

Must We Choose Between Today's Economy and Tomorrow's Teenagers? Part 2

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Last week, we looked at the tried and failed childcare strategy of the NDP. This week, let's look at the Conservative's current answer to the new NDP plan. Their response was recently summed up in an editorial from the *Globe and Mail*:

Instead of national daycare, the Harper government implemented the universal child-care benefit – \$100 per month per child under six years of age. It's not nearly as generous as \$15-a-day child care but it also costs less, doesn't require the creation of a bureaucracy to manage, and gives cash to families while leaving it up to them to decide how best to spend it.

Credit where credit is due: this is far better than the NDP. The Liberals will have to scratch their heads a bit to carve out some political ground on this issue – perhaps they will propose some hybrid plan that would combine the worst aspects of the two proposals (perhaps that is overly pessimistic).

The Conservative's idea is better in principle, and could be improved by adding income-splitting to it; they are talking about this important taxation policy again, but they did before the last election too, and has it happened?

The Christian Heritage Party has supported a similar idea for a long time, but our plan goes farther than the Conservative plan (even if they do add income-splitting to it). They are sending cheques for \$100 a month, which is a tangible benefit (that is sure to keep or gain some votes), but only for children under age six. CHP Canada's plan is much more generous, but would still help the economy:

CHP policy, overall, reflects the conviction that the married two-parent family is the most important foundation of society. Public policy should reflect a recognition and protection of the important function of a family in training up the next generation of stable and responsible citizens. The CHP Family Care Allowance touches on child care, but in a way totally different from all of the other parties. It would provide \$1000 per month to any family where one parent remains at home (does not work for wages outside the home) to care for their children—until age 18—unlike the current policy of \$100 per month for children under 6. It would also be available to families where one of the adult spouses remains at home to be the primary caregiver for their aged parent or disabled family member.

The Conservatives recently added a \$2000 per child tax credit—annually—which will provide about \$310 per child in tax relief. Hardly what a family needs to help a parent stay home to raise their children. For real pro-family legislation, you need the CHP's \$12,000 annual childcare allowance.

The average take-home pay of a woman who works at a second job is under \$1000 per month. We want to help her stay home and care for her children if that is what she wants, and surveys continually tell us that *this is* what she wants.

Additionally¹, it will open about 1.5 million existing job spaces — mostly entry-level jobs, which would especially help to relieve youth unemployment — and would reduce overall unemployment to between 3 and 5 per cent.

Go ahead and send this “better solution” on to Conservative members and MPs; send it to Prime Minister Harper! If they stole our policy – the whole thing – we would not complain because it would be better for Canada's families and children – now and for their future. Look at other “Better Solutions”² offered by the CHP and join³ or renew⁴ your membership at www.chp.ca.

Footnotes

¹ www.chp.ca/platform/category/life-family/family-care

² www.chp.ca/platform/our-better-solutions

³ www.chp.ca/get-involved

⁴ www.chp.ca/get-involved/renew