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RE: Policy Questionnaire - CPS

Dear Marie Adèle,

Thank you for sending the Ontario Greens your organization's questionnaire. We appreciate the opportunity to speak on these issues related to children's wellbeing in this province. I am happy to provide you with a response on behalf of the party.

Sincerely,

Madeleine Crist
Office Manager
Green Party of Ontario

Policy Questionnaire - CPS

1. What will your party do to improve access to publicly funded mental health treatment and resources for children and youth living with mental health issues or developmental disabilities?

The Ontario Green Party is committed to helping treat mental health and developmental disabilities especially for our youth and children. We will provide an immediate base budget increase of 8% to the community mental health sector to increase access to publicly funded care and decrease the wait list for children to a 30 day maximum. We will also:

- Make the appropriate investments so students can easily connect to community mental health professionals at or near primary and secondary schools.
- Ensure that mental health, wellness and resiliency training are included across the entire education system. Implement a comprehensive curriculum that covers issues such as mental wellness, coping skills, and stress management.
- Replicate networks such as the Guelph and Wellington County ACEs Coalition province-wide to increase programming available to prevent the effects of adverse childhood experiences.

- Invest in Youth Wellness Hubs province-wide as a one-stop shop for employment, health, education, recreation and housing support. Our goal should be to have at least one in each community across Ontario.
- Expand the Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health and increase funding for peer-to-peer programming, frontline counselling, harm reduction tools, and training to support well-being and resilience.
- Increase the number of Indigenous-led health centres, youth programming, crisis support teams, and support suicide-prevention training.
- Dedicate resources and funding to directly support 2SLGBTQIA+ youth groups.
- Invest in expanding services for youth who face service gaps as they age out of the youth system of care.

The Green Party of Ontario is committed to supporting children and youth with disabilities by doing the following:

- Addressing the growing waitlist for Ontario Autism Program (OAP) core services by building capacity of autism providers, and fully fund the OAP to bring families into the program as rapidly as possible.
- Ensuring the updated formula includes adequate funding for ESL grants, special education assistants, counsellors, and other specific supports to provide equitable access to learning and school activities for all students.
- Providing educators multi-discipline training to help them address student sensory and behavioural issues and adopt teaching strategies that support students with a wide spectrum of accommodation needs.
- Allocating funds to ensure schools are able to comply with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

2. What will your party do to improve access to paediatric health care in rural and northern communities?

The Green Party of Ontario is committed to rebalancing the healthcare funding formula to ensure better access in rural and remote areas. We will also:

- Make permanent the 50 community wellness nursing positions supporting First Nations communities.
- Use incentives to bring physicians and allied health professionals to Northern and rural communities.
- Create opportunities for specialist and subspecialist trainees to undertake electives and core rotations in the North.
- Invest in increasing the number of Indigenous-led health clinics.
- Expand the roles and scope of nurse practitioners as primary health care providers, especially in areas that lack primary care options.

3. What will your party do to reduce rates of childhood poverty and food insecurity across the province?

The Green Party of Ontario is committed to reducing the rates of child poverty and food insecurity by doing the following:

- Phasing in a Basic Income, with the first step being to double ODSP and OW rates and reduce aggressive clawbacks.
- Eliminating any unnecessary red tape, reporting requirements, and other barriers typically faced by those needing financial support.
- Maintaining all existing supplementary supports that are available with current income assistance programs.
- Building 182,000 new permanently affordable community housing rental homes over the next decade, including 60,000 permanent supportive homes and renewing 260,000 community housing units over the next decade.
- Implementing a province-wide nutritious school lunch program.
- Including meaningful consultation with people who have lived experience with poverty and existing social assistance programs in the design of all programs and services aimed at client-centred approaches for reducing poverty.
- Annually reporting disaggregated data on the proportion of the population that experiences chronic homelessness, unmet health needs, food insecurity, lack of literacy, and low-paid work.
- Providing start-up funding and land for community-owned healthy food markets, community gardens, and rooftop growing spaces, particularly in urban food deserts.