

Your turn with the party leaders: Stephen Harper [CA] ^[1]

The National

Author: CBC News

Source: CBC News

Format: Article

Publication Date: 19 Jan 2006

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

Peter Mansbridge: Now it's "Your Turn" with Stephen Harper, the leader of the Conservative Party. He'll be answering your questions. The rules are the same. We asked viewers to tell us what they'd like to ask the political leaders, and most questioners came from that group. But we also asked a research firm to provide us with a representative group of Canadians, and we also drew from that pool. And once again, Stephen Harper does not know what you'll be asking....

Navid Companieh: My name is Navid Companieh. I'm from Richmond Hill, Ontario. My question to you, Mr. Harper, is that you have stated that you're going to give \$1,200 per year per child to families for child care. Now, on average on the low side, it's \$600 plus per child space in a daycare centre. How is this \$1,200 or \$100 per month going to benefit the working class family?

Stephen Harper: First of all, just to make a slight amendment to that, it's for children under the age of six. It will be taxable in the hands of the spouse who earns the lowest income. Look, it helps. We don't claim and I don't make a claim that our child care benefit is going to pay all the costs of raising a child. I say it's simply going to help.

What I would point out to you is that our child-care program which includes that, which also includes a fund to work with employers to help with the capital costs of creating day-care spaces, that our combined program in our budget, we've put aside twice as much money as the Liberals have for a program they claim is going to pay the cost of child care for every single child in the country. The fact of the matter is we don't have that kind of money. We're doing what we can with tax relief and with this payment to help parents pay for costs, to help them adapt, and particularly obviously, this helps with cases where people may want options other than institutional day care. I should point out there are other programs. You know, there are income tax deductions for child-care expenses. There are also a series of child benefit programs that help principally those with lower income. We're not touching any of those. This is simply a supplemental fund.

Peter Mansbridge: OK, do you have a follow-up?

Navid Companieh: But the thing is you've also stated in your platform that you're only committing to the current government's bilateral agreements for one year.

Stephen Harper: That's correct.

Navid Companieh: So exactly how are the provinces going to get this money to be able to help the child-care institutions to be able to open up more spaces?

Stephen Harper: Well, the current bilateral agreements have only one year of funding. I've said we will honour that funding, and then we will be moving to our own child-care program, which is directed primarily at parents rather than at provincial governments or bureaucracies or experts. We are prepared to work collaboratively with the provinces on our plan to create capital assistance for the creation of day-care spaces, however. So that's something I do look forward to sitting down with some provinces on.

Navid Companieh: Thank you.

- reprinted from CBC News

Related link: CRRU ISSUE FILE: Early learning and child care in the 2006 federal election ^[2]

Region: Canada ^[3]

Tags: election ^[4]

funding ^[5]

federalism ^[6]

spaces ^[7]

federal programs ^[8]

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/06/01/your-turn-party-leaders-stephen-harper-ca> [2]
<https://childcarecanada.org/res/issues/2006federalelectionintro.htm> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [4]
<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/election> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/funding> [6]
<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/federalism> [7] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/spaces> [8]
<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/federal-programs>