

*Supply*

Benefits are usually paid to the mother on a monthly basis. In 1991 the monthly benefit was set at an average of \$34 per child. The total amount does not differ, but the age group differs from province to province.

Current federal income support for families does not stop with the family allowances. In this regard family allowances are complemented by a system of child related benefits, mainly delivered through the personal income tax system.

The child tax credit program which provides benefits to lower income families is another key source of income support for families. Since taking office in 1984, this government has significantly enhanced the maximum value of the credit by over 50 per cent. The benefit has increased from \$367 per child in 1984 to \$585 per child in 1991.

As part of the national child care strategy, the federal government also introduced in 1988 a supplement to the child tax credit with respect to children six years of age and under. The supplement is valued at \$207 per child in the year 1991.

The federal government has undertaken other income support measures to assist families with children. For example, we have implemented a goods and service tax credit package which, when all elements are taken together, means that families with incomes of less than \$30,000 per year are better off than before the GST was implemented. Families benefit from an enhanced tax credit which is paid quarterly. In 1991 the maximum value of this credit is \$190 per adult and \$100 per child.

The issue of family violence is also a concern for this government for many reasons. It has a long lasting effect on individuals and on families as well as on our society as a whole.

We all have a role to play. The federal government announced in February 1991 a four-year, \$136 million program to continue the effort of reducing the level of family violence in Canada. The new initiative addresses violence against women, children, seniors and the disabled and also within the Indian and Inuit communities.

The federal government has also eased the problem of marriage breakdown and divorce by introducing new divorce legislation which amended the grounds for

divorce and humanized its consequences. To assist with the enforcement of support orders the federal government also introduced services which provide for the release of information from designated federal banks to help locate persons who do not meet their support order obligations and provide for the garnishment of designated federal moneys from defaulting spouses.

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Given the increasing labour force participation rates of women and the changing structure of our family unit, there is no doubt that child care is an important matter. We the federal government do provide substantial support and it runs in the order of \$1 billion per year. Included in this, of course, is more than \$250 million in federal contribution to provincial and territorial governments in respect of their expenditures for day care services. Also included are the tax revenues forgone in respect of the child care expense deduction. Effective for the 1988 tax year this deduction was increased in order to better reflect the actual cost of care faced by parents using receipted child care.

For parents with pre-school aged children, the maximum deduction now is \$4,000 per child, up from \$2,000 per child per year.

There is also the child care initiatives fund which supports innovative approaches to child care. To date, for example, the fund has supported a wide range of projects including a national child care survey by the National Day Care Research Network, national conferences that have been sponsored by the Canadian Child Care Federation and a national survey of wages and working conditions for child care workers.

Families with newborn babies receive additional support as a result of the amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act. The amendments introduced a multi-tiered system of maternity, parental and sickness benefits, including 15 weeks of maternity benefits available during the period surrounding the birth of the child; 10 weeks of parental benefits available to natural or adoptive parents, either the mother or the father; and 15 weeks of sickness benefits.

This year parents will receive over \$1 billion in benefits in order to look after their newborn or indeed their adoptive children.