Policies for Womens' Equality

Friday, April 8, 2004 – For some time now, CPRN's Family Network has been making the case for bringing our social policies into line with new social realities.

Social and labour market policies based on assumptions about the way in which Canadians lived their lives in the post-war period from 1945 to 1975 have become increasingly inappropriate for today's challenges. Canada's families and work force are very different from what they were 30 or 40 years ago.

A few facts help illustrate why:

- The proportion of women in the labour force has tripled since 1941, while a gender gap in wages remains.
- The proportion of all families that are lone-parent families (mainly headed by women) is two and a half times what it was in 1941.
- The proportion of the population over age 65 has doubled, and will continue to grow, with implications for care giving.

New social risks are implicit in this changing reality, risks that current public policies are ill equipped to protect against. The burden of those risks has fallen inordinately on families, and particularly on women.

Jane Jenson, Director of the Family Network, addresses this phenomenon in a recent presentation to the Women's Economic Summit, organized by the federal New Democratic Caucus in Ottawa in February. In ***A Decade of Challenges; A Decade of Choices: Consequences for Canadian Women***, Jenson examines the impact on women - in the family, the community, or the labour market - of the misfit between social policy prescriptions and current social realities. She goes on to outline some of the implications for public policy.

You can access or download a copy of her presentation by clicking here.

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Spring Issue of *NetworkNews* Now Available

The Spring edition of our quarterly newsletter, ***NetworkNews***, is now available on the CPRN Web site. It's packed with the usual photos, articles and news of CPRN friends, Board and staff. And there's the popular column from our President, Judith Maxwell. In this issue, she looks at a new Ottawa buzzword – *social entrepreneurship*.

Download a copy of *NetworkNews* by clicking here. Good reading for one of those unwelcome snowy spring evenings!

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