



The unrealized potential of the Canada Child Benefit to reduce food insecurity among households with children

Li, Tim "The unrealized potential of the Canada Child Benefit to reduce food insecurity among households with children"
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What the researchers did

The researchers examined the impact of Canada Child Benefit (CCB) by comparing the changes in food insecurity among eligible households (those with children under 18) and ineligible households (those without), following its introduction in 2016.

What the researchers found

There were no significant changes in the overall prevalence of food insecurity among households with children under 18, following the introduction of the CCB. However, the probability of severe food insecurity (missing meals to going whole days without food) for low-income families fell by a third from 12.3% to 8.2%.

RDC Datasets used

Canadian Community Health Survey (2015-2018)

Policy areas this research can inform

- Children and youth
- Government
- Health
- Income, pensions, spending and wealth

Policy implications of this research

While the CCB did not reduce the prevalence of food insecurity among households with children, this study highlights the potential for modest income supplements to reduce food insecurity for low-income households. The reduction in severe food insecurity is important considering severe food insecurity is associated with the greatest negative health outcomes. The findings suggest that the benefit could have had a larger impact on food insecurity if it was better targeted to provide more money to low-income families. Although the CCB was not designed with food insecurity in mind, it should be thought of and revisited as a key policy lever for reducing food insecurity in Canada moving forward.

Read the full article

Brown, E.M., & Tarasuk, V. (2019). Money speaks: Reductions in severe food insecurity follow the Canada Child Benefit. *Preventive medicine*, 129, 105876. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0091743519303524>

