

# Women, equality & social programs: The vital connection <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** Day, Shelagh

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Excerpts from the speech:

Why are cuts to social programs a women's equality issue? Women are not socially and economically equal to men, and because social programs are a central equalizing force in our lives. -

Women are still assigned the role of principal care-giver for children, old people and men. Public child care, schooling, post-secondary education, health care, long term care all shift some of the burden of care-giving from the shoulders of women to the state.

This has made more opportunities for women to participate in employment and education and public life, increasing their earnings, their choices and their social participation. - Public social programs have created "good jobs" for women & with decent wages, job security, union protection & in the care-giving sector & as teachers, nurses, child care workers, social workers, counsellors. -

Income security programs like unemployment insurance, social assistance, old age security, public pensions have all provided ways of ameliorating women's inequality, and softening women's economic dependence on men. By contrast when these programs and services are cut back, women lose "good jobs", our burden of unpaid care-giving is increased, employment and education opportunities are narrowed. Women are also less able to leave harassing, abusive or dangerous work or home situations, if unemployment insurance and welfare benefits are inadequate, and fewer women are eligible. For the poorest women, cuts mean that our ability to feed our children and pay the rent or to leave a violent relationship is jeopardized. Basic security is threatened.

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

British Columbia <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** economics <sup>[4]</sup>

gender <sup>[5]</sup>

mother's labour force participation <sup>[6]</sup>

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