



## **Response of the Liberal Party of Canada to Campaign 2000 / Family Service Toronto**

The Liberal Party remains committed to reducing poverty by 50% and helping more Canadians join the middle class. Thus far our plan has made immense progress in the last four years by reducing poverty by 20%, three years ahead of schedule for this milestone, and lifting 900,000 Canadians out of poverty, including nearly 300,000 children compared to 2015.

A re-elected Liberal government will build on the progress already made by the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), with significant new investments that will help lift more Canadians out poverty and give even more families an equal and fair shot at success. We do this by:

- Immediately strengthening one of the most effective programs for reducing child poverty - the Canada Child Benefit (CCB). We will increase the CCB for families with children under one by 15 per cent, providing more than \$1,000 in additional benefits.
- Introducing Guaranteed Paid Family Leave within the next year, an ambitious and progressive new program that will ensure all families have access to a basic income to afford to take time off raising their child in the first year.
- Taking nearly 40,000 households out of poverty and remove nearly 700,000 Canadians from paying tax by raising the Basic Personal Amount so that no Canadians pays tax on the first \$15,000 they earn.
- Moving forward with the new Canada Housing Benefit. Starting just months from now, this new portable housing benefit will help 300,000 households save \$2,500 per year on the cost of rent, and take more than 500,000 Canadians out of core housing need with the implementation of the National Housing Strategy.
- Updating the Canada Health Act to ensure that Canadians can access the full range of mental health services they need, and implementing consistent national standards.
- Moving forward to introduce national universal pharmacare so that all Canadians can afford the medications they need, at an affordable price.
- Significantly expanding access to evidence-based, community level addictions treatment programs.
- Immediately doubling our investments in early learning and child care and establishing a national secretariat to coordinate a long-term vision for a national child care system.
- Implementing a federal minimum wage of at least \$15 per hour, and bringing into new job protections for Canadians who are currently self-employed through work on digital platforms.
- Investing in additional supports to promote a more inclusive job market for persons with disabilities, including the creation of a national workplace accessibility fund so that all Canadians have the accommodations they need to find and keep a good paying job or to pursue higher education.

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- Making post-secondary education more affordable by boosting student grants by 40 per cent, and ensuring that no graduate needs to repay their student debt within 2 years of leaving PSE, at any time if they make less than \$35,000 per year, or if they have a child under the age of 5.
- Co-developing a distinctions based plan to close all major infrastructure gaps in Indigenous communities by 2030 and introducing distinctions-based Indigenous health legislation. This will include associated components for urban Indigenous programming, including the development of a distinctions-based urban Indigenous housing strategy.
- Helping seniors by strengthening Old Age Security at age 75 and increasing survivor benefits through the Canada and Quebec Pension Plans. These measures will provide increased financial security for millions of older Canadians, and take at least 20,000 seniors out of poverty.

This builds on important progress we have made over the past four years through the introduction of the CCB and the new Canada Workers Benefit, the creation of Canada's first-ever federal proactive pay equity regime, and important new investments in the quality services that families rely on to join the middle-class, including affordable housing, and affordable and high quality child care. In addition to these initiatives, and those outlined in our platform, we will continue to take additional steps in order to fully achieve the goals outlined in the PRS. We will also continue to make sure that strategies such as the NHS are adequately resourced in order to achieve the important, long-term goals they have set out.

We know that poverty reduction is more than simply a question of income adequacy. It is about the ability to participate equally in a community, both socially and economically.

As outlined in the PRS, we will continue to report on a dashboard of indicators to track progress on the many aspects of poverty, from different measures of low income, to Canadians in housing need, to the differences in earnings and life outcomes between low-income Canadians and those in the middle class. This includes the Low Income Measure, so that we can properly assess how poverty reduction interacts with other related measures of inequality, economic inclusion and affordability.

We also understand that we must do more to combat racism, build the conditions for good jobs and an equal workplace, and address the unique challenges that communities like LGBTQ2+ Canadians face, if we are to achieve true and substantive equality. To this end, a re-elected Liberal government will double investments in Canada's first ever anti-racism strategy, enhance the gender-based violence strategy with a new national action plan, increase mental health and community supports for LGBTQ2+ persons, and invest in further research to support evidence-based policy that will address the unique challenges that women, newcomers, racialized persons, Indigenous peoples and youth - among other groups - face in seeking to join the middle class.