

Providing more money to low-income families through the Canada Child Benefit reduces the risk of food insecurity

Tim Li. "Providing more money to low-income families through the Canada Child Benefit reduces the risk of food insecurity."
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Context

The Canada Child Benefit (CCB) provides up to \$1,068 more annually for families with children under 6, compared to those with older children. The researchers matched CCB-receiving families with and without children under 6 across a wide suite of household characteristics to determine the impact of the additional benefit supplement on household food insecurity, the inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints. Identifying the effect of the more generous child benefit for younger children contributes to a larger body of evidence showing that policy interventions reduce food insecurity when they improve the financial circumstances of low-income households.

Key finding(s) from the research

The additional money provided by the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) to families with children under 6 years old reduced their probability of food insecurity compared to similar CCB-receiving families with children over the age of 6.

Population(s) studied: Households receiving Canada Child Benefit with children aged <18 years

Research dataset(s) used: Canadian Income Survey 2018–2020

Policy implications for this research

The findings from this study demonstrate that raising the size of the CCB for low-income families would reduce their risk of food insecurity. The federal government could contribute to addressing this serious problem by making the benefit amounts for low-income households larger and equal irrespective of the children's ages. Since almost all provinces and territories also have their own child benefits, they can also implement targeted increases to reduce food insecurity.

Policy area(s) this research can inform: Children and youth; Families, households and marital status; Government; Health; Income, pensions, spending and wealth

Read the full article

Men, F., St-Germain, A. A. F., Ross, K., Remtulla, R., & Tarasuk, V. (2023). "Effect of Canada Child Benefit on Food Insecurity: A Propensity Score– Matched Analysis." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 64(6), 844-852.
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