**ARE WE THERE YET?**

When the Danzig Street tragedy hit the city last summer, calls for a comprehensive approach to the issue of gun and youth violence in Toronto poured from everywhere. But a year later, much more needs to be done to give hope to racialized youth in the GTA.

 “ Many of us will go  to bed tonight, thinking that a lot has changed, because the violence has somewhat been reduced, but that’s not enough” said Andria Babbington, vice-president of the Toronto & York Region Labour Council. “A long term solution to the problem must include good decent jobs for the youth, a rehabilitation system that allows them to reintegrate society after getting in trouble with the law, and respect of their humanity ” said the mother of three, who has first-hand experience of the difficulties faced by young racialized people in the city.

There is increasing poverty and racialization of poverty in Toronto, as good jobs are replaced by precarious work in both the private and public sectors. Young people growing up in many Toronto neighbourhoods don’t see a hopeful future for themselves. They watch their parents out working two or three jobs to make ends meet, and older
siblings graduate with huge debts and few career offers. And despite the improvements in community policing, far too often they experience harassment and  racial profiling.

 The Toronto & York Region Labour Council has always maintained that good jobs and equity must be at  the core of any real exercise in community building. One example is the effort to achieve a Community Benefits Agreement with Metrolinx guaranteeing  apprenticeship positions in the new LRT construction. Those who control our economy must accept their responsibility and create living wage jobs that are accessible to all Torontonians if the next generation is to feel they have a  chance to build healthy, safe and respectful communities.

 To see the Labour Council statement from last  summer, go to  <http://www.labourcouncil.ca/uploads/8/8/6/1/8861416/labour_council_recommendations.pdf>
To see the list of specific recommendations made by Labour Council to all levels of government, go
to<http://www.labourcouncil.ca/uploads/8/8/6/1/8861416/labour_council_recommendations.pdf>