

# Tories in tune with families: Poll <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

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## EXCERPTS

Canadians believe the Conservative party is most in tune with the values and needs of today's families, according to the results of a poll conducted exclusively for Postmedia News and Global TV.

Just over one-third of Canadians (35 per cent) favour Prime Minister Stephen Harper's party when it comes to family issues, while nearly three in 10 (27 per cent) believe Jack Layton's NDP is the most family-friendly. Just two in 10 (19 per cent) vouch for the Liberals as led by Michael Ignatieff when it comes to family issues.

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Forty-one per cent of parents believe the Tories are the best party for families, compared to 24 per cent of those without children.

One-third (34 per cent) of non-parents say the NDP best understands families, compared to 23 per cent of those with children who favour the NDP. The split is closer for the Liberals, with 18 per cent of parents and 19 per cent of those without children saying they're the best party for families.

The poll results also reveal that 12 per cent of Canadians favour the Green party under Elizabeth May for family issues, and seven per cent nationally -- 30 per cent in Quebec -- believe Gilles Duceppe's Bloc Quebecois is the most family-friendly party.

It's "curious" that from universal child care to health care, so many Liberal promises are aimed at family concerns, yet the party doesn't appear to be hitting the mark, Wright says. He blames a general lack of clarity in their political brand right now.

"I think if you ask people today what the Liberal party stands for with families, you'd be hard-pressed (to define it), but that's probably the case with almost every issue they've had to position on in the last few years," he says.

The Liberals announced a \$1-billion plan to offer more support to people caring for a sick family member, including an employment insurance benefit for up to six months and a tax benefit of up to \$1,350 a year for families earning less than \$106,000 annually.

The Tories "anchor" their platforms and campaigns around families with children at home, Wright says, and that constituency is a powerful one because it tends to include taxpayers at mid-life who are more concerned about education and spending than other groups.

They vote in larger numbers than young adults, he says, and they're up for grabs more than seniors who are dedicated at the voting booths but already lean to the right politically.

In their five years in power, the Tories have introduced a \$100-a-month child care allowance and a tax credit for children's physical activities, and Wright says the party's focus on cyber crime and law and order issues also appeals to families.

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- reprinted from the Windsor Star

**Region:** Canada <sup>[2]</sup>

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