

Ottawa Journal: strong record on support for families

As Prime Minister Stephen Harper said, "Strong families make a strong country." It's just one of the reasons why our Government has delivered a strong record of support for families since we were first elected in 2006.

It's a record that includes cutting the GST, creating the Universal Child Care Benefit (UCCB), delivering the Children's Fitness and Arts Tax Credits, and introducing the Tax Free Savings Account, among other measures.

However, Canadian families who are struggling to make ends meet certainly know that there is always more that can be done. Our Government wants to ensure Canada remains the best country in the world in which to raise a family.

This is why we've kept our promise to introduce a number of new initiatives that will help all families with children, from coast to coast to coast. Every single family with children up to age six will receive an enhanced UCCB payment, up to \$1,920 per year. Furthermore, new for families with children aged 6 to 17, our Government is delivering a payment of up to \$720 per year. This direct support will continue to ensure that choice in child care is not laden in more bureaucracy, but left in the hands of the real experts – mom and dad.

Our Government has also delivered the new Family Tax Cut. Available for the 2014 taxation year, the Family Tax Cut makes life more affordable for hundreds and hundreds of thousands of Canadian families. Under the new initiative, families with children under the age of 18 will be able to transfer up to \$50,000 of income from the higher earning spouse to the lower earning spouse, thereby saving up to \$2,000 a year in federal taxes.

We're also increasing the amount families can claim for the cost of child care under the Child Care Expense Deduction by \$1,000. This is on top of the previously announced doubling of the Children's Fitness Tax Credit. Parents are now able to take advantage of the new \$1,000 claim limit and as of this year, the credit is now refundable.

But along the way, Canadians have watched the Opposition criticize our help for families, offering nothing more than expensive social programs and the promise to raise and create more taxes.

Only our Government can be counted on to support families. It's proven by our record of always putting Canadian families first.

By David Tilson, MP