

Strengthening child and youth mental health

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?

We will [introduce](#) universal, publicly funded, and accessible Mental Health care in your community. New Democrats will expand access to counselling and therapy services across the province by bringing therapy services into OHIP. Our plan includes \$130 million of targeted funding for child and youth mental health services.

New Democrats will [double](#) the Mental Health and Wellbeing Grant for schools. We will invest \$250 million to increase the ratio of caring, compassionate staff to students and support equity-driven, evidence-based programs in schools. We will also dedicate \$285 million to support schools to hire more educational assistants from diverse backgrounds.

Reducing inequities in access to paediatric care

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

We will improve access to primary care through Nurse Practitioner Led Clinics, Community Health Action Centres, Aboriginal Health Access Centres and Community Family Health Teams. We will connect primary care providers to a network of support in community to ensure a continuum of care. We will ensure the sustainability of maternal health, labour and delivery, and paediatric health units in rural hospitals. Children and youth need targeted services, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds. We will ensure that hospitals, clinics, and community healthcare settings are equipped to offer evidence-based healthcare for Ontario's young people.

Tackling childhood poverty

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

We will establish a system that raises people out of poverty no later than the end of our first term. We'll immediately begin to work with all stakeholders on delivering an evidence-based approach to setting rates at a level that recognizes the real costs of essentials like food and rent. We will re-start the basic income pilot program that was cancelled by the Ford government. We will immediately increase to OW and ODSP rates by 20% and double it in our second year in government.

Housing: Housing is one of the key social determinants of health. Our housing plan will help keep families in their homes and help low-income families afford rent.

Childcare: We will ensure that all children, whether they have a disability, are racialized, or are a member of a Northern, rural, or Indigenous community, are provided with high-quality inclusive childcare options that fit their circumstances.

Provincial Food Strategy: Put healthy, locally sourced food onto Ontario tables by supporting agriculture and transportation workers.

Sincerely,

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Director of Policy

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