

April 7, 2025

Dear Mishail Bhatia,

Thank you for writing, and for providing us with the opportunity to speak to children's health and share the Green Party of Canada's platform. We appreciate your continued advocacy on behalf of children, youth, and families across the country.

Please find our response below.

Best regards,
Marie Bu Jacobsen
Survey Team
Green Party of Canada

1. Prioritization of Children's Health

• As a nation, Canada has underinvested in children's health (1.68% of GDP) in comparison to peer nations who spend up to 3.68% of their GDP on policies and programs related to children. To remedy this situation, does your party intend to make new investments to measurably improve the health and wellbeing of Canada's kids?

Yes

We support new investments to improve children's health and wellbeing.

We will:

- Increase the Canada Child Benefit and support low-income families
- Invest in early learning, childcare, and children's development
- Fund a universal school food program
- Support Indigenous-led childcare programs
- Improve access to mental health services for youth
- Help single parents and families with disabled children
- Support youth through better education on health and relationships

All children deserve a healthy, safe, and supported start in life.

2. Protecting Families against economic pressures

Will your party commit to expanding economic protections for families during these uncertain economic times through an expansion of the Canada Child Benefit?

Yes

We support expanding economic help for families through the Canada Child Benefit (CCB).

We will:

- Increase the Canada Child Benefit for low-income families
- Introduce an *End Poverty Supplement* through the CCB. This will help families meet basic needs
- Provide housing and transportation support for low-income families
- Strengthen Employment Insurance to better protect parents during job loss
- Our ultimate goal is to introduce a Guaranteed Livable Income to protect all Canadians from poverty and hardship.

We want all families to have stability and support, especially in these hard times.

3. Dedicated Funding for Children's Healthcare

o Canada's healthcare systems serving children, youth, and their families are currently undersized. There is insufficient funding allocated to children's health systems (including mental health and child health research), and a shrinking highly specialized workforce to meet the needs of a growing, increasingly complex and diverse population. Will your party commit to dedicated, ring-fenced federal funding for children's healthcare through bilateral health agreements with provinces and territories?

Will consider

We will work to improve children's health. Our platform does not promise dedicated, ring-fenced funding.

We support:

- Expanding community-based healthcare, including services for children and youth
- Strengthening mental health care, especially for young people
- Funding a universal school food program to support child nutrition
- Expanding access to dental care for all who qualify, including children
- Fighting child poverty with targeted income supports like the End Poverty Supplement

We will work with provinces to improve access to pediatric care. All children deserve to get the health services they need.

4. Health Workforce for Pediatric Care

• When children require preventive care or experience illness, injury, or a limitation in their functioning, a wide variety of highly specialized healthcare and other professionals provide expert care to maintain, improve, and promote their health and wellbeing. Will your party commit to addressing shortages of child and youth healthcare professionals (e.g., pediatricians, child psychologists, pediatric nurses) through targeted health workforce planning and funding?

Will consider

We will build a stronger healthcare workforce. We do not have a specific policy focused only on pediatric professionals.

But, we want to:

- Hire more doctors and nurses
- Expand community health clinics and interdisciplinary teams - which can include pediatric care professionals
- Double funding for Indigenous health workforce development
- Fund training in sectors facing chronic labour shortages
- Speed up the recognition of foreign-trained health workers

These steps would help address workforce shortages in pediatric and youth care. As part of a broader strategy, it will improve healthcare access across Canada .

5. Indigenous Child Health Equity

• First Nations, Metis and Inuit children experience measurably poorer health outcomes than other children living in Canada. What is your party's position on initiatives like Jordan's Principle and the Inuit Children First initiative?

We support full funding for Jordan's Principle.

- We commit to ending health gaps for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children.
- We support expanding Indigenous-led health care services.
- We will double funding to train and support Indigenous health workers.
- We back the TRC's Calls to Action on Indigenous health.
- We support culturally safe care for children and families.
- We will expand access to Non-Insured Health Benefits.
- We recognize the importance of the Inuit Child First Initiative and support it.

6. Data & Accountability for Child Health Outcomes

• **Canada currently lacks an integrated, intentional approach to the collection of health data for children and youth. Existing data is limited by the fact that most children’s healthcare takes place in settings that also serve adults, with budgets and resources that blend pediatric and adult care. To enhance program delivery, strengthen policies, and target investments, children need to be an intentional focus of an accessible national health data strategy. Does your party support introducing children as a priority audience within the context of national data collection efforts?**

Yes

We support making children a priority in national health data strategies.

Here’s our position:

- Strong data is key to improving care, targeting investments, and holding systems accountable.
- We don’t have a dedicated child health data policy, but, we do want children to be visible and prioritized in all national health planning.
- We support tracking outcomes to close health gaps, especially for Indigenous and marginalized children.
- We will work with provinces and experts to build better systems.

Every child deserves care shaped by clear data, equity, and informed decisions.

7. Additional Comments

• **Is there anything else you would like to share regarding your party’s vision for improving child and youth health in Canada?**

o (Open-ended response)

We take a holistic approach to improving child and youth health. Canadian children should get support from strong communities, clean environments, and fair systems.

We will:

- End child poverty with stronger income supports for families
- Expand access to public healthcare, dental care, and pharmacare
- Improving mental health services for all ages
- Fund Jordan’s Principle and Indigenous-led health care
- Address climate-related health risks for children
- Support healthy food in schools and clean air, water, and housing

We want every Canadian child to grow up safe, healthy, and supported.