



P208 – 33355 Bevan Ave., Abbotsford BC V2S 0E7

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*Embargoed until 12:01am Thursday, May 2, 2013*

### **LIVING WAGE CALCULATION SHOWS THE REAL COSTS OF RAISING A FAMILY IN THE FRASER VALLEY**

**ABBOTSFORD, B.C., May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013** – For families with young children, the costs of basic necessities like food, rent and childcare quickly add up. Even with full-time work year round, both parents in a family of four must earn at least \$16.37 to escape severe financial stress in the Fraser Valley.

This is the Fraser Valley living wage rate for 2013, according to a new report released by Living Wage Fraser Valley and Vibrant Abbotsford.

The living wage is calculated as the hourly rate at which a family with two full-time earners and two young children can meet its basic needs, once government taxes, credits, deductions and subsidies have been taken into account.

“The living wage should not be confused with the minimum wage, which is the legislated minimum set by the provincial government,” explains Iglia Ivanova of the CCPA. “The living wage calls on employers to pay wages that reflect the actual costs of living in their communities and that are high enough to provide a basic level of economic security to families with children. Families working full-time deserve to earn a living that’s more than a constant struggle to get by. By paying the living wage to both their direct staff and their service contractors, employers enable more families to escape chronic financial stress and will help reduce the disturbingly high level of child poverty in BC.”

Low wages is one of the key contributions to child poverty in BC with almost half of poor children (43%) living in families where at least one adult had a full-time, full-year job and many others lived in families with some paid work (part-year or part-time).

Living Wage Employers recognize that paying a living wage constitutes a critical investment in the long-term prosperity of the economy by fostering a dedicated, skilled and healthy workforce.

Public policy decisions can also greatly affect affordability and quality of life for lower-earning families and decrease the amount employees need to earn privately. For example, implementation of the \$10/Day Child Care plan proposed by the Child Care Advocates of BC and the Early Childhood Educators of BC, would reduce the Fraser Valley living wage by an estimated \$3 per hour to \$13.37.

Living Wage Fraser Valley (LWV) is a multi-sectoral group that reduces poverty by raising community awareness, influencing local policy and recognizing local living wage employers. Through a new partnership with Living Wage for Families’ Employer Recognition Process, LWV is now equipped to formally certify local employers who pay their direct and contract employers a Living Wage.

To get involved with Living Wage Fraser Valley, become a Living Wage employer, or obtain more information, contact [alison@vibrantabbotsford.ca](mailto:alison@vibrantabbotsford.ca) or visit [www.vibrantabbotsford.ca](http://www.vibrantabbotsford.ca).

Download 'Living Wage Fraser Valley - 2013 Update' here:

[http://vibrant.triplei.ca/files/5013/6700/4736/Living\\_Wage\\_Fraser\\_Valley\\_2013\\_Update.pdf](http://vibrant.triplei.ca/files/5013/6700/4736/Living_Wage_Fraser_Valley_2013_Update.pdf)

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### **About Living Wage Fraser Valley**

Living Wage Fraser Valley (LWV) reduces poverty by raising community awareness, influencing local policy and recognizing local employers who pay their direct and contract employees a living wage. Members believe that people who work full-time should not have to live in poverty and that working individuals should be able to maintain a standard of living where they can participate fully in society. LWV is multi-sectoral group with open membership that includes policy-makers, labor, employers and other community members. LWV is hosted by Vibrant Abbotsford.

### **About Vibrant Abbotsford**

Vibrant Abbotsford is a collaborative group working to build a more vibrant city through the reduction of poverty. We create opportunities for residents to gain means, choices and power to achieve self-sufficiency and act as active participants in society. Vibrant Abbotsford develops and supports a variety of employment, education, and social initiatives. Activities include building community understanding of poverty, supporting citizens to build assets, and supporting residents to feel more included in Abbotsford life.

### **Resources**

Vibrant Abbotsford <http://www.vibrantabbotsford.ca>

Living Wage for Families <http://livingwageforfamilies.ca/>

Living Wage Employers <http://www.lwemployers.ca/>

Metro Vancouver 2013 Living Wage Update <http://www.policyalternatives.ca/livingwage2013>

Greater Victoria 2013 Living Wage Update  
[http://www.communitycouncil.ca/pdf/2013\\_Living\\_Wage\\_Victoria\\_Supplement\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.communitycouncil.ca/pdf/2013_Living_Wage_Victoria_Supplement_FINAL.pdf)

Greater Victoria 2013 Living Wage Media Release  
[http://www.communitycouncil.ca/pdf/2013\\_Living\\_Wage\\_Victoria\\_Media\\_Release.pdf](http://www.communitycouncil.ca/pdf/2013_Living_Wage_Victoria_Media_Release.pdf)

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