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CANADA'S SHRINKING FAMILIES

A new report highlights why families are getting smaller and what to do about it

September 29, 2010 (Ottawa) – Today the Institute of Marriage and Family Canada is releasing *Canada's shrinking families—Why families are getting smaller and what to do about it*. This report identifies that there is a demographic crunch in Canada. It looks at the causes and implications of smaller families and what can be done to make change.

Increased immigration has not offered a long term solution, neither has excessive government funding for families proven successful in sustaining increased birth rates, as the examples of Germany and Sweden show. “Canada is aging rapidly, and this has numerous implications for government, business and the economy and family life, too,” says the report’s author, IMFC Senior Researcher Peter Jon Mitchell. “It’s not an easy thing for government to address.”

Canada is not alone with a low birthrate of 1.6 children per woman, below the 2.1 required for replacement. “Declining fertility is a personal matter, but it also changes our communities, our culture and our country,” says Mitchell.

Some elements of a creative long term solution discussed in the paper involve encouraging Canadians to prepare for the absence of robust social programs in the years ahead, by encouraging them to save and reduce personal debt. The paper also examines how to encourage a marriage-friendly culture as a long term solution, because a strong marriage-friendly culture can encourage fertility. “Canada has never had a public dialogue on the benefits of marriage,” says Mitchell, “and demographic decline could provide a good context in which to do so.”

Canada's shrinking families—Why families are getting smaller and what to do about it can be read in full, [here](#).

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