



2020 BUDGET CONSULTATIONS February 10, 2020

CFUW Ontario Council, representing 49 clubs throughout Ontario, in the 2019 Survey of Members, the following were voted major concerns:

1. Health: long term care, public health cuts, home care
2. Climate change
3. Poverty and affordable housing
4. Education and schools: increased class sizes, funding, mental health support
5. Women's rights: pay equity, child care
6. Gender-based violence

The Ministry of Finance asks about "Building Ontario Together". To us:

It means gender equality.

It means human infrastructure, not just the physical.

It means prioritizing human services.

It means gender-based analysis of policies and programs.

Then a strong capable workforce will be available. It will create "A Place To Grow".

You also suggest six topics. We will comment on the first three:

1. Make life more affordable:

This is basic. Yes, providing human services is expensive, yet it is the essential building block for society, be it childcare, affordable housing, student debts which basic income would address.

As monies spent on childhood, on the social determinants of health, in supporting families and the elderly ultimately save the community and the taxpayer in long term¹, it is therefore recommended that Ontario **has public consultations for a human services strategy**.

2. Prepare people for jobs:

A. Women:

Ontario has the lowest participation of career-age women working². If increased, it could add 7-9% to the GDP³.

How:

- Create a program to encourage corporations to set targets, include real flexibility, raise awareness of the unconscious bias, encourage the promotion of women.
- Encourage women in STEM, especially with the influx of tech companies.
- Equal pay: Ontario – 2016 Gender wage gap is 16.2% & 11.4% hourly - 4th in the provinces (Canada is 13th out of 16 peer countries). Reasons: fewer hours due to unpaid caregiving; choice of professions - human services poorly paid.⁴
- Affordable quality childcare.

- Reduce gender inequalities in unpaid care work, including both child and elder care.

B. Education:

Our first priority must be the education of our children. CFUW supports public education.

As partners of People for Education we support their call for the long overdue review of the 1997 education funding formula, having been ignored by successive governments.⁵

We also support full-day kindergarten whose benefits have been shown to continue.⁶

3. Build healthier and safer communities:

A. Health

We watch for support and funding to the local Ontario Health Teams and the Mental Health and Addictions Centre of Excellence.

We are concerned that:

- The waitlist for long-term beds is increasing; even the new 15,000 beds won't correct⁷
- Home care needs are increasing, yet staff are leaving⁸.

B. Climate change:

Climate change is our #2 in our 2019 Survey. Our CFUW membership-approved policies support any action that will bring us to our Paris Agreement level, including carbon taxes. A suggestion by the outgoing Environment Commissioner was the UK *Climate Change Act 2008*, newly enhanced in 2020.⁹

C. Gender-based violence:

CFUW Ontario Council supports #ProjectMapleLeaf in its fight on human trafficking.¹⁰

We also support the rape crisis centres need for more funding due to increased demand in services.¹¹

¹ Canada without Poverty, How expensive is poverty in Canada <http://www.cwp-csp.ca/poverty/the-cost-of-poverty/>

² Financial Accountability Office Ontario Child Care In Ontario: A Review Of Ontario's New Child Care Tax Credit And Implications For Ontario's Labour Force, Sept. 24, 2019 <https://www.fao-on.org/en/Blog/Publications/childcare-ontario-2019>

³ S. Devillard et al, The power of parity: Advancing women's equality in Canada June 2017 | McKinsey Global Institute <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/gender-equality/the-power-of-parity-advancing-womens-equality-in-canada>

⁴ The Conference Board of Canada, Provincial and Territorial Ranking - Gender Wage Gap <https://www.conferenceboard.ca/hcp/provincial/society/gender-gap.aspx>

⁵ People for Education, *Funding education in Ontario – Time for a review*, Feb.4,2020 <https://peopleforeducation.ca/our-work/funding-education-in-ontario-time-for-a-review/>

⁶ Janette Pelletier, Children gain learning boost from two-year, full-day kindergarten, August 2, 2017, The Conversation Canada <https://theconversation.com/children-gain-learning-boost-from-two-year-full-day-kindergarten-79549?>

⁷ Financial Accountability Office: Long-Term Care Homes Program: A Review of the Plan to Create 15,000 New Long-Term Care Beds in Ontario. October 30,2019 <https://www.fao-on.org/en/Blog/Publications/LTBO-2019>

⁸ Home Care Ontario <https://www.homecareontario.ca/home-care-services/facts-figures/publiclyfundedhomecare>

⁹ Environmental Commission of Ontario, *Climate Action in Ontario: What's Next?* September 2018
<https://eco.auditor.on.ca/our-reports/>

¹⁰ Courage for Freedom <https://courageforfreedom.org/solution/projectmapleleaf/>

¹¹ Ontario Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres Statistics Canada: Almost 19% year over year increase in Sexual Assaults in Ontario, July 29, 2019 <https://sexualassaultsupport.ca/statistics-canada-almost-19-year-over-year-increase-in-sexual-assaults-in-ontario/>