



YWCA Ontario Campaign Urges Political Candidates to “Choose Gender Equity” This Election

ONTARIO – The coalition of YWCAs across Ontario has launched a provincial election campaign to urge political leaders and party candidates to “choose gender equity” this provincial election.

“We know lockdowns and other public health measures hurt women the most - particularly Black, Indigenous and racialized women and gender diverse people, and those with disabilities,” said YWCA Cambridge CEO, Kim Decker.

“They saw the greatest number of job losses leading to increased cases of economic instability and precarious housing, the greatest burden of unpaid care work and an alarming increase in gender-based violence.”

The campaign, called “#ChooseGenderEquity,” urges all candidates in the upcoming provincial election to commit to a **five-point feminist plan** that

- Increases social assistance rates to at least \$2000 per month;
- Invests in a continuum of housing options for women and gender diverse people – including safe, affordable housing, emergency shelters, transitional and supportive programs;
- Enhances the federal child care agreement to include decent work and pay provisions for all child care workers;
- Implements decent work conditions for women that include gender-inclusive upskilling and other employment programs; and,
- Creates and implements a coordinated province wide strategy to eliminate gender-based violence.

“No one chooses to live in poverty. The pandemic has exacerbated so many systemic barriers that women face and we are calling on all candidates in this election to address them head-on,” said YWCA Hamilton CEO Denise Christopherson.

“We need our elected officials to prioritize caring for those most adversely impacted by systemic inequities and work to create a better Ontario for everyone.”

To learn more about the campaign and sign the petition, visit ChooseGenderEquity.ca.

About YWCA Ontario

YWCA Ontario is a provincial coalition of YWCA member associations. We offer a range of housing programs and services including violence against women (VAW) shelters, employment and training programs, community supports, child care services, and girls’ programs – all designed to address the needs of women, girls and gender diverse people and their families. We also engage in systemic advocacy to advance substantive gender and racial equity in our province. Combined, we serve more than 50,000 people every year across Ontario.

For media inquiries, please contact YWCA Toronto Manager of Advocacy, Sami Pritchard, at spritchard@ywcatoronto.org or 647-237-7283.