

The Case for Basic Income: Freedom, Security, Justice

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Presentation to Retirees' Association of Queen's, 19 October 2021

Land Acknowledgement

- *"Kingston is in the 'Dish With One Spoon Territory'. The Dish With One Spoon is a treaty between the Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee that bound them to share the territory, protect the land & ensure enough food for all. Subsequent Indigenous Nations and peoples, Europeans and all newcomers are invited into this treaty in the spirit of peace, friendship and respect."*



Image by gravity, inc.

Elaine



- 17 years at Queen's
- 15 years teaching HLTH 101, Social Determinants of Health
- 28 years of research on food insecurity
- 8 years of active basic income advocacy (via KAG-BIG & OBIN)

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)

Article 25

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself [sic] and his [sic] family, including food, clothing, housing, and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his [sic] control.

What is basic income?

A basic income is an unconditional cash transfer from government to individuals to enable everyone to meet their basic needs, participate in society and live with dignity, regardless of work status.



Basic Income Canada Network
Réseau canadien pour le revenu garanti

-
- Cash-based
 - Universally accessible for all who need it
 - Unconditional

Basic Income - aka

guaranteed annual income (GAI)

guaranteed livable income (GLI)

basic income guarantee (BIG)

minimum annual income (MAI) or
minimum income (MI)

negative income tax (NIT)

Two main models

- universal basic income (UBI) or demogrant model
- negative income tax (NIT) or minimum income

Main arguments in support

- the current social safety net is ineffective, inefficient
 - social assistance, EI, working poor
- BI is an effective anti-poverty policy
 - stimulates & supports the economy
 - would pay for itself over time – health care, justice, education
- successful precedents in Canada – CCB, OAS/GIS, CERB
- creates the conditions for freedom, security, justice

Several BI pilots around the world, including 2 in Canada

- MINCOME in Manitoba, 1970s
- Ontario Basic Income Pilot (prematurely cancelled 2018)



Source: Vox

Common themes

- **negligible effects on employment**
 - increases in entrepreneurship
 - stronger labour incentives than social assistance
- **better health outcomes**
 - improved mental health; decreases in physician visits, hospitalizations, addictions, stress
- **better educational attainment**
- **decreased crime rates**
- **community level impacts**
 - economic & social

We already have successful income guarantee programs in Canada - notably the Child Benefit and OAS / GIS



Couples with Children



Seniors (65+)



Single Adults

Gauranteed
income program?



Eligible support
programs

Canada Child
Benefit (CCB)

Old Age Security (OAS)
Gauranteed Income Supp. (GIS)

Social Assistance,
Ontario Works

National poverty
rate*

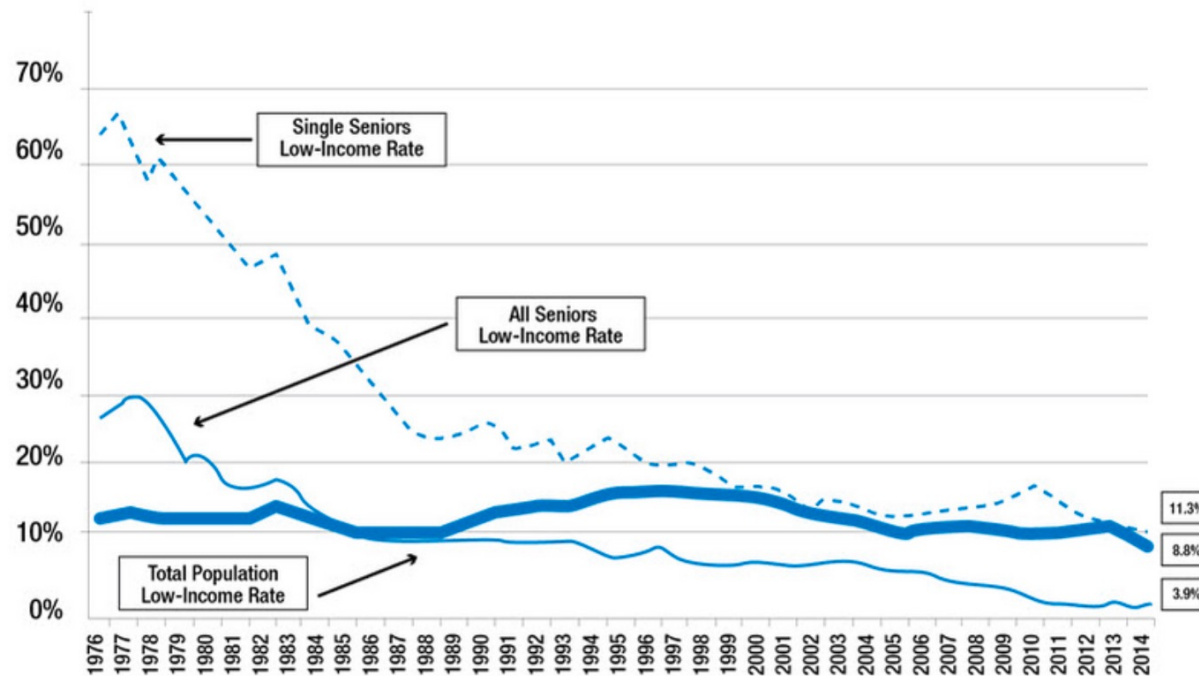
~10%
(under 18)

~5%

~30%

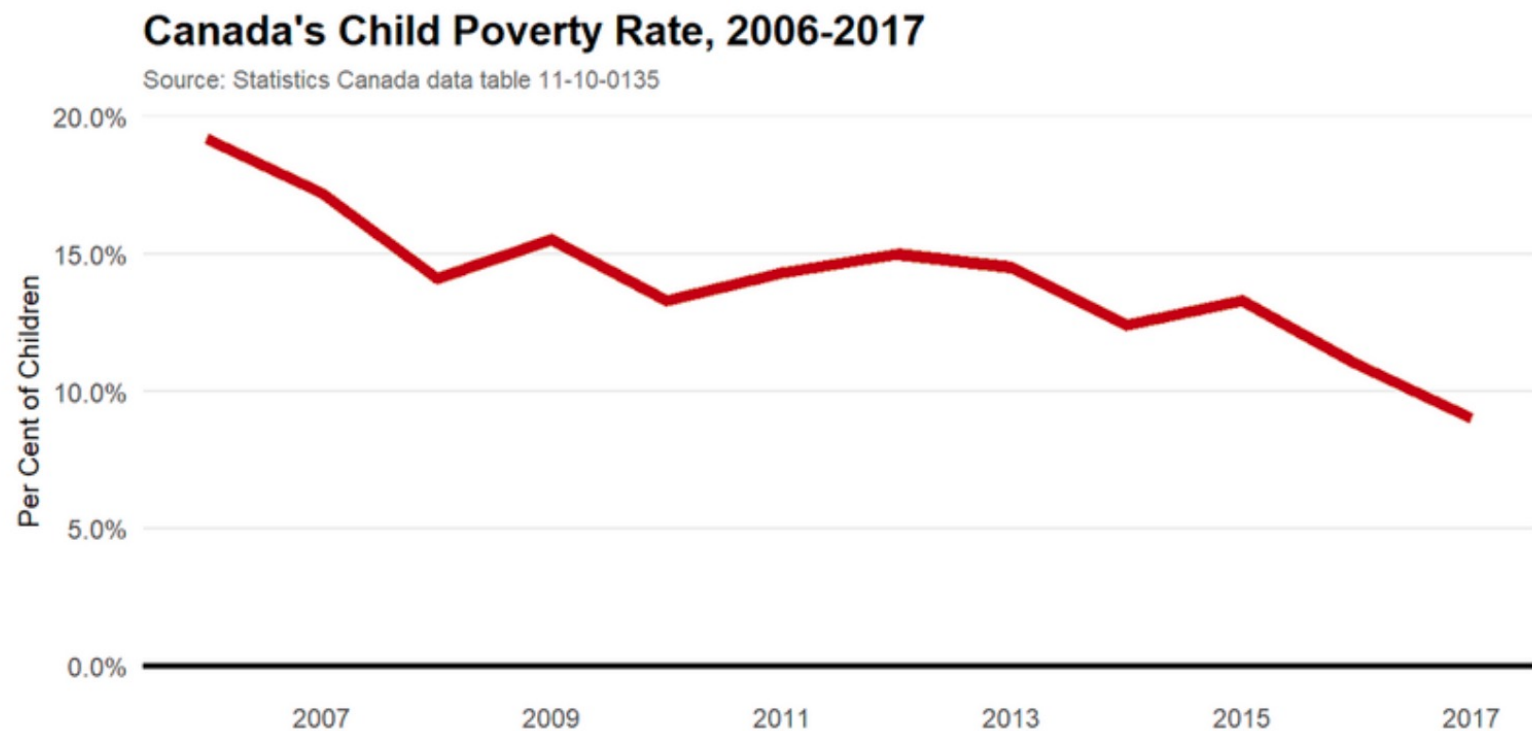
Note: *Statistics Canada - % of population living under low-income measure, 2019

Senior poverty rate has significantly declined in Canada, in part due to a guaranteed income from OAS / GIS....



Source: Statistics Canada

~50% decline in the child poverty rate. largely due to enhanced the enhanced Canada Child Benefit



Graph by @trevortombe

Source: Statistics Canada



“I just have one criteria – you come here like every other new Canadian has come here, you work your tail off,” he said. “If you think you’re coming to collect the dole and sit around — not going to happen. Go somewhere else. You want to work, come here.” he said.

Premier Doug Ford, 18 Oct 2021

There is no evidence that basic income significantly impacts labour market participation in most cases

Meta-analysis of 16 basic income trials around the world showed....

Labour market participation rate:

- Stayed the same or declined <2% in ~95% of cases
- Remaining cases - no cases where rate decreased by 5%

of hours worked:

- Stayed the same or declined <5% in ~87% of cases
- Remaining cases - no cases where hours decreased by 10%

“Taken as a whole, the current findings provide strong support [...] that guaranteed basic income would not serve as a major disincentive to work.”

- Gilbert et al., 2018

Basic income can have a reasonable price tag, particularly if financed through tax system reform

Estimates from the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) (2018)

*Payments of ~\$17K per single person (~\$24K for couples);
less 50% of earned income for every adult in Canada*

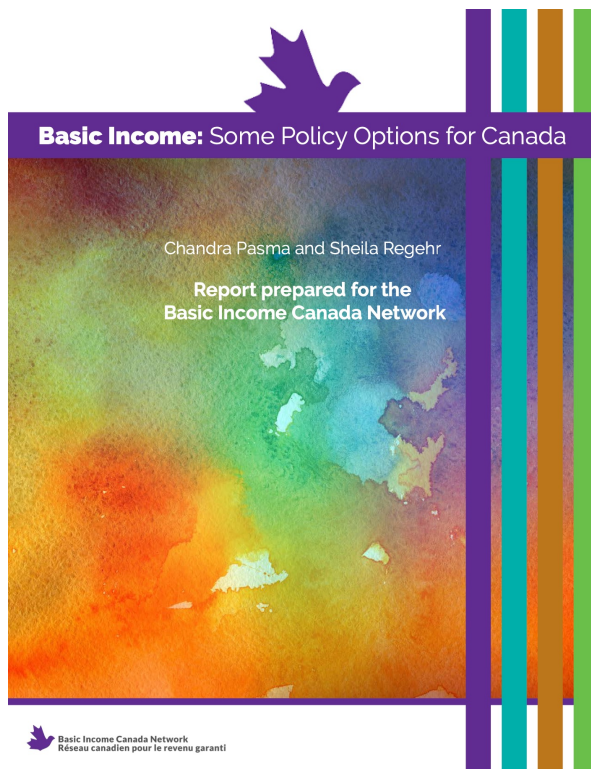
~\$76B	Gross cost
(~\$32B)	Savings from federal programs
(~\$21B)*	Elimination of provincial social assistance / disability programs

~\$23B Net costs

A few things to keep in mind...

- Full or partial payments would reach ~9M Canadians
- \$23B is a big but feasible number - that's roughly how much we spend on the Canada Child Benefit each year
- This amount can be raised by a 3% increase to the GST (or other ways)
- Does not factor in savings from lower healthcare or criminal justice costs

Source: Parliamentary Budget Office (2018); *Provincial cost savings estimates from "Basic Income for Canadians", Evelyn Forget (2018)



Option One - A benefit for 18-64 year olds, based on family income

- \$22,000 for a single person; \$31,113 for a couple (divided between individuals)
- It works similar to existing child benefits and the Ontario pilot as benefits are reduced gradually as other income rises, in our case using a modest 40% reduction rate.
- Some tax changes affected low-income single seniors so we give a boost to the Guaranteed Income Supplement for them in this model.

Option Two - A benefit for all adults 18+, based on family income

- The benefit works in the same manner as Option One, with seniors now included.

Option Three - An individual, universal benefit for all adults 18+

- Each adult gets the same \$22,000 benefit amount, regardless of family status or other income—there is no reduction rate in this model.

No single model

- minimalist-libertarian model
- mixed welfare model
- strong basic income model

Young & Mulvale, CCPA, 2009

Four key criteria

- degree of universality
- degree of conditionality
- adequacy of benefit levels
- integration with other social programs

Goals of a BI

Kingston Action Group for a Basic Income Guarantee

- increase social justice
- increase income security
- increase equality of opportunity
- increase dignity
- increase the number of Canadians living above the poverty line

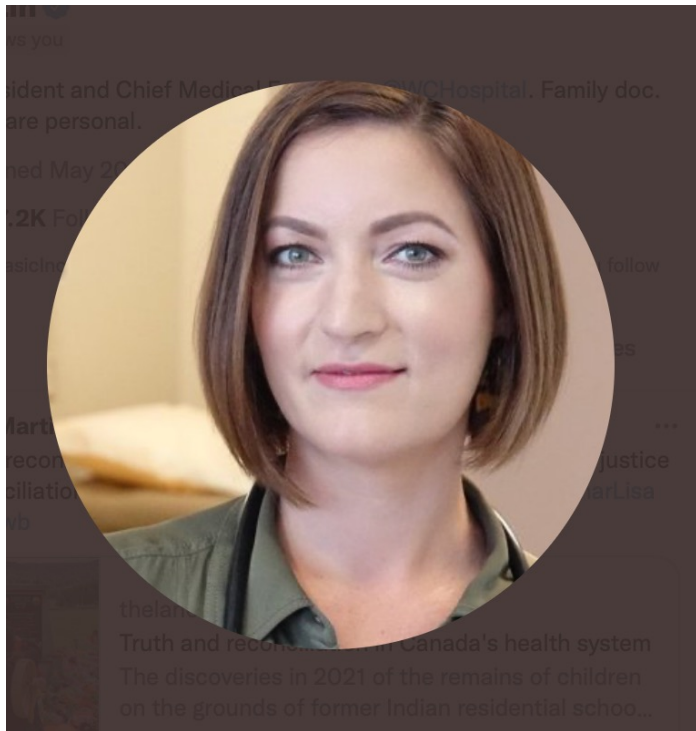
Potential Benefits of BI+ (a strong model)

- collective economic savings
- reduce bureaucracy, stigma, government intrusion into private lives, punitive aspects of welfare
- stimulate/reinvent the economy
- potential to “end poverty” & limit marginalization -> reduced human suffering

- individuals & families better able to weather income insecurity & plan for the future
- recognition of unpaid work
- opportunities for meaningful (unpaid) work
- unleash creativity
- boost entrepreneurship
- provides employer & employee flexibility
- more employee choice; decreased exploitation of labour

- enhances democracy, political empowerment & equality of opportunity
- promotes dignity of all
- acts as a force for social cohesion & unity
- opens up space for us to rethink our relationship to each other, the planet & the future

Dr. Danielle Martin



“If we were to find a drug that reduced hospital admissions by 8.5%, we’d be putting it in the water.”

THE CASE FOR BASIC INCOME SERIES

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- THE CASE FOR BASIC INCOME FOR WOMEN
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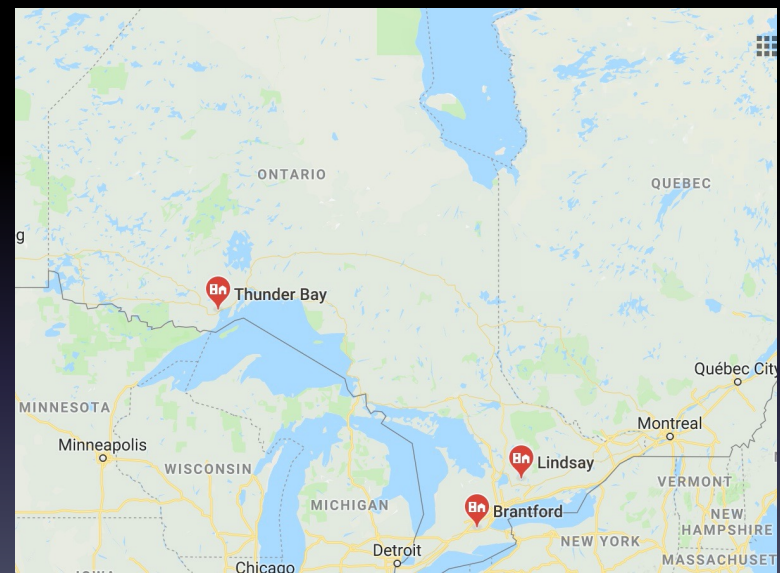
B I C Y N basic income canada youth network
réseau canadien des jeunes pour le revenu garanti

**Mobilizing youth across Canada
in support of a basic income
guarantee**

www.basicincomeyouth.ca

Ontario's Basic Income Pilot

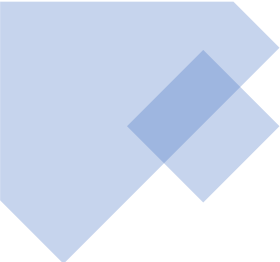
Studying the impact of
a basic income



Why study a basic income?


The pilot will test whether a basic income can better support vulnerable workers, improve health and education outcomes for people on low incomes, and help ensure that everyone shares in Ontario's economic growth. It will measure outcomes in:

- Food security
- Stress and anxiety
- Mental health
- Health and health care usage
- Housing stability
- Education and training
- Employment and labour market participation



Comparison of Pilot Basic Income model (at 75% LIM) and Ontario Works

Household size	Annual Basic Income Benefit Amount (at 75% LIM, 2016e)	Annual Ontario Works Basic Needs + Max Shelter
Single adult	\$16,989	\$8,472
Single with one child	\$24,027	\$11,592
Single with two children	\$29,427	\$12,228
Couple	\$24,027	\$13,140
Couple with one child	\$29,427	\$13,776
Couple with two children	\$33,979	\$14,460





From 'barely surviving' to thriving: Ontario basic income recipients report less stress, better health

The three-year pilot project, which began last summer, is testing whether no-strings-attached cash support can boost health, education and housing for people living in poverty.



Margie Goold, 60, who suffers from severe arthritis, was able to buy a new walker "with all the bells and whistles" since joining the program in October. (BERNARD WEIL / TORONTO STAR)

By **LAURIE MONSEBRAATEN** Social Justice Reporter
Sat., Feb. 24, 2018



"This has already been a huge life-change for me. I have a full fridge. I am eating more healthy food," says Hamilton resident Alana Baltzer, 28, who traded her \$722 monthly ODSP benefit for a basic income of \$1,915 in October. (BERNARD WEIL)



POLITICS 12/03/2020 09:44 EST | Updated 12/03/2020 11:20 EST

Trudeau Says He Sees No Path For Basic Income Right Now

The prime minister was asked to share his two cents about universal basic income.

By Zi-Ann Lum



Justin Trudeau @JustinTrudeau · Oct 9

Heading to the store to pick up some things for Thanksgiving dinner? If you're able to, consider grabbing an extra item or two for the local food bank and help a family in need. This long weekend, let's continue to be there for one another - it's the Canadian way.



1.8K

3K

11.8K





Steven Del Duca  @StevenDelDuca · 17h



Ontario Liberals will be the party that helps our province transition to a new way of doing things. An @OntLiberal government will reinstate the basic income pilot project that was cancelled by Doug Ford. #onpoli



UBI Works   @ubi_works · 22h

MUST WATCH: @StevenDelDuca re-confirms he'll start up the #BasicIncome pilot in Ontario if elected. Says as part of rebuilding the economy.

[Show this thread](#)



<https://basicincomecanada.org>



BASIC INCOME NOW

