

November 10, 2017

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau  
Prime Minister of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada  
K1A 0A6



**BPW Canada**

[www.bpwcanada.com](http://www.bpwcanada.com)

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau:

The Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW Canada) respectfully submits the enclosed Brief for your consideration. The items herein represent the concerns brought forward by our members from Clubs across the country. Resolutions were presented, discussed, debated and accepted at the Annual General Meeting held in Moncton in August 2017.

As a non-partisan organization, we have worked for over 87 years to urge governments to continue the inclusion of equal rights for women in legislation. It is through this process of voicing the issues outlined in this Brief and engaging in open dialogue with your government that we can together build a strong and thriving Canada.

On behalf of BPW Canada I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge **Motion 70** which is currently placed on notice to declare a national "**Equal Pay Day**" across Canada with Recommendation #30 submitted by BPW Canada after my meeting with MP Anita Vandenberg in Ottawa. This is an issue that we have worked on for a long time and has been included in previous briefs sent annually to the Prime Minister's Office. It is an issue that continues to be important to us so that we can align ourselves with other peer countries that have already declared Equal Pay Day. It is only when leaders from government, business and civil society work together that we will truly advance the status of women in our country.

We respectfully request that you and the appropriate Ministers review the enclosed resolutions and be available to meet with our delegation at a time in keeping with your schedules. A member of the delegation will follow up with this correspondence with a personal contact to confirm the preferred meeting times and dates.

We have forwarded this Brief to the Leaders of the Opposition and the Ministers addressed in our resolutions so that they may be apprised of our positions on the topics herein.

We are very interested in your comments concerning the enclosed Brief and request for your support and collaboration with these issues that affect women across the nation.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "JG Abdulla". The letters are cursive and fluid.

Jenny Gulamani-Abdulla, BA, JD, RCIC  
President, BPW Canada

Copy:

**The Honourable Andrew Scheer**

House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6

**The Honourable Jagmeet Singh**

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**The Honourable Karina Gould,**  
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**The Honourable Patty Hajdu**  
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**The Honourable Kirsty Duncan**  
**Minister of Science**  
House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6

**Member of Parliament Anita Vandenbeld**  
**Chair, Special Committee on Pay Equity**  
House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0A6

**Submission  
to  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE JUSTIN TRUDEAU**

**PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA**

**BY**



**The Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women  
*La Federation Canadienne des Femmes de Carrières  
Commerciales et Professionnelles***

**Member of the International Federation of BPW Clubs**

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**Working towards improving economic, political, social and  
employment conditions for Women in Canada  
*“Women Working for Working Women”***

**October 2017**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW Canada) is an equality-seeking group working towards improving the economic, political, social and employment conditions for women. We are “**Women Working for Working Women**”. Our membership includes women from a variety of professions and occupations, including women entrepreneurs. BPW Canada develops the professional and leadership potential of women through education, awareness, advocacy and mentoring within the supportive network of BPW.

In 1930, BPW Canada was a founding member of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women’s Clubs. BPW International has Consultative Status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council and is the recognized voice of working women in over 95 countries worldwide.

For more than 87 years we have advocated for women’s rights at all levels and have played a significant role in achieving advancements for a just and equal society. For more information on our achievements, please visit our website at [www.bpwcanada.com](http://www.bpwcanada.com).

Currently, local BPW Clubs across Canada offer a range of opportunities and activities for members to enhance their: Awareness, Advocacy & Action on women’s issues; Leadership Skills & Career Advancement; Supportive Networking; and Personal Development.

The BPW Canada Annual General Meeting was held on August 11-12, 2017. At our Conventions and Annual General Meetings we decide our policy. Resolutions contained in this document were initiated at the club level, researched and formulated, and brought to the 2017 Annual General Meeting where they were discussed and debated. Once accepted, these resolutions become part of the official policy of BPW Canada and are herein presented for your consideration.

The issues raised by BPW Canada are issues of concern to our society as a whole. We look forward to the opportunity to meet with our federal government representatives to present our resolutions and our concerns in more detail.

Jenny Gulamani-Abdulla, BA, JD, RCIC, President, BPW Canada

Karin Gorgerat, Vice President and Resolutions Chair, BPW Canada

## RESOLUTION #1

### **Violence against Women: Indigenous Women**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, and the Minister of Indigenous Services to support Bill S-215 and BPW Canada also urges the Government of Canada to give Royal Assent to Bill S-215;

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, and the Minister of Indigenous Services to prepare a study for public release on the effects of Bill S-215 and whether there is a decrease in violent crimes against Aboriginal women.

### ***RATIONALE***

A 2014 RCMP report states that Indigenous women and girls are three times more likely to be made missing and four times more likely to be murdered. The same report states that Indigenous women are three times more likely to be sexually assaulted.

Statistics Canada reports that simply being Aboriginal is a risk factor for violence for women but not for men. Bill S-215 will amend the murder and assault sections of the criminal code to make being an Aboriginal female victim an aggravating circumstance to be taken in to account during sentencing. The hope is that this will act as a deterrent to those who think that the consequences of violent crimes committed against Aboriginal females will be less severe than those against non-Aboriginal females. With tougher sentencing laws, this could decrease the incidences of violent crimes against aboriginal women.

Quote by Senator Lillian Dyck when presenting Bill S-215 during 3<sup>rd</sup> reading “While the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantees to all individuals equality before and under the law and the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination, it is clear that this is not the case for Aboriginal women and girls. Without a doubt, Aboriginal females do not have equal protection of the law; if they did, we would not have the national tragedy of the 1,200 missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.”

### ***Sources:***

2014 RCMP Report on Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women

<http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/missing-and-murdered-aboriginal-women-national-operational-overview>

Amnesty International: Canada, Stolen Sisters. A Human Rights Response to Discrimination and Violence against Indigenous Women

<http://www.amnesty.ca/sites/amnesty/files/amr200032004enstolensisters.pdf>

Native Women's Association of Canada: Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls Fact Sheet

[https://nwac.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2015/05/Fact\\_Sheet\\_Missing\\_and\\_Murdered\\_Aboriginal\\_Women\\_and\\_Girls](https://nwac.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2015/05/Fact_Sheet_Missing_and_Murdered_Aboriginal_Women_and_Girls)

## RESOLUTION #2

### **Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Enhancement**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, and the Minister of Finance to factor into the formulae for the CPP eligible benefits that take into consideration the impact of the “general drop out provision for leaves of absence such as extended maternity, sick or family care so as not to penalize working women who are traditionally the designated caregiver.

### ***RATIONALE***

The proposal to enhance the Canada Pension Plan was approved in principle by the majority of the Government of Canada and the Provincial/Territorial Ministers of Finance in June 2016 and during discussions there was focus on employment deductions and benefits. However, the review did not touch on the General Drop-out Provision (up to 8 years of least income) or Child Rearing Provision. As the population ages it is usually women in the family that are responsible to care for their elderly relatives and/or child relatives and results in them either retiring before the age of 60 or taking part-time work. This reduces amount they are eligible for according to the CPP benefit calculation.

In the calculation of benefit, the Drop-Out Provision allows up to 8 years of low income to be removed from the calculation. This provision originated in 1985 and since then the family environment has changed - women are working longer with increased challenges of child care, compassionate care and eldercare. All of this means they have reduced income during those years affecting the amount of CPP they will collect.

### ***Sources:***

Canada Pension Plan - Overview - [www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/publicpensions/cpp](http://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/publicpensions/cpp)

Statistics Canada - Census 2011 Analysis - [www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/101/cst01/famil41a-eng.htm](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/101/cst01/famil41a-eng.htm)

Backgrounder: Canada Pension Plan (CPP) Enhancement - [www.fin.gc.ca/n16/data/16-113\\_3-eng.asp](http://www.fin.gc.ca/n16/data/16-113_3-eng.asp)

## RESOLUTION #3

### **Addressing “Unfounded” Cases of Sexual Assault and Violence**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, and the Minister of Public Safety to direct the RCMP and all Canadian Law Enforcement to review and investigate sexual assault and violence cases that the RCMP and all Canadian Law Enforcement categorized as unfounded between 2010 and 2015;

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, and the Minister of Public Safety to direct the RCMP and all Canadian Law Enforcement to develop a methodology that defines the status of sexual assault and violence case investigations such as to refine the categories of closure regarding complainant’s investigation to be accurately based on objective review of facts in lieu of opinions; such that the language of categories exclude the word ‘unfounded’ or other general terms that may reflect divisive, prejudged, or dismissive opinions towards the complainant in lieu of evidence based investigation;

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, and the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development that, in addition to other data about sexual assault and violence cases in Canada, to direct Statistics Canada to collect and release data annually from the RCMP and all Canadian Law Enforcement, of sexual assault and violence cases that are categorized as unfounded based on objective review of facts;

**AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that the BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, and the Minister of Public Safety following an objective review of the findings from data collected related to “unfounded” cases to direct the creation and funding of a task force that this data be used by policy makers to direct resources to implement a national strategy to reduce the barrier to justice of inappropriate closure of sexual violence case investigations, by the use of means including external audits of RCMP and all Canadian Law Enforcement case records.

### ***RATIONALE***

It has been reported that ‘unfounded’ sexual assault cases records have not been released by Statistics Canada since 2003 and review of data collected from police services has determined that the national average of sexual assault cases recorded as ‘unfounded’ have increased from 16% in 2002 to 19.6% in the period between 2010 and 2015. National and International research indicates that 2% to 8% of sexual assault complaints to police may actually be determined to be false allegations. We believe that the Canadian government must take the lead to ensure policy makers are provided with accurate records as to occurrences of sexual assault and given direction to create a national strategy to prevent this crime and improve safety from violence for women.

Jurisdictions were identified where ‘unfounded’ cases have been reduced by practices including collecting and making statistics freely available to the public, by providing external audits of police services unfound cases by research and advocacy groups in programs such as the Philadelphia Model.<sup>3</sup> The Philadelphia model enables frontline workers and legal advocates to conduct annual reviews of cases declared unfounded, or cleared because an officer believes no crime occurred, as well as some open cases. Since the model was adopted about 17 years ago, the city’s unfounded rates have dropped from 18 per cent to below 10 per cent.

This is a Public Safety Issue requiring that the Government of Canada enact policy to accurately identify the number of occurrence of, and to work to adopt practices to prevent, investigate and prosecute this crime so that Canadian women can be safe from violence in pursuit of their economic wellbeing.

**Sources:**

Why Police Dismiss 1 in 5 Sexual Assault Claims as Baseless – Globe & Mail Feb 3, 2017  
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/investigations/unfounded-sexual-assault-canada-main/article33891309/>

Sexual Assault in Canada – Law, Legal Practice and Women's Activism - Elizabeth A Sheehy, editor  
[https://ruor.uottawa.ca/bitstream/10393/19876/12/Sexual\\_Assault\\_in\\_Canada.pdf](https://ruor.uottawa.ca/bitstream/10393/19876/12/Sexual_Assault_in_Canada.pdf)

Philadelphia Model 3 for Sexual Assault Cases  
<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/unfounded-sex-assaults-waterloo-task-force-carol-tracy-philadelphia-1.4080309>

## RESOLUTION #4

### **Increasing Women's Participation in Politics**

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, the Minister of Status of Women and the Minister of Democratic Institutions to undertake an investigation by a non-partisan committee of experts into the process that political parties undertake to encourage women to obtain party nominations and then provide recommendations to political parties on how they can improve their recruitment of women candidates

### ***RATIONALE***

Despite electing a record number of 88 women MPs in the 2015 election, women currently hold only 26% of the seats in Parliament, meaning that almost three out every four MPs is male. This is a mere 1% increase from the 2011 federal election. Not surprisingly, Canada ranks 63rd out of 193 countries when it comes to the proportion of women elected to Parliament. According to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, our record positions us behind countries such as Rwanda, Afghanistan, and El Salvador. In addition, we place significantly lower than other democratic countries such as the UK, France, Australia, Spain, Italy, and Switzerland. Importantly, the UN identifies 30% representation of women in government as the tipping point, where women's voices reflect women's concerns.

Bill C-237 Candidate Gender Equity Act, which was defeated in the House as of October 19, 2016 would have addressed the existing gender inequity that currently exists in our electoral process. All political parties need to be held accountable. Accordingly, BPW Canada requests the Minister of Democratic Institutions to consider the goals brought forth by the proposed candidate gender equity act and work towards finding an adequate incentive for all political parties to promote gender parity in the candidates they nominate for a general election.

### ***Sources:***

CBC News, "50% populations, 25% representation. Why the parliamentary gender gap?"  
<http://www.cbc.ca/news2/interactives/women-politics/>

Federation of Canadian Municipalities, "Women in Local Government: Getting to 30% by 2026,"  
[https://www.fcm.ca/Documents/reports/Women/Getting\\_to\\_30\\_percent\\_by\\_2026\\_EN.pdf](https://www.fcm.ca/Documents/reports/Women/Getting_to_30_percent_by_2026_EN.pdf)

## RESOLUTION #5

### **Reducing Implicit Gender Biases and Increasing Women's Participation and Success in the Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Computer Science (STEM) Fields**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, the Minister of Science and the Minister of Status of Women to form a commission to investigate and promote the achievement of gender balance representation in the STEM fields at the educational and professional levels.

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, the Minister of Science and the Minister of Status of Women, to develop and implement educational programs and scholarships that encourage women's participation on the STEM fields (from early childhood) and take steps to increase women's labour market outcomes in the STEM fields post-graduation.

### ***RATIONALE***

Although Canadian women today constitute the majority of all university graduates (about 59%), they are severely underrepresented in the Sciences, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Computer Science (STEM) fields, with only 39% of women obtaining university degrees in those fields. Due to the implicit bias against women in STEM fields, women drop in alarming rates from pursuing careers in these fields, with half of them deciding to move to other occupations, after devoting 10-12 years in those fields. A 2016 study found that women in STEM fields have been more likely to move out of their field of specialty than other professional women, especially early in their careers.

In addition to the disproportionate representation of STEM university graduates, the labour market's outcomes for STEM graduates vary based on gender. Statistics Canada's report showed that 7% of women were unemployed in the STEM field compared to 4.7% of men. Median wages and salaries in the STEM fields were also 9.4% higher for men than women

### ***Sources:***

The 5 biases of pushing women out of STEM. (Harvard Business Review). Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2015/03/the-5-biases-pushing-women-out-of-stem>

Gender differences in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and computer science (STEM) programs at university. (Statistics Canada). <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-006-x/2013001/article/11874-eng.pdf>

## RESOLUTION #6

### **Domestic Treatment Courts for Men who abuse Women**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, and the Minister of Justice to extend its funding of treatment courts to include men who are convicted of domestic abuse and to further pilot and evaluate the impact of a Domestic Abuse Treatment Centre and Protocol similar to the Changing Ways program in London, Ontario, in all provinces and territories, over a five-year period.

### ***RATIONALE***

In 2009 it was reported that the average sentence for sexual assault was 360 days (Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton, 2009). Only 64% of women who experience sexual assaults are likely to report the incidence to police (Statistics Canada, 2016). Significant efforts have been funded to support women and children who experience sexual or domestic abuse. However, less attention has been made to assist those men who are the perpetrators of this abuse in changing their behaviours. Using incarceration as the predominant ‘treatment’ of men who abuse their spouse has been shown to not resolve the underlying behaviours that led to the violence and time in jail may further intensify these abusive behaviours. Hence, women are left at risk for further violence against them following release of their spouse from incarceration with limited judicial actions they can take to protect themselves.

In London Ontario there is a non-profit organization, Changing Ways, who focus their work on “helping men end violence against women”. Their mission states it “exists to eliminate men’s abusive and violent behaviours against women and children, and to eliminate other forms of gender-based violence intimate relationships”.

The Domestic Violence Court’s mandate could be extended to include a partnership with those offering treatment to address underlying behaviours associated with domestic abuse which could result in a more comprehensive and long term solution to this growing program in our society. Changing Ways (London, Ontario) already has in place a number of agencies and services they partner with to help support their work and a relationship with police and other support services. Hence, a collaborative partnership on a more formal and legislated basis could address a means to reduction of women being abused by focusing on behaviour change in their spouses.

### **Sources:**

Changing Ways <https://www.changingways.on.ca/programs/>

Sexual Assault Criminal Process Canada - <http://www.sexassault.ca/criminalprocess.htm>

## RESOLUTION #7

### **Impact of CRA RRSP requirements on Women working beyond 71 years of Age**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, and the Minister of Finance to adjust the RRSP regulation to 6 years following a person's retirement before an RRIF is required to be established and taxes paid on the amount being held in the RRIF;

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, and the Minister of Finance in support of the adjustment to carry out a review of the impact on women who work beyond 71 years on the loss of their pension savings as they age, due to the failure to correct this regulation on Pension supplements payments required

### ***RATIONALE***

With the elimination of mandatory retirement at 65 years, many women have chosen or have the need to continue to work full-time well past this age. While the reasons for that vary, they include having lower incomes over their work careers as evident with the Gender Pay Gap. With these lower incomes, their pensions are also lower resulting in the need to work longer.

With the changes were made to mandatory retirement, review of the Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP) CRA rules to covert to Registered Retirement Income Fund (RRIF) by age 71 was not also completed. With a woman's life expectancy on average exceeding that of a man, this means that these requirements can cause unfairness to single senior women.

Ted Rechtshaffen stated in a Financial Post article in 2012 that there are four ways that CRA rules can cause this unfairness (a) women who are single have no one to split their income with to decrease their income tax rate; (b) while a senior women has a living spouse they both received CPP but with the death of their husband causes the CPP to decrease to only up to the maximum amount for one person; (c) a woman's RSP and RIF get folded into one account at age 71; and (d) old age security when required by a couple is reduced when the husband dies. The outcome is a significant decrease in the overall available pension funds for a single person.

This issue can be partially corrected by changing the CRA RRSP maturation regulation to read "6 years following their formal declaration of retirement" instead of a set age of 71.

### **Sources:**

Stats Canada Gender Pay Gap - <http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/statistics-canada-gender-pay-gap-1.4014954>

Department of Finance (nd). Changes in the age limit for establishing a RRIF and the minimum withdrawal factors. Income Tax Act, subsection 7308 (3) (4). Invesco Canada

Financial Post Oct 13, 2012 - <http://business.financialpost.com/personal-finance/retirement/four-ways-single-seniors-lose-out>

## RESOLUTION #8

### **Increasing the Representation of Women in Corporate Boardrooms**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, the Minister of Status of Women, and the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, along with the Canadian Securities Administrators, to implement legislation to ensure a more balanced gender representation on the boards of federally incorporated companies and Crown corporations by requiring a minimum of one-half of all new board appointments to be female and one-half of all candidates under consideration for open board positions to be female.

**FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT** BPW Canada urges the Government of Canada, the Minister of Status of Women, and the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Labour, along with the Canadian Securities Administrators to require federally incorporated companies and Crown corporations in such legislation to also disclose their diversity initiatives or plans to train, promote and identify potential female leaders who are capable and competent to fill executive roles within their businesses

### ***RATIONALE***

Canadian women are significantly under-represented on corporate boards and in executive management positions. Roughly 45% of TSX listed companies do not have any women board members and women hold only 12% of all board seats, which dramatically lags other developed nations (Norway has 40%, France 34%, and the UK with 26%).

Securities regulators recognized there was a problem and in December 2014 Canadian TSX listed issuers (excluding those listed on the Venture Exchange) became subject to new disclosure requirements with respect to the representation of women on boards and in executive management positions. Most provincial securities regulators followed Ontario Security Commission's lead and adopted this requirement; with the Alberta Securities Commission last to join in December 2016. Unfortunately, the representation of women in these corporate leadership roles has only marginally improved since implementing these disclosure requirements over two years ago and only 15% of the 500+ board seats vacated in the past year were filled by women. Board turnover naturally is the appropriate time to increase gender representation. Nevertheless, even with the new policies, 85% of the new board roles are male-controlled.

While current Canadian Securities Commission disclosure requirements follow the "comply or explain" model, several other countries have instituted a mandatory quota system. The countries that adopted these mandatory quotas experienced faster progress than those adopting "comply or explain" policies; and those with financial penalties for non-compliance saw the fastest progress. Since implementing a "comply or explain" policy in the U.K. in 2010, the number of women on boards has doubled to 26%. However, often countries with mandatory board quotas have not seen significant improvements in increasing women at executive officer roles so quotas are not a clear answer to this fundamental issue.

Working with the Canadian Securities Commission could go a long way to meet the goal that the current federal government, through the Minister of Status of Women, has set in achieving 30% of women representation on boards by 2019.

**Sources:**

2016 Diversity Disclosure Practices – Women in Leadership Roles at TSX-listed companies

<https://www.osler.com/osler/media/Osler/reports/corporate-governance/Gender-diversity-disclosure-practices-in-Canada-2016.pdf>

Status of Women, Canada - <http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/initiatives/wldp/wb-ca/index-en.html>

CBC News – Gender Equality on Corporate Boards – Study puts Canada in the Middle of the Pack

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/business/gender-equality-on-corporate-boards-study-puts-canada-in-middle-of-the-pack-1.2898318>

## RESOLUTION #9

### **Phthalates Correlated to Depression and Other Health Risks**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that BPW Canada urges Government of Canada, and the Minister of Health to ban all phthalates from consumer products, including cosmetics, food storage containers, and any possible routes of human exposure, not only in that of children's products.

### **RATIONALE**

Phthalates are diesters of phthalic acid commonly used to increase the flexibility of plastics or preserve the fragrance in personal care products. They are included in a wide range of products such as food packaging, medical devices, children's toys, vinyl flooring, shower curtains, soap, shampoo, cosmetics, and nail polish. Phthalate exposure has been associated with multiple concerning health outcomes including infertility, thyroid function, asthma, and insulin resistance and oxidative stress. Phthalate exposure has also been associated with various neurobehavioral outcomes including attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder and cognitive function.

While the Government of Canada has taken action to restrict phthalates in children's toys, this chemical has health effects on the human population through-out their lifespan. Growing evidence suggests that phthalates may also be associated with depression. When it comes to mental health, women carry the burden of the illness, whether as the individual diagnosed or as a caregiver. Of the 1,508 working women over the age of 18 diagnosed with depression and/or anxiety were interviewed across Canada, 1 in 10 (7%) women have lost her job because of depression or anxiety. Women are more likely to quit (23%) or take long-term disability leave (21%).

A ban of all phthalates from Consumer Products is one means to decrease these health risks to the population, which not only affect women but those in their care.

### **Sources:**

Canadian Mental Health Association (2004). Depression and Anxiety Among Canadian Women in the Workplace. Retrieved from [http://www.cmha.ca/public\\_policy/the-effects-of-depression-and-anxiety-on-canadian-society/#.WLbhDmTythA](http://www.cmha.ca/public_policy/the-effects-of-depression-and-anxiety-on-canadian-society/#.WLbhDmTythA)

US National Library of Medicine, National Institute of Health  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26624239>