



Liberal Party of Canada

350 Alberl Street, Suite 920
Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 6M8

Parti libéral du Canada

350, rue Albert, bureau 920
Ottawa (Ontario) K1P 6M8

August 29, 2021

Provincial-Territorial Autism Network
Via email : director@autismns.ca

Dear Cynthia Carroll,

Enclosed, please find the Liberal Party of Canada's formal response to your letter.

On behalf of our Leader, Justin Trudeau, and the entire Liberal team, thank you for writing to identify the major concerns of your membership.

We appreciate your interest in the Liberal Party of Canada's policies as they relate to the issues which affect you. We encourage you to read our platform when it is released.

Sincerely,

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On behalf of the Canadian Autistic community, we ask: will your government commit to investing in the necessary development of a National Autism Strategy, and provide a concrete timeline to have this strategy implemented by 2023?

We are committed to continuing to work to make Canada a more equitable and inclusive place for all Canadians.

We recognize the complex and diverse needs of people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and are committed to improving the health and overall well-being of children and adults with autism spectrum disorder.

That's why in April 2021, we announced an investment of \$15.4 million over two years in the federal Budget to support the development of a National Autism Strategy by enhancing engagement efforts, supporting additional Strategic Fund projects to address emerging priority needs and improving data collection. Work on the strategy has progressed during COVID-19, and the public engagement process by the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences has ended with the final report to be released in early 2022. We look forward to reviewing the report and working with all partners to continue supporting Canadians with ASD and their families.

Over the past six years we have taken concrete action to support ASD Canadians, including:

- \$9.1 million in community-based projects to better serve families' needs;
- \$10.9 million for the Autism and Intellectual Disabilities Knowledge Exchange, to provide online access to information, resources & services;
- \$12 million for the Ready, Willing and Able program to help those with autism find a job; and,
- over \$42 million towards research to improve understanding and treatment of autism.

We have also taken government wide action including:

- supporting families and putting more money in their pockets with the enhanced Child Disability Benefit and the Canada Child Benefit.
- passing federal accessibility legislation – the Accessible Canada Act – and appointing Canada's first-ever Minister for Accessibility,
- investing \$12 million in the Ready, Willing and Able initiative, a partnership between Employment and Social Development Canada, the Canadian Association for Community Living and the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorders Alliance.

We understand the importance of inclusive consultation and have invested \$1.46 million to make sure that Canada's autism strategy is developed in collaboration with the people most impacted by it. We remain committed to continue our work with provinces, territories, families, individuals with ASD, and stakeholders to achieve this objective.