

Poverty in Elgin St. Thomas

Nearly 16% of Elgin St. Thomas residents live below the poverty line, without access to the networks and services that make our community great.

Poverty – the state of having little or no money, goods, or means of support – is often a **vicious cycle** which **prevents our residents from reaching their full potential as members of our community** and leaves us on unequal footing.

Everyone deserves the dignity and respect that comes from having what they need.

Q: WHO IS AFFECTED BY POVERTY IN ELGIN ST. THOMAS?

A: Some members of our community are more susceptible to the effects of poverty. Poverty hits persons with disabilities, single mothers, Indigenous Peoples, seniors, new immigrants and children the hardest.

Poverty is NOT:

- Something that can be quickly fixed with short-term solutions
- A problem that can be solved by individuals and organizations acting on their own
- Something that only concerns those struggling with poverty
- The fault of the individuals affected by it



Poverty IS:

- An issue which requires **innovation** and **long-term change**
- Something that requires **collaboration** and the sharing of skills, knowledge, and resources
- An issue perpetuated by **social systems** which need to be reformed
- The **responsibility of our whole community**

Poverty and Health

The health of our population is **socially determined**, meaning that those living without access to transportation, nutritious food, safe housing, adequate income, and other assets display much lower levels of good health and well-being.

Our Goals to End Poverty

1) Accessible and Affordable Transportation

Everyone in Elgin St. Thomas should have access to safe, reliable and affordable transportation options.



2) Food Security

Everyone in Elgin St. Thomas should have access to affordable, accessible, sufficient, and nutritious food that meets dietary needs for an active and healthy life.



3) Financial Empowerment

Everyone in Elgin St. Thomas should have access to a livable income, banking services, protection from fraud and predatory lending, and the ability to build savings/assets, improve credit ratings, and reduce debt.



4) Safe and Affordable Housing

Everyone in Elgin St. Thomas should be able to find and maintain a safe and affordable place to call home.



Q: HOW DO WE CREATE CHANGE?

A: Often, the only way to create **lasting** and **impactful** change for those living in poverty is to create **changes in policy**. As a community, it is our job to support governments, funders, and each other in understanding how system reforms or policy changes could have life-changing benefits for the citizens of Elgin St. Thomas.

In order to do this, organizations and individuals must take an active role in **informing candidates, informing the public, increasing civic engagement, and overcoming barriers to voting.**