the common interest and concern for our children's well being and future that brings us together. We acknowledge the limitations of our own specialized silos working separately. And we recognize instead the profound interconnection between all the parts represented in this room today – that our own professional hats are completely stitched together with the threads of everyone else's hat. That interconnection is the essence of what we mean when we talk of "community."

To illustrate, let me come back to education for a minute, just as an example, and look at how John Taylor Gatto proposes breaking down the "school silo" to bring learning back into the community. In a nutshell here are a few of the alternatives he proposes:

- "Involve everyone in the community in the education of the young: businesses, institutions, old people, whole families." Set up "a thousand different apprenticeships (for our students), the one-day variety or longer," -- with the local police chief, with the town newspaper, with local elders who remember the way it used to be, with a local business or farmer.
- "Include *family* as the main engine of education...promote during schooltime confluences of parent and child that will strengthen family bonds....The 'Curriculum of the Family' is at the heart of any good life."
- "Trust children and families to know what is best for themselves;...encourage and underwrite experimentation;...look for local solutions and always accept a personal

solution in place of a corporate one....Turn your back on national solutions and towards communities of families as successful laboratories.”

- “Trust children from a very early age with independent study...to develop private uniqueness and self-reliance....Independent time...is the key to self-knowledge (which) ...is the only basis of true knowledge.”
- “Make community service a required part of schooling. Besides the experience in acting unselfishly that it will teach, it is the quickest way to give young children real responsibility in the mainstream of life.” For five years Gatto ran a school program in which he required all 13-year-olds to give 320 hours a year of hard community service. He reports: “Dozens of these kids came back to me years later, grown up, and told me that the experience of helping someone else had changed their lives. It had taught them to see in new ways, to rethink goals and values.”

These and other ways of bringing family and community back into the heart of education, says Gatto, “are all powerful, cheap, and effective ways to start a real reform of schooling.” We may or may not agree with his particular recommendations. But they illustrate the practical and creative ways in which we can cut loose from the limitations of our institutional silos, and nurture healthy communities.

We may also, incidentally, heave a tremendous sigh of relief that none of what he suggests, or in this way of thinking altogether, requires spending more money. On the contrary, he says, it is actually hard to turn a dollar on true education; -- one of its defining characteristics is that it actually doesn’t cost much. What it does require is working together cooperatively in new ways.

The same types of creative community building strategies that Gatto suggests for education are available in all our areas of knowledge and understanding. The critical thing is to acknowledge that, by definition, “community” is the actual antidote to silo thinking, precisely because it includes all aspects of our social well being. Community literally invites us to see the interconnectedness of reality as we actually experience it, -- the mutual dependence of the family, environment, economy, health, education, justice and all other aspects of our quality of life.

“A community is a place”, says Gatto, “in which people face each other over time in *all* their human variety, good parts, bad parts and all the rest. Such places promote the highest quality of life possible, lives of engagement and participation...People interact on thousands of invisible pathways in a community, and the emotional payoff is correspondingly rich and complex.”

Communities begin to break down, when we try to isolate these parts in separate silos and institutions. For example, “by isolating young and old from the working life of places, and by isolating the working population from the lives of young and old, a fundamental disconnection of the generations has occurred....No vibrant, satisfying communities can come into being where young and old are locked away” in schools and nursing homes.

To come back to where we started: the four fundamental qualities that have brought you here today, actually provide all the necessary ingredients to come up with practical ways of working together to serve our children better and that fit the circumstances of each of our regions:

- 1) the *courage* to challenge some sacred cows and step outside our silos;
- 2) the *vision* of a better future for our children and the determination to create a good society for the Nova Scotia of the next millennium;
- 3) the *intelligence and insight* to acknowledge our confusion, to recognize what is not working, and to see clearly the interconnectedness of our world;
- 4) and the *pragmatism* to take workable and practical steps in the right direction; to bring the vision down to earth, and translate it into action.

And what links all these four qualities together in a particularly potent and poignant way is that everyone in this room is a “public servant,” with a mandate literally to “serve the public.” That is a profoundly different mandate from that of business, responsible to shareholders for an adequate return on investment; from trade unions, responsible for advancing the economic interests of their members; or from any other private, special or sectarian interest. The four qualities – of courage, vision, insight and pragmatism – are not optional for public servants as they may be for many others. They are actually your job description. And I know they unite us in a common resolve today.



## **Part II: Beyond the Silos – Building Community**

I'd like to give just a few examples from the Genuine Progress Index research that demonstrate in very practical terms, the necessity for us to step beyond our specialized departmental silos, and to work together to serve our children well. To build the good society that we really want to inhabit in the new millennium, we must first recognize that the true well-springs of our wealth and prosperity lie in the strength of our communities, the quality of our environment and in our social well being. The health of our natural, human and social capital ultimately determines our economic prosperity.

Because the interaction of *all* these variables determines our actual well being, as the definition of community implies, the Genuine Progress Index measures 20 social, economic, and environmental sets of indicators to assess how we are really doing as a society. The 20 components give explicit value to our economic security, our family and household work, our voluntary and community service, our free time, the quality of our environment and the health of our natural resources, our health and education, to our physical security as measured by crime rates, and to our progress towards greater equity.

For that reason, the GPI is a useful tool to get us thinking about Nova Scotia as a *whole* society and our children as *whole* human beings. The GPI approach quite naturally leads us to explore how we might begin to break down the walls of our silos to serve our children and our communities more effectively.

I didn't expect this at the start, because I was pitching the GPI to government, but what's happened naturally really should not have surprised me: -- the GPI has been most enthusiastically embraced by communities that see it as a natural community development tool. Even though the provincial GPI is still more than a year from completion, Kings County didn't want to wait – they're going to start using the GPI, as far as we've come with it, right away. It makes sense that communities have responded as they have, because the GPI approach *is* wholistic –and that's the way communities actually experience their lives.

For too long we have measured our well being in narrow materialist terms, focusing on the market economy and its growth as the bellwether of our prosperity. The more we produce and the more money we spend., the “better off” we are, our experts tell us. But the market economy itself is a silo – certainly our dominant silo, which all other silos faithfully serve in the name of growth, jobs and “progress.”

So long as the market is our primary reference point, schools will be job training institutions rather than instruments of true education. And so long as growth is our goal, communities will lose control of their own destiny, increasingly dependent on abstract and distant market forces that determine their well being and future – decisions made in New York or Toronto or Ottawa to relocate a factory to Mexico where labour is cheaper, to shut down an inefficient enterprise, or to provide jobs in exchange for tax write-offs

and wage cuts. And so we short-circuit our own creativity and our capacity to provide for ourselves and meet our own needs.

Because the narrow market fixation prevents us seeing our society as a whole, we have not even concerned ourselves with *what* exactly is growing. More crime, more gambling, more accidents, more pollution all make the economy grow as surely as more clinics and schools. The more trees we cut down and the more fish we sell, the more the economy grows, and the experts tell us, the “better off” we are. Because of a narrow focus on economic growth, we have not distinguished between economic activities that bring benefit to communities from those that cause harm and degrade the quality of life.

And while we are busy counting and measuring everything produced and sold for money, we put no value on the real cornerstones of community -- voluntary community service, or the vital unpaid work performed by families in the household, simply because money is not exchanged there. We count all our extra hours of *paid* work as progress because it makes the economy grow, but we put no value on our free time. And so long as the economy grows, our current measures of progress also put no value on equity, environmental quality, or the health of our communities.

The illusion of limitless growth and the obsession with spending and having ever more not only destroys our environment and threatens our planet. It also undermines our communities. Gatto writes:

*An important difference between communities and institutions is that communities have natural limits; they **stop** growing or they die. There is a good reason for this: in the best communities everyone is a special person who impinges on everyone else's consciousness.*

Communities throughout Nova Scotia, rebelling against ever larger consolidated schools, know this instinctively. If we are going to trade off efficiency and technology against community, that at least deserves a full debate – are we producing more “well-schooled” consumers, or are we truly educating our young?

Scientists recognize that the only biological organism that has unlimited growth as its dogma is the cancer cell, the apparent model for our conventional economic theory. By contrast, the natural world thrives on balance and equilibrium, and recognizes inherent limits to growth. The cancer analogy is apt, because the path of limitless growth is profoundly self-destructive, both to the environment on which we depend for life, and to our communities.

What we count and measure is a sign of what we value as a society, and that, in turn, determines our policy priorities. Because we measure our well being and prosperity according to our economic growth statistics, and not according to the strength of our communities, policy attention and resources are devoted to strengthening the market economy and preparing our students for the job market, but not to the invisible social well-springs of our prosperity.

We now know that if we neglect these sources of true well being, we will eventually pay the price in economic terms. We've learned this the hard way, through the collapse of our ground fishery, through the Tar Ponds mess, and through the price we are now paying for years of overspending. Sadly, because we generally do not see the interconnectedness of our world, it can best be demonstrated in practice by showing the price we pay for ignoring it. Once we recognize and value the connecting threads that define our well being, practical policy shifts become clear and obvious, and solutions flow naturally. Here's a few examples from our research to date:

### **1) Downsizing and Voluntary Service**

Superficially, from a market silo perspective, downsizing appears as a cost saving to business and government. But those that are retained are the most highly skilled and educated workers, who are expected to maintain and improve output with less human resources. As a consequence, overtime hours for the highly educated have been steadily increasing in the last 10 years, most of it unpaid. How many people in this room are more overworked than ever?

We will not for the moment consider the hidden social costs of overwork on stress levels, physical and mental health, family life, and free time. But let's look beyond the measured market economy to the invisible area of voluntary work and community service, currently ignored in our measures of progress. There we find that highly educated people also have the highest rate of voluntary work of any demographic group. In Nova Scotia 73% of university graduates do some work for non-profit and volunteer organizations – by far the highest rate in the country. That hidden work contributes directly to our standard of living and quality of life, and is the lifeblood of healthy communities and civil society.

But there are only 24 hours in a day. With the same university graduates putting in longer hours than ever in their paid jobs, voluntary work is getting squeezed out. Earlier this year, we discovered, for the first time, that voluntary community service in Nova Scotia has declined by 7.2% in the last 10 years. There are more volunteers than ever before, but they are putting in, on average, 25% less hours a year per volunteer. If it were counted anywhere, the decline would be worth \$60 million a year in lost services to those most at risk.

Put together with the 22.5% loss in government social services per capita, there has been a cumulative 30% erosion of the social safety net for the most vulnerable Nova Scotians (Tables 1 and 2, Charts 1 and 2). The decline has reduced services to children in need. Put together also with the 24% decline in real income for the poorest 40% of Nova Scotians, children in poor families are considerably less well served than they were 10 years ago. Do school teachers see the consequences of this loss? And how do they handle it?

Unless we see the whole picture – market trends, voluntary services, educational levels of volunteers, the social costs of overwork, family life, the needs of those at risk, community strength, and more – we remain unaware of the real costs of downsizing. If we look

narrowly at the market economy alone, as a silo, we maintain the illusion that reducing labour inputs is saving money.

When he announced major cuts in social service expenditures in 1996 Paul Martin said: “Governments have to rely on volunteerism more than ever in a time of cut-backs.” But without measuring voluntary services, there was no way of knowing whether volunteers have or have not picked up the slack from government service cuts. The Finance Minister’s assertion was untested for years. From the GPI, we now know, for the first time, that volunteers have not been able to compensate for government service cuts, in large part because of trends in the market economy that are conventionally welcomed as signs of progress.

## **2) Single Mothers, Child Poverty and Health Costs**

In parts of Lower Sackville, such as the Hillside Park Elementary School, Gordon Michael tells me that up to 80% of children are from single-parent families. When we remain fixated on work in the market economy, we fail to notice that non-employed single mothers put in about 50 hours a week of unpaid productive work (Table 3). That unpaid work is conservatively defined by Statistics Canada as work that could be replaced for pay in the market economy, and that *is* counted when performed for pay. The GPI found that if the productive work of non-employed single mothers were replaced for pay in the market economy at \$9 an hour (the going rate for domestic services), it would be worth \$450 a week, or \$23,450 a year.

It is questionable whether every additional lawyer, broker or advertising executive contributes to social well-being. But the unpaid work single mothers do is a direct investment in our human capital – in our children. Because it is unpaid, however, it is not counted and not valued in our measures of progress. Because it is not valued and therefore not supported, more than 70% of Nova Scotian single mothers live below the low-income cut-off line. This in turn affects our children. More than half the 51,000 Nova Scotian children living in poverty come from single-parent families.

Single mothers who do take on paid jobs spend three times as much of their income on paid child care as married mothers, eating up a sizeable portion of the low salaries they generally accept to find jobs that fit their household responsibilities. When they come from work, they also have 100% of the housework to do, and so have only an hour a day to devote directly to caring for their own children (Chart 3).

Time use studies show that most working single mothers do not have the minimum necessary time for basic household production, including food preparation and cleanup, house care, laundry and shopping, and are frequently sleep deprived. For these reasons, paid work is not an option for most single mothers, and they remain dependent on the hidden, unmeasured and unrecognized household economy. So there is an important connection between failing to value the unpaid household work of families, and our high rates of single-parent poverty and child poverty.

Conventional economics textbooks describe firms as producers and households as consumers, each a silo with a narrow function. Through that lens, since only firms provide “jobs,” we do not regard the use of taxpayer dollars for job creation in the market economy as “welfare,” but as essential social infrastructure for the market economy. Government subsidies and tax breaks are provided, loans are forgiven, trade missions sent abroad to cut new business deals.

But what happens if we break that conventional silo down just a bit, and recognize that households are *producers* as well as consumers, and that the household economy contributes productive work that is essential to our survival and well being? If we then recognize the household as a productive economic unit, we will no longer regard social supports for single mothers disparagingly as “welfare,” but rather than as essential social infrastructure for the household economy. The shift in view is profound.

Aristotle saw the family as the fundamental building block of community. Acknowledging, valuing and supporting the unpaid work that families do is an essential step in building healthy communities, in eliminating a major cause of child poverty, and, at the most practical level, meeting the needs of children at Hillside Park Elementary School in Lower Sackville.

If we fail to tackle the problem at its roots, we will eventually pay the price in economic terms. Child poverty in Nova Scotia has increased by 50% in 10 years to 23% of all children, the second highest rate in the country. That poverty in turn produces other social costs, including poor educational performance, poor workplace productivity and high health costs. *The New York Times* reported just two weeks ago:

*"Scientists have known for decades that poverty translates into higher rates of illness and mortality. But an explosion of research is demonstrating that social class -- as measured not just by income but also by education and other markers of relative status -- is one of the most powerful predictors of health, more powerful than genetics, exposure to carcinogens, even smoking., ....Risk for a wide variety of illnesses, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, arthritis, infant mortality, many infectious diseases and some types of cancer, varies with relative wealth or poverty: the higher the rung on the socioeconomic ladder, the lower the risk"*

From the GPI perspective and from any view that sees the interconnectedness of all aspects of community, family, economy, health and education, simply pouring more money into acute health care and hospitals does not begin to address the crucial determinants of health.

“What really matters,” concluded Canada’s National Forum on Health in 1997, are “the social and economic determinants of health....We are particularly concerned about the impact of poverty, unemployment, and cuts in social supports on the health of individuals, groups and communities.” The Forum referred to studies showing that “income inequality is the key determinant of variations in average life expectancy,” and

specifically noted that high poverty rates among single mothers, elderly women and caregivers “have adverse effects on women’s health.”<sup>1</sup>

We are not talking abstractly here, but about the concrete issues we face in working with children and their parents at Hillside Park Elementary School and dozens of other schools around the province. If we’re ever to handle the frustration of the school nurse, the classroom teacher, the community service worker or any other front-line public servant, we have to work together to tackle the underlying problems at their root.

Even from a purely economic perspective, high rates of child poverty are a poor investment that will produce significant social and economic costs 20 years from now. Think of tackling that challenge with determination as a good financial investment that will produce enormous cost savings in the future, and thus provide greater economic security for our children.

### **3) Family Time and Stress**

Let’s stay with the family, the building block of community, for a minute more, but shift the focus from non-employed single mothers to a different kind of family – the dual-earner family. Two-income families now constitute nearly 70% of all Canadian families. They’re considerably better off economically than single parents, but they suffer from a different type of poverty. They are increasingly short of that most precious of all commodities – time!

According to Statistics Canada, the average dual earner couple today puts in 78.5 hours a week at paid jobs. If they have children, the couple puts in an additional 56 hours a week of unpaid household work, for a total of about 134 hours a week. Amazing as it may seem, they work longer hours than the average household 100 years ago, when the male breadwinner put in 58.5 hours a week for pay, and the female homemaker put in 56 hours of unpaid household work (Table 4).

Let’s look at some numbers. Women have doubled their rate of participation in the paid labour force, but they still do twice as much housework as men, a proportion that has hardly changed in 40 years. Sixty-two percent of women with small infants, age 0-2, are in the paid labour force, up from 25% 40 years ago. In addition to the double burden of paid work and household work, including child care, the growth of home care has put additional demands on women. Working mothers put in an average of more than 11 hours work a day on weekdays, and an additional 15 hours of unpaid work on weekends. Women have less free time than ever (Charts 5,6,7,8).

---

<sup>1</sup> National Forum on Health, *Canada Health Action: Building on the Legacy*, Final Report of the National Forum on Health, Government of Canada, catalogue no. H21-126/5-1-1997E, pages 14-16; National Forum on Health, *What Determines Health?*, Government of Canada, catalogue no. H21-126/3-1996E, pages 128-129.

Am I talking about the life of anyone in this room? You don't need statistics to know what I'm telling you. Still, it's nice to know we're not alone! Because household work is ignored, this time stress that *most* of us experience as a daily reality is not a public policy issue, even though it's reached epidemic proportions and tears families and communities apart. We still regard juggling our schedule as our private, domestic problem. There are no legislative debates on how to ease the burden, and how to encourage more family-friendly work arrangements to help balance job and household responsibilities more successfully, though we are talking here about our day to day quality of life. It doesn't have to be a private, hidden concern. In Norway, for example, there is actually a Ministry for Children and Families that addresses these very concerns.

What are the costs of this neglect? We can only speculate anecdotally. We bemoan violence in schools, and we worry about teenage alienation. But how many of us take responsibility for the fact that we're spending less time than ever with our children? The combination of television and the time crunch of two-income and working single-parent families has swallowed up most of what used to be "family time." We are so busy rushing around and working long hours to make ends meet, to handle increased workloads, and to buy more stuff, that we spend considerably less time with our children than our parents spent with us. What effect does this time stress have on education, on emotional development, on health?

Since 1981, child care has been the fourth fastest growing industry in the country after computers, electronics and trucks and vans. While we spend less time with our children, we spend nearly 20% more time each week shopping than our parents did. All these trends – extra paid work hours, more spending, more paid child care – count as economic growth and "progress." (Charts 9, 10, 11).

Look at the language we use: More spending is praised as "consumer confidence." Longer paid work hours contribute to a "healthy," "robust," and "dynamic" economy. Pay a stranger to look after your children and the economy grows. Look after your own child – it has no value in our current measures of progress. Watch your free time dwindle – it counts for nothing. Every shift from the family and household economy to the market economy is counted as growth and progress.

Is there a cost? While we operate solely in the market silo, while we see a primary function of schools as preparing children for the market economy, while we ignore and de-value the work done in families, while we assign no value to free time and family time, we will never even ask the question, let alone calculate the costs, take on the challenges, or change our policies.

Look at the work place. It has hardly changed at all to accommodate the new reality of women's participation in the paid labour force. The basic structure of the workplace still reflects the reality of a bygone era with one breadwinner and one homemaker. Flexible starting and ending times to accommodate child drop-off and pick-up; job sharing; pro-rated benefits for part-time work, and other family-friendly work arrangements are hardly

on the forefront of the policy agenda in this country, because we see only through the narrow lens of paid work.

We are so busy comparing ourselves with the United States, which pays considerably less attention to the *quality* of life than we do, that we do not look for inspiration to Europe, where these issues *are* on the forefront of the policy agenda in several countries, including the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and France. Measuring, valuing and recognizing the unpaid work done by families can be a useful tool to help us address the growing stresses of juggling job and household responsibilities.

And what are the costs of the trend towards more work and paid child care on children? Opinions vary, but they are worth a vigorous public debate. On the one hand, a mother's work can positively affect her children and reduce the frustration and stress of being house-bound and confined to domestic chores. On the other hand, a recent Mail-Star story about working mothers quotes a 28-year-old Moncton mother whose 4-year-old son sometimes pleads for her to stay home when she leaves for work in the morning. Her heart regularly breaks, she says, as she tells him: "Mommy has to go to work to bring home the cookies." When she has to work late, she confesses feeling guilty about spending more time away from her 2 and 4-year-old children.<sup>2</sup>

The question the story does not ask is whether the children would prefer their mother or father to the cookies. Here is one opinion from a recent *Globe and Mail* story:

*The multiterrain vehicle (which will never see a dirt road) and matching furniture that come with two incomes mean nothing to children. It's the presence of their parents that they hunger for....Playgrounds, libraries, community pools and kinder-gym classes (are) almost surreally devoid of mothers (these days)....It is pitifully rare to see a little boy or girl hugged, kissed or tickled to delighted helplessness. Yes, they are taken to classes (by child care workers) and pushed on swings. They are fed, and someone usually makes sure they aren't running out onto the expressway. But ultimately their "primary caregivers" (Orwell himself couldn't have come up with a better example of Newspeak) view them not as the apple of their eye, but as a job. These children have been robbed of their childhood.*

The writer expresses her "astonishment at the way parents consign their offspring to strangers":

*The act of raising children—like all important human relationships—is a profoundly intimate one. With young ones it is especially physical....These so-called "primary caregivers" (or underpaid servants) come into the child's life and then, when the child is old enough to be in school, they simply disappear. What does this teach the child about relationships?...Our behaviour can only*

---

<sup>2</sup> *The Mail-Star*, Halifax, Thursday, August 6, 1998, page A2



*leave (children) feeling that our ambitions and comforts always come ahead of their needs.*<sup>3</sup>

How does this social change affect the classroom and the relationship of school teacher and child? What is the connection between the changing role of the family and the issues all of you in this room deal with when serving our children? There are no simple answers, and certainly the answer is not to roll back the progress women have made in pursuing careers of their choice and advancing gender equity in the paid work force. Not only the workplace has to adjust to the new reality. Profound changes are also clearly needed in the traditional gender division of labour in the household. But if our schools reflect our social norms, we may *also* wish to question whether our consumer ethic (a silo in itself) carries a more profound cost in our relationship with our children.

We're not talking now about so-called "special needs" children – of those in poverty, from illiterate families, who come to school hungry. We're talking about your child and mine, your average middle class child – the child we can never understand why they got into trouble or got hooked on drugs or committed a random act of violence or feels so profoundly alienated. Drug use in schools *is* growing. Is there any connection here?

Interestingly, the shift from family work to market work often doesn't make sense even in economic terms. Even at the level of dollars and cents, we are unaware of the costs of replacing parenting with paid child care, or of eating out instead of preparing our own meals. From 1986 to 1997, the overall consumer price index in Nova Scotia rose by 35%, groceries by 33%, and wages by only 26%. This means that real wages actually declined. But during the same period, restaurant food went up by 44% and the cost of child care by 48%, so that we literally have to work longer hours to pay for the services that have shifted out of the household economy (Chart 12). Or we can go deeper into debt.

Many workers are clearly trapped in a vicious circle here. The more time they spend selling their labour in the market place, the less time they have to cook and take care of their children, and the more dependent they are on substituting market services for activities previously carried on in the household. At the same time the prices of those market services are rising more rapidly than their income, so that they have to work longer hours to pay for these services, which in turn makes the workers even more dependent on restaurant and take-out food and paid child care.

Ironically, the GDP counts all elements of this self-defeating circle as economic growth and "progress", since additional work hours, more spending, and greater dependence on paid market services like fast food and day care all add to the GDP and to economic output. In conventional terms, all this extra market activity makes our economy "stronger" and "more robust". Conventional market statistics alone create the illusion that growth is "limitless" and automatically enhances well being, but only because time, stress, efficient resource use, and quality of life are simply not factored into the equation.

---

<sup>3</sup> *The Globe and Mail*, July 9, 1998, page A26

Ladies and gentlemen: We will never make genuine progress, serve our children adequately, or address the *quality* of our lives until we break out of our silos and see the intimate connections between work, family, education, health and all aspects of our lives. The Halifax Regional School Board is planning to cut back primary school hours in order to save money. That particular silo, very understandable in conventional terms, is defined by the school board budget. In all the many articles I have read on the subject, I have never once seen a discussion of the effect of this decision on parents' work time, on family time, on child care costs, and so on. Could we move one small step towards genuine partnership with families, children, communities and other agencies in making such decisions, so that we see the bigger picture, and understand more accurately the full benefits and costs of our actions?

There *is* clearly a profound and serious cost to our silo system, and I don't think we would be here today if we didn't know it, which is why I pay tribute to the natural intelligence that sees through the illusion. Sometimes the perversity in our system is so obvious we simply cannot avoid it, and that helps us see through the myths. Get sick from stress and overwork, for example, – that's literally good for the economy, the way we currently measure our progress. Ladies and gentlemen, this is not just a theoretical cost of our fixation on paid work and spending. Heart disease among women is on the rise, as are other stress-related illnesses. Obesity-related illnesses are on the rise. We are already paying the price in very real terms for the stresses on our families and communities.

There is some good news here among the grim statistics! If we come back to the family as the essential building block of community, there are plenty of good models from which we can learn, if we don't compare ourselves only with the United States. The Dutch, for example, have a 3.4% unemployment rate and the shortest work hours of any industrialized country. They have created more jobs by reducing work hours, by guaranteeing equal treatment for part-time workers, and by pro-rating benefits for part-timers. Parents can balance their job and family responsibilities more easily without economic penalty. The Dutch have their own challenges, but they have reduced social stress significantly without sacrificing a healthy economy, good social services and a prosperous society. We could learn something from the Dutch model of consensus decision-making involving business, union, community and government partners.

The Danes have 11 hours more free time per week than Canadians, 5 ½ weeks of annual vacation, and a 4% unemployment rate. The Swedes have generous parental leave provisions for both mothers and fathers, with guaranteed re-entry into the work force. Family-friendly work arrangements are at the top of the collective bargaining agenda in several European countries, ahead of wage demands. Once we see the big picture and the need to balance work, family, school and free time, there is no end of creative options, models and job creation possibilities.

One of my favourites is actually from Albany, New York, where working parents in clerical civil service jobs were given the option of taking the summer school vacation off without pay, but with guaranteed re-entry at the same level in September. The openings provided much-needed summer jobs for college students; parents saved child care costs

and spent the summers with their children; and the government saved money to boot by paying the students less than the full-time workers they replaced. There is an abundant array of working models and “best practices” on which we can draw to find creative solutions to the challenges we face, adapting them as we need to our own circumstances.

#### **4) Justice, Education and Employment**

Once we break down our silos and see the intimate interconnections between our fields of interest and expertise, remedies and solutions naturally suggest themselves. But we cannot implement them alone. Let’s look at justice for some working examples.

In Canada as a whole, only 19% of the population have less than a grade 10 education. But 36% of all inmates, and 46% of federal prisoners, who are the most serious offenders, have less than a grade 10 education. A Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics survey of Nova Scotia prison inmates found that 42% had less than a grade 10 education, compared to 19% in the population as a whole.<sup>4</sup> Since offenders given sentences of two years or more serve their time in federal facilities, there appears to be a direct correlation between poor education and both overall crime rates and seriousness of offence. By contrast, crime rates appear to go down in direct proportion to level of education.<sup>5</sup>

A similar correlation exists with employment. 52% of Canadian prison inmates and 59% of Nova Scotian inmates were unemployed at the time of admission to sentenced custody, five times the unemployment rate in the general population (Table 5). A Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics survey of inmates in Nova Scotia prisons found that 67% were unemployed at the time of admission to the correctional facility.<sup>6</sup> And regression analyses conducted by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics demonstrate a strong statistical link between crime and unemployment.<sup>7</sup>

Harvard University epidemiologist Harvey Brenner in 1984 found that a 14.3% increase in the U.S. unemployment rate (from 4.9% to 5.6%) from 1973 to 1974, was associated with 403 additional homicides, 7,000 additional assaults, 270 suicides, and 8,400 admissions to mental hospitals in that country, with many of the effects spread over a period of six years.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, *A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada’s Adult Correctional Facilities*, catalogue no. 85-601, page 120.

<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada, Robinson, David, et. al., “A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada’s Adult Correctional Facilities”, *Juristat*, catalogue no. 85-002, volume 18, no. 8, pages 5 and 6. Shelley Trevethan, Chief, Corrections Program, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, points out that Statistics Canada has not actually stated that crime rates are proportional to level of education, so GPI Atlantic takes full responsibility for this inference (personal communication, 6 April, 1999).

<sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, *A One-Day Snapshot of Inmates in Canada’s Adult Correctional Facilities*, catalogue no. 85-601, page 120. For Canada, the “Snapshot” shows 55% of provincial prisoners and 43% of federal prisoners unemployed at the time of admission.

<sup>7</sup> Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, *Criminal Justice Trends Canada from 1962: Corrections Program*, page 21.

<sup>8</sup> Brenner, Harvey, *Estimating the Effects of Economic Change on National Health and Social Well Being*, a study prepared for the Subcommittee on Economic Goals and Intergovernmental Policy of the Joint

Unemployment rates and crime rates have risen sharply during each of the last two recessions, then dropped back during the business cycle upturn but not to pre-recession levels. Each decade, both unemployment rates and crime rates have risen substantially (Table 6). Both the chance of being a crime victim and the chance of being unemployed are three times as high in the 1990s as they were in the 1960s.

In other words, people with jobs and a decent education are far less likely to commit crimes than those who are unemployed and poorly educated. While this certainly does not prove that unemployment and poor education *cause* crime, as many case studies demonstrate, the correlation does indicate that investments in job creation and education are likely to produce positive spin-off benefits in reduced crime. Since crime is also highly correlated with youth, employment programs for young people are likely to produce particular benefits in crime reduction.

A long-term longitudinal study in the United States measured the economic value of investment in high quality pre-school education (the Perry program) in a low-income inner city area with high crime and unemployment rates against a control group in the same area in which no such educational investment was made. Since the program was instituted in the early 1960s, the Perry experimental group has regularly out-performed the control group, and demonstrated consistently lower crime rates.

A report by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics notes: “The Perry Pre School programme reduced crime among youth and adults, while improving success rates in school, higher rates of employment, higher earnings, and less reliance on social assistance. In this case, a \$5,000 investment in early childhood education yielded an estimated \$28,000 return in dividends to society.” Because the economic cost-benefit analysis of the Perry initiative is based on an actual longitudinal study over nearly four decades, considerable confidence can therefore be placed in the calculation of potential social returns on investment.

Here in Nova Scotia, we are embarking on our own extraordinary initiative that can really turn our justice system around and initiate a healing process that has its roots firmly in the community. It is a model of what might be possible when we take off our habitual hats and step out of our specialized silos. The Nova Scotia Justice Department is instituting a restorative justice program, which could become an example for the country. This program intends to bring together the offender, the victim and justice officials to determine appropriate forms of restitution to the victim and to the larger community for harm done by the offender. Restorative justice may divert an offender from the normal judicial system at any point in the process – from the time of arrest through the prosecution and court process to the corrections stage.

---

Economic Committee, Joint Committee Print 98-198, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington D.C., 1984; cited in Cobb, Clifford, Ted Halstead, and Jonathan Rowe, *The Genuine Progress Indicator: Summary of Data and Methodology*, Redefining Progress, San Francisco, September, 1995.

<sup>9</sup> Statistics Canada. Juristat. *Justice Spending in Canada*. Cat. No. 85-002, Vol. 17, No. 3, p.3.

The program is a radical alternative to the existing adversarial system and “the general fixation on punishment as the principal tool for correcting behaviour,” which, according to the Justice Department, “drives offender responsibility underground. If the only option available for offenders is a potentially harmful period of incarceration, non-acceptance of responsibility will be the standard response.”<sup>10</sup> The new program is also driven by the recognition that imprisonment has not succeeded in reducing recidivism rates among offenders and that these rates are still too high.

“Restorative justice is only available when offenders are prepared to accept responsibility for their actions,” says the Justice Department. “Restorative justice places a high value on a face-to-face meeting between the victim, offender and community. During the course of that meeting, each party is given an opportunity to tell the story of the crime from their own perspective, and talk about their concerns and feelings.”<sup>11</sup> The community may be represented by relevant volunteer groups.

That initial forum might produce a range of possible outcomes quite similar to those currently being explored in the adult diversion program, including community service work by the offender, direct restitution or personal service to the victim, counselling and participation in educational programs, public letters of apology or an essay taking responsibility, expressing remorse and undertaking not to re-offend.

Unlike adult diversion, however, restorative justice procedures may be used at any stage of the judicial process and for serious as well as minor offences. For serious offences, the offender may still be required to serve a prison term after participating in a restorative justice forum, and the restorative justice mechanisms may be employed even after an offender has already served part of a prison term.

The scope of restorative justice models is far broader than that of the conventional adversarial system, since it emphasizes direct offender accountability, victim healing, offender re-integration, and repairing the harm caused by the offence. It is intended to reduce recidivism, increase victim satisfaction, strengthen communities, and increase public confidence in the justice system.

Instead of dealing with crime only as a symptom, restorative justice has the capacity to delve into underlying causal factors and social problems. In this way, it “enhances a community’s sense of safety by identifying circumstances in the community which contributed to the offence, and determining what can be done to avoid a similar situation in the future.”<sup>12</sup> I’ve mentioned it in detail here because it is a very practical example of non-silo thinking, of building community, and of bringing true vision down to earth in a pragmatic and powerful way.

---

<sup>10</sup> Nova Scotia Department of Justice, *Restorative Justice: A Program for Nova Scotia*, Halifax, June, 1998, page 3.

<sup>11</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>12</sup> *Op. cit.*, page 4

## **5) A World of Connections**

These few examples illustrate, I hope, the necessity for us to break out of our silos and to work together to serve our children as full human beings, and to restore community in all its parts. Wherever we look, -- not only in these few case studies -- we find a world totally interconnected. Protecting our environment, for example, is entirely an investment in our children.

Many of you have children from unemployed fishermen in your schools. In that case the depletion of a natural resource produced massive unemployment that affects the children you work with. Similarly, if we harvest our forests unsustainably, if we lose topsoil, then our children have that much less resource wealth, food security and economic security. If we pollute our environment, our children will pay the cleanup costs or suffer the health consequences. If we do not curb our greenhouse gas emissions, our children will pay the price in drought costs, sea level rise, and extreme weather conditions.

If we bargain shop at A Buck or Two without thought for the teenagers working 15 hour days for a dollar an hour in Mexican sweatshops or Shanghai forced labour made-for-export factories to produce those bargains, then our children will pay the price in an unstable world order, a growing gap between rich and poor, and the conflict that necessarily emanates from injustice and neglect.

Scientists at the University of British Columbia calculated that if everyone in the world consumed at the rate that we do in Canada, we would need four extra planets earth to provide the necessary resources, energy and other materials. Is it to avoid looking closely at that alarming fact, that we bury the news that 40,000 people, mostly children, are dying of hunger in the world every single day, and that we cannot quite bring ourselves to teach our children to open their hearts to the world's billion destitute people living in absolute poverty without the ability to meet their most basic survival needs?

On the other hand, if we can drop our fixation on economic growth and accumulation, if we can cut through the illusion that spending and having more makes us "better off," if we can look beyond our narrow silos, and focus on what we know to be the well springs of well being, then we can, without a doubt, create a better future for our children, a good society for Nova Scotians, and a better world for all humanity in the next millennium.

There are no secrets here, and, I dare say, no real disagreements. If we can take off our "expert" caps, and come back to basic shared values -- family, community, peace and security, environmental quality, and caring for others -- as the core principles of the society we want to inhabit, we can serve our children, our communities and our world well, and we can be proud of our legacy to our young people.

It's not a matter of more spending. In fact, John Taylor Gatto argues that one of the surest ways to recognize true education is that "it doesn't cost very much; it doesn't depend on

expensive toys or gadgets. The experiences that produce it and the self-awareness that propels it are nearly free... In one of the great ironies of human affairs, (he says), the massive rethinking the schools require would cost so much *less* than we are spending now, that powerful interests cannot afford to let it happen.”

In some cases what is required is simply a shift in priorities from one type of spending to another. The \$112 million it cost us to build the 45 kilometre Cobequid Bypass on Highway 104 could have lifted more than half of Nova Scotia’s 51,000 poor children out of poverty. Would Nova Scotian motorists be willing to drive a few kilometres an hour slower, or take a few more minutes on their journey, to know that 26,000 children were no longer impoverished? I think so! But the question was never posed, and the opportunity for choice not presented, because we’ve not yet made the connections.

We might even re-order our economic priorities somewhat. Instead of focusing so intensively on global trade that frequently makes communities feel helpless and dependent on forces outside their own control, we might encourage more local and self-reliant community development initiatives that can build communities, provide a measure of protection against external shocks, and restore to communities some sense of control over their own destiny.

In fact, I believe strongly that there is hardly a better place in the world than this province to take the lead in charting a new path. Community values are still strong here. Materialism has not taken quite the same hold on people’s minds as in some other parts of North America where community has long disintegrated. There is still a friendliness, and caring, and good heart, and gentleness in the Maritime culture that strikes visitors, and represents our greatest source of wealth. Ironically, we may be extremely fortunate that the conventional economic system has not served this region particularly well in the last century, so we are perhaps more open to alternatives than those more firmly yoked to narrow materialist measures of success.

But we cannot take our precious Maritime strengths for granted, or they will wither. Time is running out, and we are presently hooking ourselves more and more to the materialist monolith in a way that cuts us off from our own traditions, and can quickly lead to self-destruction. Let us come back first to the family and community from which our children’s well being genuinely stems. If that family is afflicted with economic insecurity and substance abuse, if the child is not provided adequate nutrition, if television, work and child care have replaced family time, then we know we can expect costs in education, health care and even crime.

Once we recognize the interconnected nature of reality, we know also that there is no tidy way to put it all together. It is an extraordinarily rich and complex tapestry that is also the very definition and essence of true community.

But our shared vision *can* provide the unifying force. If we can value the family and its work and time; if we determine to eliminate child poverty in the province; if we value and support voluntary community service; if we commit ourselves to protecting the

environment, reducing pollution and protecting our resources; if we can build strong local self-reliant economic structures; if we can create new jobs by reducing overwork; if we can shift our values from accumulating more, which we know provides no real satisfaction, to the *quality* of our lives, -- then there is no doubt that we can create a better world for our children in the new millennium.

In the discussion groups ahead, you will be taking a fresh look at the challenges facing our children, and you'll have the opportunity to take some very practical steps in a new direction. However small those steps are, they can have a profound and far-reaching effect if they are based on real vision, and if they truly point towards a better world for our children.

There's an image here from some native traditions that we might keep in mind during our deliberations today. In all important decisions, a tribal elder was assigned to represent the interests of the Seventh Generation hence. If we'd applied that wisdom to our decisions about casinos, or to the operations of Sydney Steel, or to drift-net trawling, we may well have come up with alternative routes to prosperity.

I actually do not think it is far-fetched at all for Nova Scotia to become a real model for a world that has largely lost its sense of direction, that is stumbling into the new millennium without a real sense of purpose on a potentially self-destructive course. And so I want to conclude with a quote from one man who is a real hero to me, because by the power of his integrity and example, by his simple decency, courage, vision, and commitment, he really did change the world in a profound way.

South Africa was a country that, just a few years ago, was literally at the limits of despair and on the very edge of violent revolution – one of the most intolerant, racist and brutal societies in the world. Nelson Mandela came out of 27 years of jail there without a trace of bitterness, hatred and vengeance. And that example, shining from the heart of just one man, helped to turn it all around, and to bring South Africa back from the brink. It was a model for a world at the brink. This is from Nelson Mandela's inaugural speech as the first president of a free South Africa:

*Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.  
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.  
It is our Light, not our Darkness, that most frightens us.  
We ask ourselves: Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?  
Actually, who are you NOT to be?  
You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the World.  
There is nothing enlightening about shrinking so that other people won't feel unsure  
around you.  
We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us.  
It is not just in some of us; it is in everyone.  
As we let our own Light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do  
the same.  
As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.*



Nelson Mandela's words are as true for whole communities as for individuals. We have all the necessary ingredients – courage, vision, intelligence and pragmatism – to create a genuinely good society in Nova Scotia, and to let that example shine out naturally as a beacon for a troubled world. The only place to start is by:

- *renouncing* what does not work – our narrow silos, and the illusion that having more makes us “better off,”
- embracing whole-heartedly a shared *vision* of the Nova Scotia we want our children to inhabit in the new millennium, and
- embarking on the *path* to that goal by adopting a few, modest, practical steps that will point us in the right direction.

Our day today is set up that way. The discussion groups that follow will identify what's not working, and the challenges our young people face. The afternoon discussions, by region, will identify where we want to go, and how we can take even one small step in working together towards those goals.

Nothing we do here has anything to do with ideology or political affiliation, of being on the left or right, of being an “educator” or “health official” or any other kind of expert. It has to do instead with our common and shared commitment to our children, to our communities, and to humanity, and with our profound responsibility as public servants to serve Nova Scotians to the best of our ability. If all of us here pull together to create a better world for our children, and tap into the enormous power that is already here, there is no doubt in my mind that Nova Scotia can be a model for the world in the new millennium.

**Table 1: More Volunteers with Less Time to Give Has Meant a Net Loss of Volunteer Services to Canadians<sup>13</sup>**  
(Formal volunteer organizations, 1987-1997)

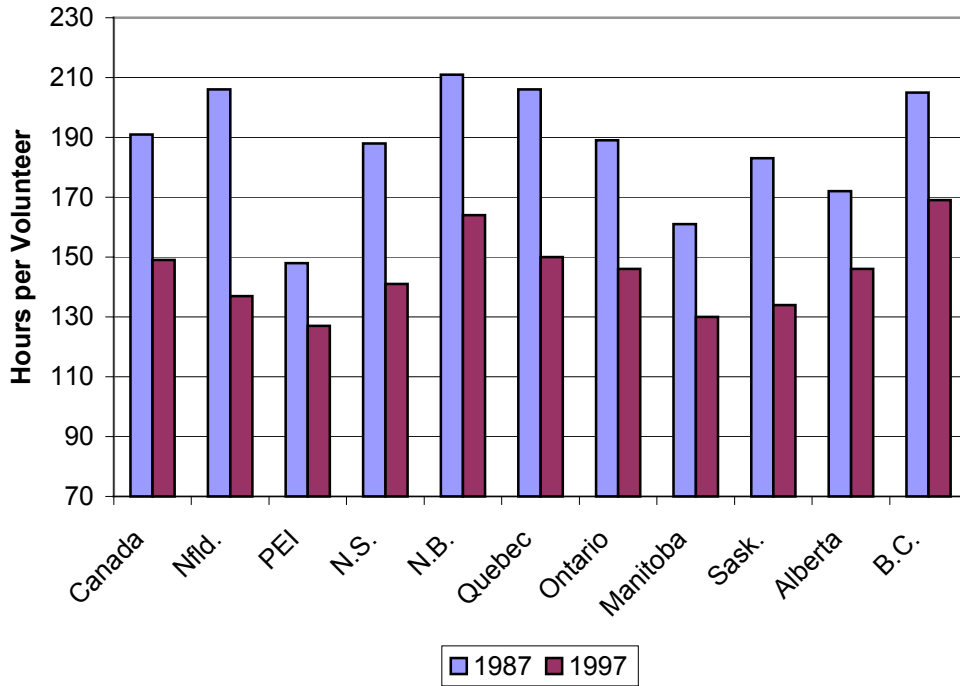
	Number of volunteers (thousands)		Total annual volunteer hours (thousands)		Average annual hours per volunteer		Volunteer service hours per capita (total population)	
	1987	1997	1987	1997	1987	1997	1987	1997
<b>Canada</b>	<b>5,337</b>	<b>7,472</b>	<b>1,017,548</b>	<b>1,108,924</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>38.3</b>	<b>36.5</b>
Nfld.	110	150	22,600	20,494	206	137	39.2	36.7
PEI	32	38	4,669	4,869	148	127	36.2	35.5
<b>N.S.</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>40,901</b>	<b>40,029</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>45.6</b>	<b>42.3</b>
N.B.	162	208	34,097	34,121	211	164	46.6	44.8
Quebec	1,005	1,313	206,911	196,974	206	150	30.4	26.5
Ontario	1,870	2,890	352,923	421,596	189	146	36.4	36.8
Manitoba	303	344	48,748	44,763	161	130	44.2	39.2
Sask.	276	361	50,497	48,311	183	134	49.2	47.3
Alberta	701	878	121,035	128,323	172	146	49.5	44.9
B.C.	661	1,005	135,166	169,443	205	169	44.1	43.0

NOTE: Figures do not include informal voluntary work, for which trends will be available with the 1999 release of the 1998 General Social Survey results.

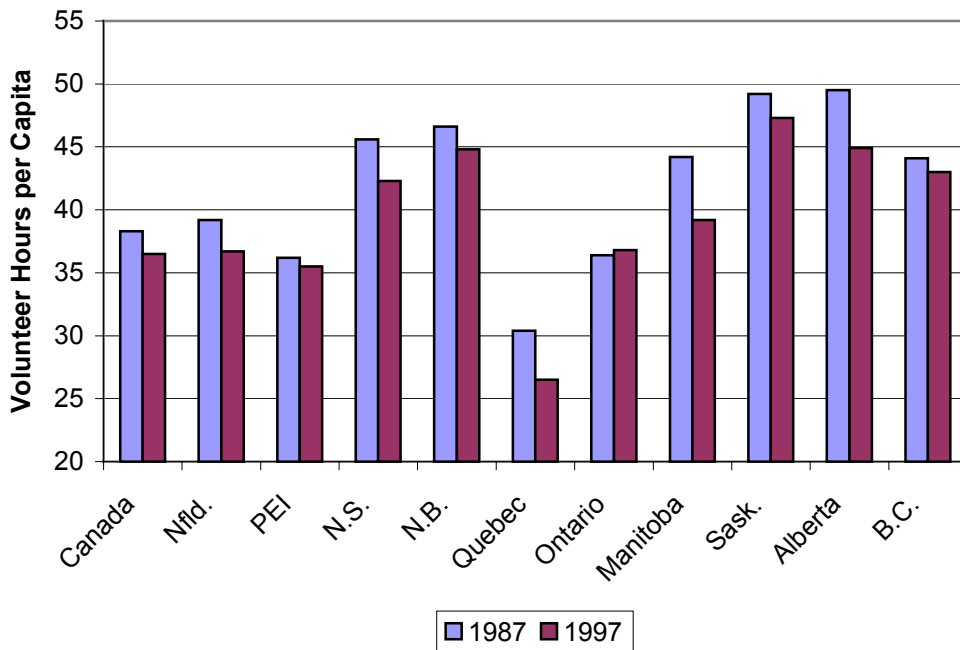
<sup>13</sup> Sources:

Statistics Canada, *Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians*, catalogue no. 71-542-XPE, 1998;  
 David Ross, *Economic Dimensions of Volunteer Work in Canada*, Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, January 1990, page 11;  
 Statistics Canada, *Giving Freely: Volunteers in Canada*, by Doreen Duchesne, catalogue no. 71-535, no. 4;  
 Statistics Canada, *Revised Intercensal Population and Family Estimates July 1, 1971-1991*, catalogue no. 91-537, page 79;  
 Statistics Canada, *Quarterly Demographic Statistics, July-September, 1997*, catalogue no. 91-002-XPB, volume 11, no. 3, page 16;  
 Statistics Canada, *Provincial Economic Accounts, Annual Estimates, 1996*, catalogue no. 13-213-PPB, population, page 167.

**Chart 1: Time Squeeze on Volunteers: Annual Hours per Volunteer, 1987 - 1997**



**Chart 2: Decline in Volunteer Service Hours, 1987 - 1997**



**Table 2: Decline in per capita Government Expenditures on Social Services and Income Support, and in Real Wages, Nova Scotia, 1993-1997<sup>14</sup>**  
(Constant 1997 dollars)

	Government transfers to persons	Provincial government expenditures on social services	Municipal government expenditures on social services	Average weekly earnings
1993	\$3,817	\$1,740	\$356	\$520
1994	\$3,769	\$1,599	\$349	\$520
1995	\$3,680	\$1,563	\$308	\$511
1996	\$3,624	\$1,536	\$314	\$509
1997*	N.A.	\$1,435	N.A.	\$504

- 1997 figures for columns 1 and 3 were not available at publication time.
- Government expenditures in columns 1, 2 and 3 are averaged over the whole Nova Scotia population.

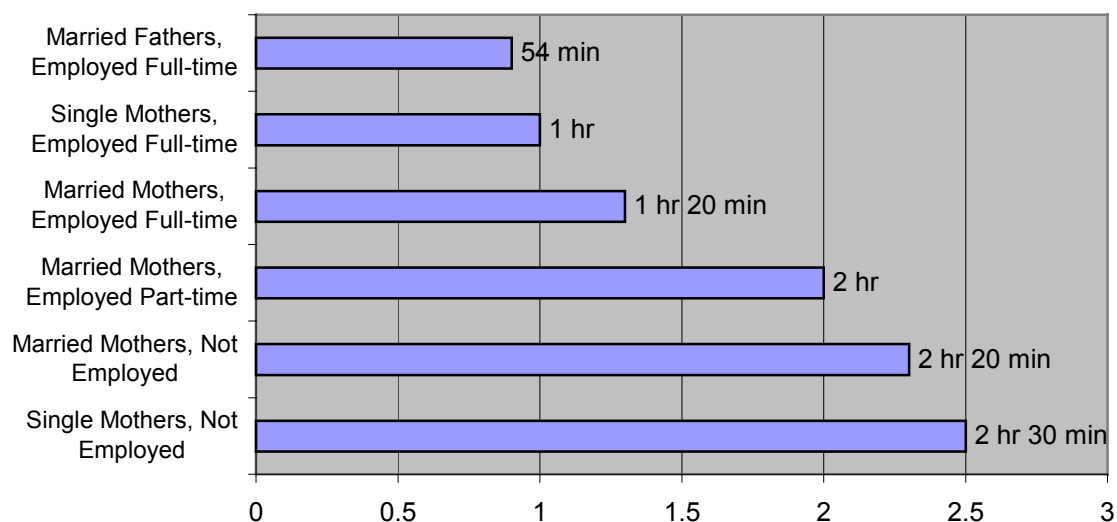
**Table 3: Average Time Spent on Unpaid Household Work by Parents aged 25-44, Canada**

Hours Per Day	Married				Single	
	Fathers Employed Full-Time	Mothers Employed Full-Time	Mothers Not Employed	Mothers Employed Part-Time	Mothers Employed Full-Time	Mothers Not Employed
Cooking	0.4	1.2	1.8	1.7	0.8	1.6
Housekeeping	0.2	1.0	1.9	1.6	0.7	1.9
Repairs	0.4	-	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0
Other	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Shopping	0.6	0.8	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.7
Child Care	0.9	1.3	2.3	2.0	1.0	2.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>7.1</b>

Source: Judith Frederick, *As Time Goes By...Time Use of Canadians*, catalogue no. 89-544E, page 25.

<sup>14</sup> Sources: Statistics Canada, *Provincial Economic Accounts, 1997*, catalogue no. 13-213, table 13, page 160; *Provincial Government Revenues and Expenditures*, CANSIM database 2784; *Municipal Government Revenues and Expenditures*, CANSIM database 7096; Population from CANSIM matrix 1; *Average Weekly Earnings, including Overtime, All Employees, Industrial Aggregate*, CANSIM database 4330 L64926; and Statistics Canada, *Consumer Price Index*.

**Chart 3: Primary Child Care Time by Employed and Not Employed Parents**



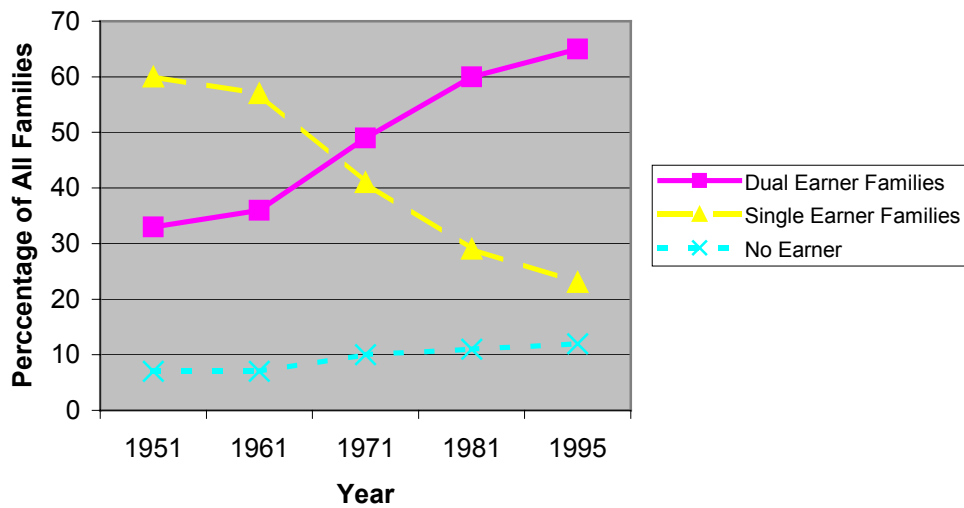
Source: Judith Frederick, *As Time Goes By...*, Statistics Canada, catalogue no. 89-544E, page 25  
 Note: “Primary child care” refers to time in which parents are feeding, dressing or washing children, teaching, reading to or playing with children, providing medical and physical care, and otherwise exclusively engaged with children. It does not include time spent looking after children while performing other activities or doing other household tasks.

**Table 4: Total Work Hours, Couple with Children, Canada, 1900 and 1998**

	1900	1998
Male, paid work	58.5	42
Female, paid work	--	36.5
Male, unpaid work	10 (est.)	22.4
Female, unpaid work	56	33.6
<b>Total work hours</b>	<b>124.5</b>	<b>134.5</b>

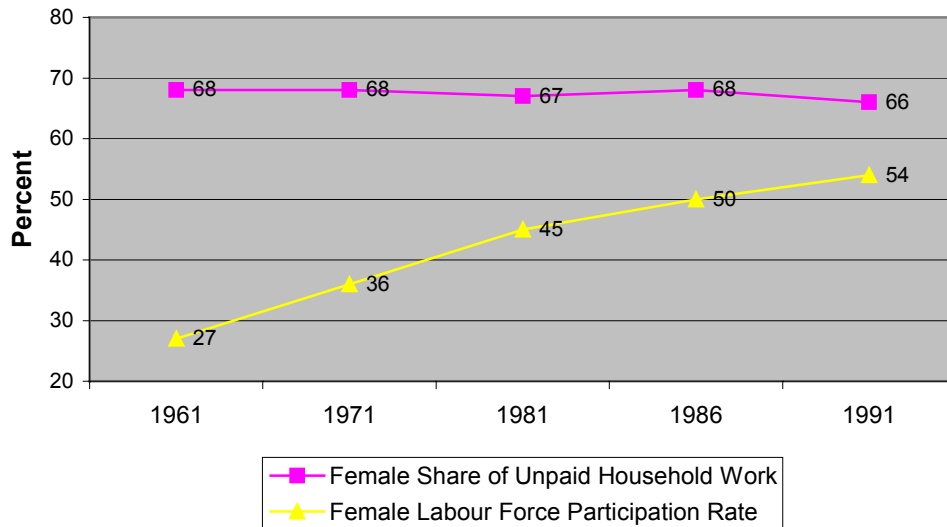
Notes: Almost no married women were in the paid work force until the Second World War. No figures are available for male unpaid household work at the beginning of the century. It is therefore estimated here that men put in an extra 10 hours of unpaid household work after their long work week. Unpaid work hours for married couples with children in the 1990s are based on Statistics Canada time use surveys. See Statistics Canada, *As Time Goes By...Time Use of Canadians: General Social Survey*, catalogue no. 89-544E, Appendix C, pages 67-68. Paid work hours are from Statistics Canada’s *Labour Force Annual Averages*. Female household work hours at the beginning of the century based on studies cited in Ruth Schwartz Cowan, *More Work for Mother: The Ironies of Household Technology from the Open Hearth to the Microwave*, Basic Books, New York, 1983, pages 154-160. The average work week in Canada in 1900 was 58.5 hours.

**Chart 5: Dual Earner Families as Percent of All Families in Canada**



Sources: Statistics Canada, *Characteristics of Dual-Earner Families*, catalogue no. 13-215-XPB; Statistics Canada, *Charting Canadian Incomes: 1951-1981*, catalogue no. 13-581E; Statistics Canada, *Women in Canada*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, catalogue no. 89-503E

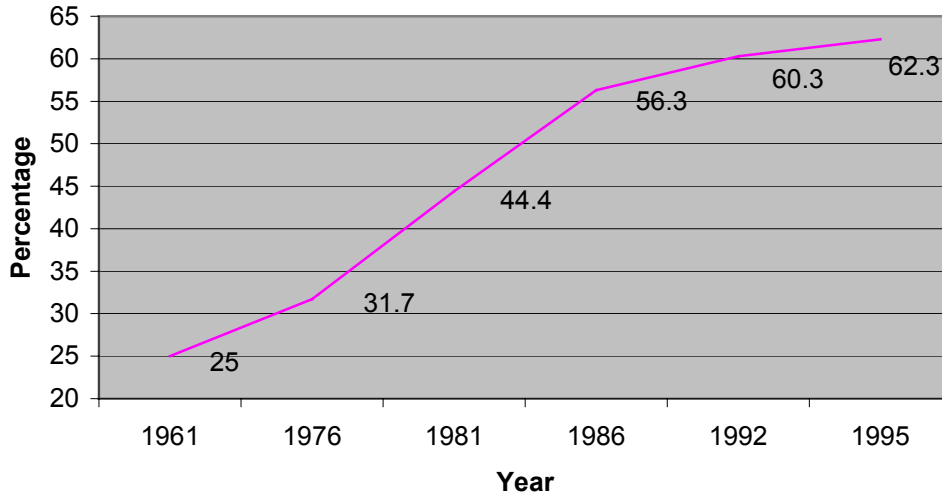
**Chart 6: Women’s Share of Household Work in Nova Scotia Has Remained Almost Unchanged Despite Dramatic Increases in Paid Work**



Sources: Statistics Canada, *Households’ Unpaid Work*; Statistics Canada, *Historical Labour Force Survey*; Statistics Canada, *CANSIM* database; Historical extrapolations, 1961-1975, from Statistics Canada, *Charting Canadian Incomes: 1951-1981*, catalogue no. 13-581E, pages 10-11;

Statistics Canada, *Women in Canada*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, catalogue no. 89-503E, page 88; Statistics Canada, *Women in the Workplace*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, catalogue no. 71-543E, page 10.

**Chart 7: Labour Force Participation Rate of Mothers With Infants Age 0-2, Canada, 1961-1995**

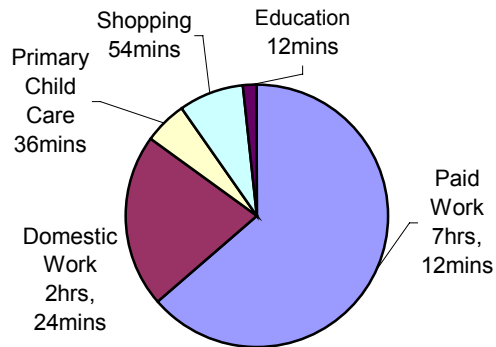
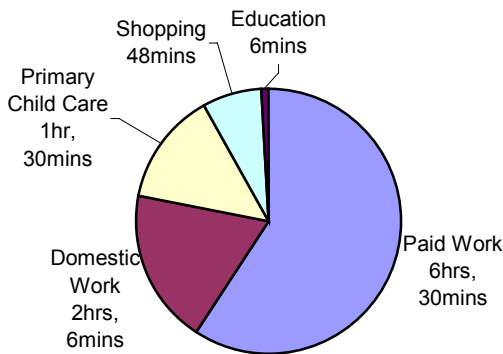


Source: Statistics Canada, *Canadian National Child Care Study*, catalogues no.89-A-90, volume II, 89-527E, 89-529E and 89-536-XPE; Statistics Canada, *Labour Force Annual Averages*, catalogue 71-220; historical extrapolations for 1961-1975 from Statistics Canada, *Charting Canadian Incomes: 1951-1981*, on married women in the labour force and dual-earner families, and Statistics Canada, *Caring Communities: Proceedings of the Symposium on Social Supports*, catalogue no. 89-514E, page 113.

**Chart 8: A Day in the Life of a Working Mother**  
Average Weekday Work Hours, Employed Mothers, Canada

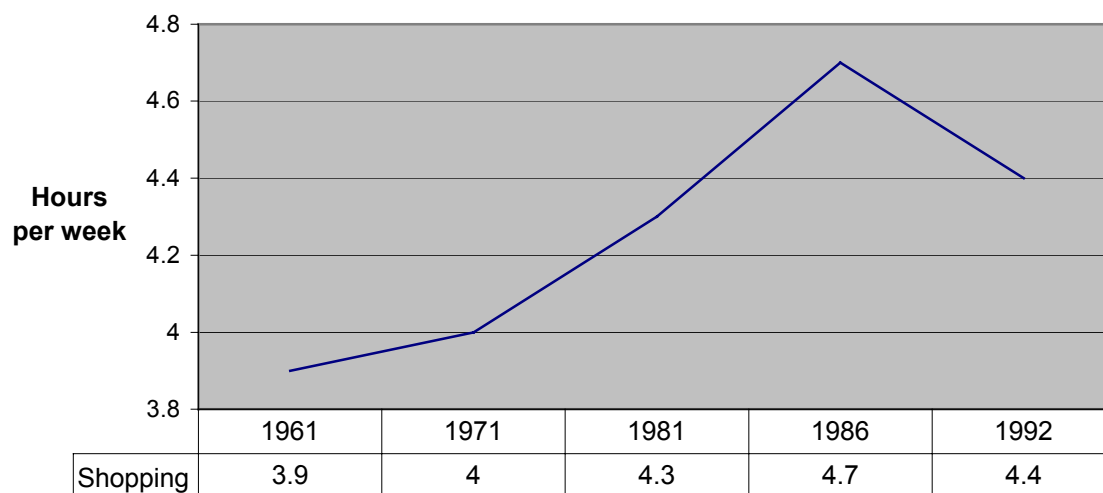
**Mothers With Children Under 5**  
(Total Daily Work Time: 11 hours)

**Mothers With Children Over 5**  
(Total Daily Work Time: 11 h 12 min)

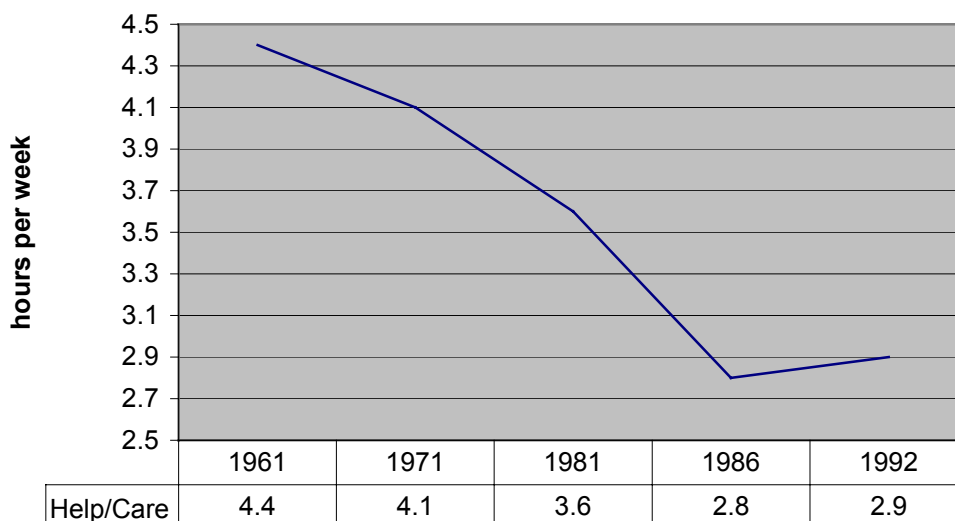


Notes for Chart 8: Harvey, Andrew, et. al., *Where Does Time Go?*, General Social Survey Analysis Series, Statistics Canada, catalogue no. 11-612E, #4, table 19, page 117, data from 1986 GSS Time Use Survey. Note: Though these figures are daily averages, the data show that mothers actually shop an average of once every three days for 2 ½ hours each time.

**Chart 9: Time Spent Shopping in Nova Scotia, 1961-1992**



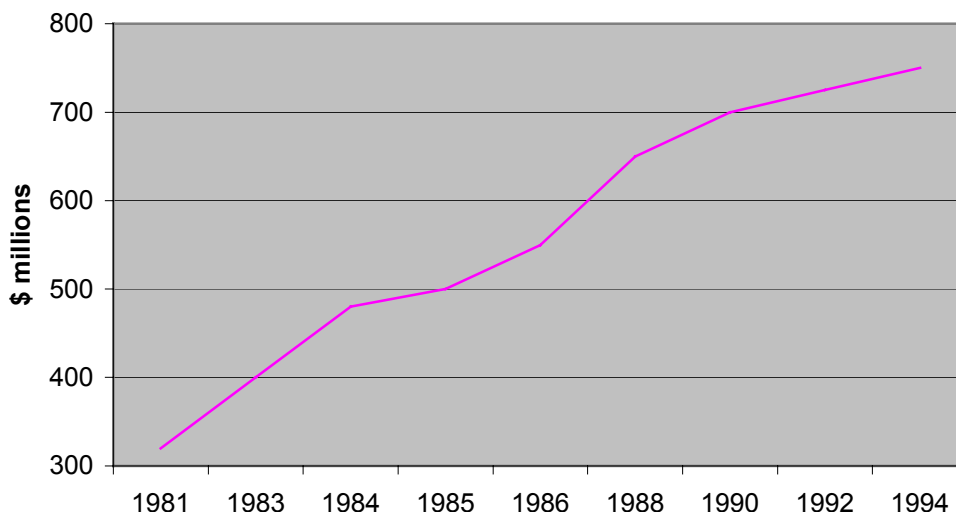
**Chart 10: Weekly Hours of Household Child Care, Nova Scotia, 1961-1992**



Source: Statistics Canada, *Initial Data Release from the 1992 General Social Survey on Time Use*. Other sources in Colman, *The Economic Value of Unpaid Housework and Child Care in Nova Scotia*, page 51. About three-quarters of the decline in household child care is due to the 27% drop in the number of children in the Nova Scotia population. The rest is probably attributable to the shift from unpaid parenting to paid child care.

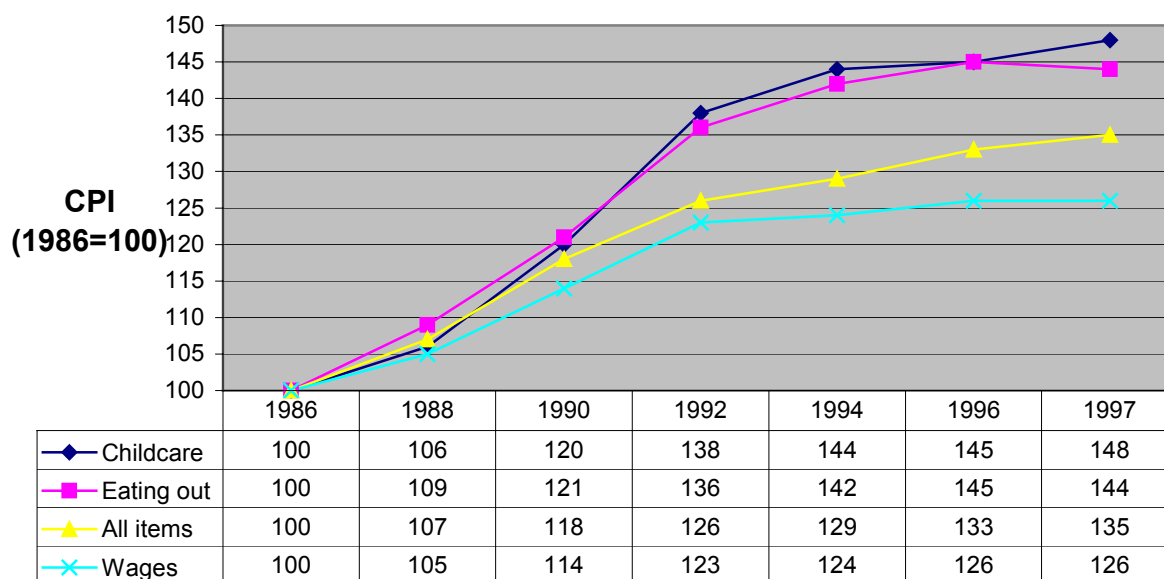


**Chart 11: Child-Care is the Fourth Fastest Growing Industry in Canada**



Source: Statistics Canada, *Canadian Economic Observer*, February 1995, catalogue 11-010.

**Chart 12: Paying More for Shifts from Household to Market Economy:  
Consumer Price Indices and Wage Inflation, Nova Scotia, 1986-1997**



Sources: Statistics Canada. *The Consumer Price Index*, catalogue no. 62-001-XPB; and CANSIM database, 7466, P803032, 803050, and 803000; and CANSIM 1453, D703360: Average Weekly Wages and Salaries, Nova Scotia: Industrial Composite.

**Table 5: Employment Status at Time of Admission to Sentenced Custody, Nova Scotia; 1995-96 to 1997-98<sup>15</sup>**

Employment Status	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Full Time	23.6%	23.6%	21.6%
Other	1.3%	2%	2.2%
Part Time	1.5%	1.8%	1.6%
Seasonal	1.3%	1.5%	1.5%
Student	1.9%	1.3%	1.4%
<i>Unemployed</i>	<b>57.4%</b>	<b>58.4%</b>	<b>58.8%</b>
Unknown	12.8%	11.5%	12.9%
Total Admissions	2622	2134	1914

**Table 6: Robbery Rates and Unemployment Rates, Canada and Nova Scotia, 1962 – 1997 (Average Rates by Decade)**

	Canada		Nova Scotia	
	<i>Robbery Rate (per 100,000)</i>	<i>Unemployment Rate</i>	<i>Robbery Rate (per 100,000)</i>	<i>Unemployment Rate</i>
<b>1962-69</b>	33.6	4.0%*	16.0	4.9%*
<b>1970-79</b>	68.1	6.7%	32.8	8.1%
<b>1980-89</b>	93.3	9.3%	38.3	11.8%
<b>1992-97</b>	105.7	10.0%	41.6	12.5%

Sources: Statistics Canada, *ESTAT* and *CANSIM* databases.

NOTE: Unemployment rates are averaged for the years 1966-69, the earliest available on Statistics Canada's *ESTAT* and *CANSIM* databases.

---

<sup>15</sup> Nova Scotia Justice Department, Policy, Planning and Research Division kindly supplied these data in personal correspondence, January, 1999. The table includes all persons sentenced to custody terms in Nova Scotia. It includes persons sentenced to provincial custody and federal custody.