East York children suffer as Toronto remains child poverty capital

“Children who grow up in poverty lack the opportunity to be creative, to think outside the box, to think,” said Naeen Al-Busaidi, manager of family support services at the Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office.

The community of East York is doing a lot to support its less affluent neighborhoods such as Thorncliffe Park. Al-Busaidi said Leaside has been a “neighbourly compassion.”

They’ve been there for the community through the holidays, through the times of need and they’ve really stepped up in their support to show love for the community and to show that they care.

This situation is compounded by the fact that family dynamics in Thorncliffe are different. The community is made up of a lot of newcomers, and those families usually don’t have family supports to fall back on, Al-Busaidi said.

“Thorncliffe has four to five children in each household, compared to Leaside, which is between two to three,” Al-Busaidi said.

Many families are escaping conflict in their home countries, she said, and coming into the community with very little they need to start over. They may have struggled in their home countries, and coming to Canada could be a barrier to access meaningful employment, she said.

The community of Thorncliffe Park relies on the work of the Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office, which has noticed an abundance of newcomers in Thorncliffe Park as key reasons for the high child poverty rate.

“Thorncliffe food bank coordinator Zeeshan Modi sorting food and daily use items for food bank clients.”

The report, called “Divided City: Life in Canada’s Child Poverty Capital,” was released on Nov. 14. It examined child poverty in 140 neighbourhoods and found that 26 percent of the city’s children live in poverty, compared to 21 percent of the city’s adults.

The report compared the city to other Canadian cities, and found Toronto has a “higher child poverty rate than any other city in Canada.”

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In the report, researchers compared Toronto to other Canadian cities in terms of child poverty in 140 different communities. They found that 26 percent of children in Toronto live in poverty, compared to 21 percent of adults in the city.

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