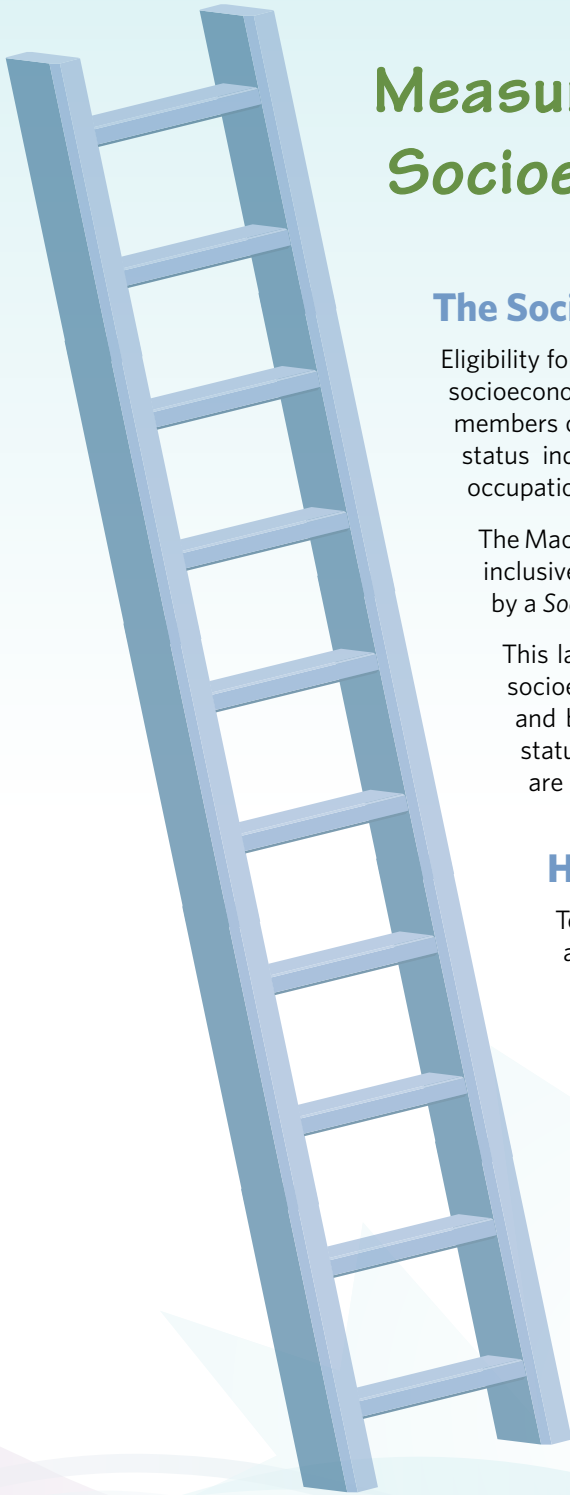


mothers *in* motion



Measuring Subjective Socioeconomic Status (SES)

The Social Ladder

Eligibility for program subsidies is often based on income as the sole measure of socioeconomic status (SES). This measurement, however, discriminates against members of the community who may be marginalized by other socioeconomic status indicators such as ethnicity, immigrant status, language, education, occupation, neighbourhood characteristics, and community capacity.

The MacArthur Scale of Subjective Social Status¹ provides an alternative, more inclusive, method to assess socioeconomic status. This scale is represented by a *Social Ladder*.

This ladder conceptually represents society where those with the highest socioeconomic status (i.e. those with the most money, highest education and best jobs) are at the top and those with the lowest socioeconomic status (i.e. those with the least money, least education and worst jobs) are at the bottom.

How to use the Social Ladder

To use this ladder as a measure of socioeconomic status, individuals are asked to place an "X" on the rung on which they feel they stand. Individuals who place themselves on rung 5 or lower perceive themselves to be of low socioeconomic status (LSES), and should be considered by service/program providers as eligible for subsidies and other forms of assistance.

Source

- 1 Adler NE, Epel ES, Castellazzo G, Ickovics JR. Relationship of subjective and objective social status with psychological and physiological functioning: Preliminary data in healthy, White women. *Health Psychology* Nov 2000;19(6):586-592.



Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity

Association canadienne pour l'avancement des femmes du sport et de l'activité physique

For more information on the *Mothers in Motion* project, please contact CAAWS (caaws@caaws.ca / 613-562-5667) or visit the website at <http://www.caaws.ca/mothersinmotion/>.

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