

Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS)

Responses to samanthag@cps.ca by Monday, November 18th

Elevating the voices of children and youth: What will your party do to listen to and elevate the voices and interests of children and youth?

- It is important to listen and hear the voices of children and youth. Often, children and youth perspectives can help with implementation of programs such as in education and healthcare as well as reflect back the impact of policies and programs on them.
- A NDP government will restore elected school boards, which had a non-voting student member to bring that perspective to the table.

Eliminating childhood poverty: What will your party do to reduce rates of childhood poverty and food insecurity?

- The NDP finds it unacceptable that Nova Scotia has some of the highest increase in poverty and food insecurity in Canada. Children are poor because their parent or parents are poor.
- A NDP government will make life more affordable by:
 - taking immediate action to remove the HST from essentials like all groceries, cell phone and internet bills and drop the HST from buying and installing heat pumps– putting \$1300 per year back into the wallets of families,
 - a gas tax holiday, saving you 15.5 cents per litre at the pump every time you fill up, and
 - lowering transportation costs by making the Halifax Harbour ferries free and improving public transit options for commuters.
- A NDP government will make housing more stable and affordable by:
 - putting an end to skyrocketing rent increases by establishing rent control that cuts in half the current rate increase to 2.5%, down from 5%

- banning the fixed-term leases that allow landlords to hike rents, put in place rent control, so the price of an apartment doesn't increase when someone new moves in.
 - putting in place a compliance and enforcement unit so that both renters and landlords have somewhere to turn when there are differences that need to be resolved urgently
 - providing \$900/year housing rebates for low- and middle-income renters and homeowners. The Affordable Homes Rebate will help households with income below \$70,000 a year – so it will benefit approximately half of all Nova Scotia households,
- An NDP government will help families and their children by waiving the deductible charged under Family Pharmacare, to reduce the financial barrier to an important element of medical care.
 - A Nova Scotia NDP government will sign a bilateral agreement with the federal government under the federal Pharmacare Act for universal coverage of contraception and diabetes drugs and devices. This will families hundreds of dollars and provide more options for women and gender-diverse people. It will save up to \$18,000 a year for people living with diabetes.
 - The NDP know that high-quality childcare at \$10 a day saves families thousands of dollars a year and improves children's development as well as provides some relief to food insecurity. An NDP government will establish a pilot program with four new publicly-owned and operated child care centres in underserved areas. We'll also provide capital funding to schools for more child care spaces closer to home.

Ending systemic racism and discrimination: What will your party do to ensure all children and youth are protected from systemic racism and discrimination?

- A NDP government will publicly release a plan for implementing the recommendations from the Commission on Inclusive Education and report annually on progress for public accountability and transparency.
- An NDP government will engage African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, racialized and other communities to identify shortcomings in protection against systemic racism and discrimination and plan accountable steps to promote acceptance and welcoming measures that reduce the existence and effects of systemic racism and discrimination.

Protecting the rights of children and youth: How will your party uphold and protect the unique and inalienable rights of children and youth and realize the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child?

- An NDP government will create a Child and Youth Advocate office, which is long overdue, and task it to begin by identifying what else Nova Scotia should do to realize the articles of the Convention and thus protect the rights of children and youth.

- Specifically, an NDP government will:
 - immediately act on the Auditor General's recommendations to reduce school violence which has increased an alarming 60% over the past seven years, and
 - open 45 family doctor clinics across the province, at the pace of 15 doctor clinics each year, making sure every child and their family have access to the collaborative team of primary care providers at each clinic.

Strengthening data and accountability: How will your party improve data collection and availability for increased transparency and accountability about the health and well-being of children and youth?

- An NDP government will include this among the responsibilities of the Child and Youth Advocate office so the data basic for accountability is being collected independently, and provide the necessary funds when setting the office's budget.