

In Canada,
DISABILITY POVERTY
begins at birth.

Investments Needed for Children & Youth with Disabilities

1. Caregiver Income Benefit
2. Child Disability Benefit
3. Home & Vehicle Accessibility

Necessity of a Caregiver Income Benefit

- Family caregiving is at the core of what sustains children & youth with complex care needs.

- Direct care and care coordination is a full-time job and creates huge barriers to employment.
- As a result, caregivers are often forced to make major financial sacrifices including loss of employment income, pensions, and workplace benefits. Families are pushed towards poverty as the disability related expenses continue to rise and compound.
- We ask you to create a robust Caregiver Income Benefit* that recognizes the important full-time work of family caregivers. Modelled on the Caregiver Recovery Benefit*

Increase the Child Disability Benefit

- Families with children & youth who have complex disabilities, have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, years of inflating costs and eroding provincial programs yet have not seen the doubling of the CDB as promised to us for many years.
- As per 2019 mandate letter: “Double the Child Disability Benefit and work with families and experts to ensure the Benefit is effective in providing help as most needed”
- The current maximum benefit of \$242/ month is not supportive when we face such extraordinary costs for specialized care, therapy, equipment, and home & vehicle modifications which can be more than \$40,000 annually.

- Income testing the CDB is financially challenging for families. We recommend shift income threshold higher to better reflect the financial demands of having a child with complex care needs.

We ask you to triple the Child Disability Benefit to \$726.00 per month.

Home & Vehicle Modifications for Accessibility

- Home modifications for accessibility are an absolute necessity for the safety and wellbeing of children with physical disabilities, and their family caregivers.
- Adapted vehicles are essential to meet the right to inclusion in community. Unfortunately, these modifications are cost prohibitive for the majority of families, many go without and are marginalized as a result.

- Federal Budget 2022 launched the Multigenerational Home Renovation Tax Credit of \$7500 which excluded families who need to make accessibility modifications earlier in their children's lives to prepare for supporting them at home into adulthood.
- New tax credits such as the Multigenerational Home Renovation Tax Credit must include families with children with disabilities.
- The Home Accessibility Tax Credit needs to be significantly increased beyond \$3000 to be supportive of the actual needs for Canadians of all ages with disabilities.
- Create funding opportunities for families who require accessible rental housing including rent subsidies and equipment grants suitable for adapting rental property.

Solutions to End Disability Poverty for Children & Youth

- 1) Creation of a Caregiver Income Benefit.**
- 2) Triple the Child Disability Benefit.**
- 3) Create grants for home and vehicle modifications across the lifespan.**

Implementation of the UNCRPD & UNCRC

- As a committed signatory of the UNCRPD & UNCRC, we urge this government to make essential policy changes and demonstrate your commitment through action.
- Our recommendations would make significant strides in reducing childhood disability poverty. Children have the right to thrive at home with

their families in a way that is more equitable with their peers.

- We ask you to use a rights-based approach to policy for a better future for all Canadians with disabilities, including children & youth.

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2. <https://www.marchofdimes.ca/enca/aboutus/govrelations/provincial/Documents/MODC-Federal-Budget-Submission-Minister-of-Finance-Feb2022.pdf>
3. <https://www.accessiblehousingnetwork.org/accessible-housing>