

## YWCA Questionnaire

### Poverty, Violence, Homelessness

- 1 What concrete steps will you take to reduce the rate of intimate partner violence in Saskatchewan?

I would introduce five days of paid leave for survivors of domestic violence and require employers to accommodate survivors of domestic violence in the workplace to ensure their safety. I would reverse the Sask. Party's cuts to community based organizations, including organizations that provide food security, housing, and other supports for vulnerable women. I have also committed to introducing universal coverage for mental health and addictions services. Greater and more timely access to mental health and addictions services will reduce domestic violence in our province and work to help make women safer in communities all across Saskatchewan.

- 2 The Saskatchewan Poverty Reduction Strategy states that in the short-term, the Government of Saskatchewan will "work with community agencies to expand opportunities for housing for those deemed hard-to-house." What steps will you take to provide safe, appropriate, supportive housing options for women who are deemed hard to house?

I would look to work with groups like the YWCA and housing authorities to implement a Housing First strategy all across our province and I would ensure inclusion of those leaving domestic violence in Housing First. Recognizing that housing needs in Regina are different than in a community like Foam Lake, I would take a flexible approach and work with housing authorities to make sure everyone has a safe, dignified place to sleep at night. This would include investing and supporting shelters, cooperatives, social, and affordable housing.

- 3 Will you commit to applying a gender-based analysis of provincial assistance programs, and any future redesign of such programs to ensure women and families receiving assistance are able to adequately cover the cost of living?

Yes. Every change to government programs should be looked at through the lens of "How will this affect women? How will this affect Indigenous people? How will this affect people living with disabilities?" The sad reality is that the current government isn't asking these questions because promoting equity isn't their priority. Every person in our province deserves to live in dignity, and I would ensure changes to social services supports would always leave women and families better off – not worse off like the Sask. Party's cuts. I would increase provincial assistance programs, as well as significantly increase the threshold for employment income before benefits and supports are clawed back.

- 4 What will you do to support the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and to respond to the disproportionate victimization of Aboriginal women and girls?

I would offer the full support of the provincial government for the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. As premier, I would act on its recommendations that pertain to the jurisdiction of the provincial government and work to reduce the victimization of Indigenous women and girls in Saskatchewan. However, we don't need to wait for the report of the Inquiry into MMIWG to take action to make life safer for Indigenous women and girls in our province. In addition to boosting support programs and strengthening community based organizations that provide services, I would work to

rebuild a province-wide public transportation network – which, given the recent reports of Indigenous women hitchhiking alone in Northern Saskatchewan, is needed now more than ever before.

### **Women and Employment**

- 1 What measures will you implement to improve the economic status of women in Saskatchewan?

Saskatchewan needs pay equity legislation to help close the gender pay gap, and I would deliver on this important need as premier. Women are much more likely than men to be working for minimum wage, and would benefit greatly from a \$15 per hour minimum wage which I have committed to deliver. I would also work to ensure that more women have access to the full range of reproductive health options in communities large and small because access to reproductive healthcare has a huge impact on economic choices for women. My commitment to an affordable, universal childcare program would also have a positive impact on the economic status of women. I also believe that, as a leader of a political party, there is a role to play in advancing the status of women within the NDP. I would work to elect a slate of gender balanced MLAs to form a gender balanced government caucus and cabinet in the 2020 election.

- 2 Do you have plans to develop work-based training that increase opportunities for women to participate in the workforce?

Increasing the number of women in the workforce isn't just good for women, it's good for our economy too. One key initiative would be to introduce a universal, affordable childcare program. Another would be to increase opportunities for women in the workforce by reversing the Sask. Party's 5% cut to post-secondary institutions so that more women will be able to access the post-secondary education they need to get into the workforce. Part of that reinvestment would help fund more apprenticeship and co-op placements, which are so vital for women looking to learn a new trade or acquire new skills.

- 3 How do you plan on recognizing and giving economic value to the unpaid work of women?

I would work to create more, better paying jobs for women doing work that is currently unpaid. My plan for universal childcare at \$15 per day will create new spaces for children, improve wages of childcare providers, and create new paid jobs in childcare. In the same way, stopping the cuts and reinvesting in healthcare, homecare, and seniors care will create new paid employment for women currently doing unpaid work providing elder care.

### **Education – Early Years**

- 1 How do you plan to fix the child care subsidies to ensure that all families have access to high quality early years programming for their children?

I have committed to introducing universal childcare for \$15 per day and the best possible early learning supports for Saskatchewan children. Studies show that when other provinces invested in universal childcare, they ended up with more money on hand because of the new tax revenues generated by parents entering the workforce. I'll work with childcare centres and home-based providers to expand childcare subsidies, increase the number of spaces available, improve access, and increase the quality of

early years programming. I've also committed to investing in education to create the most enriched and engaging classrooms possible with a high priority placed on investing and supporting early years education.

### **Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Child Welfare**

- 1 According to Statistics Canada, 85% of children in care in Saskatchewan are First Nations and Métis. How do you plan to reduce the number of First Nations and Métis children in care?

I would work with the FSIN, Indigenous leaders, tribal councils and the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan to better-support Indigenous child welfare organizations and provide increased resources for families struggling with the intergenerational legacy of residential schools and the Sixties Scoop to keep their families together. In addition to increasing funding from the province, I would push the federal government to comply with the numerous rulings from the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal to stop discriminating against Indigenous kids and provide adequate funding for social services. The Sask. Party has been missing in action when it comes to standing up against the federal government's discriminatory underfunding of child welfare on reserve. I would implement all of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that apply to the provincial government and I would act to end the underfunding of education on First Nations. We need to put an end to jurisdictional wrangling and fully implement Jordan's principle and provide needed services to every person in Saskatchewan.

- 2 In 2015 a legislative review was completed titled Child Welfare Proposals. What is your response to these proposals and how do you intend to move these recommendations forward?

These proposals have not been released to MLAs for consideration, but it's clear that much more needs to be done to improve child welfare in Saskatchewan. We need to provide more supports and services for families before they reach a crisis and have their children apprehended. We also need to significantly increase the supports available for foster parents to create more foster care spaces and end the practice of putting vulnerable kids in hotel rooms.