



**Autism Society Canada**  
**Société canadienne de l'autisme**

**Largest Collective Voice of the Autism Community Asks the Five Federal Political Parties for their Plan of Action on Autism**

For immediate release

**December 19, 2005 Ottawa** – The president of Autism Society Canada, Jo-Lynn Fenton, has sent a letter to Paul Martin, Stephen Harper, Gilles Duceppe, Jack Layton and Jim Harris, the leaders of the five political parties, asking their position on important issues facing our community. To view the full text of the letters, click here: [http://www.autismsocietycanada.ca/general\\_info/whats\\_new/index\\_e.html](http://www.autismsocietycanada.ca/general_info/whats_new/index_e.html).

Autism Society Canada believes that meeting the needs of the Autism community requires commitment from the federal government and a plan involving key federal department stakeholders. It is estimated that there are 200,000 Canadians with autism and that 1 in every 166 children born in Canada today has an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

“It is time for Canada to take action to meet the needs of the Canadian autism community. An election affords us the opportunity to hear from all the political parties about the concrete actions they will take, if elected. We look forward to letting Canadians know the answers we receive from the Liberal Party of Canada, the Conservative Party of Canada, the Bloc Québécois, the New Democratic Party of Canada and the Green Party of Canada.”

Specifically, Autism Society Canada has invited all five political parties to send answers to the following three questions:

1. What action will their party take, if they form the next government, to address the needs of the Autism community and give autism the priority its warrants?
2. What concrete steps will their party take, if elected, to:
  - a. Increase funding to provinces and territories so they can provide critical no-cost treatment, education, professional training, required supports and accommodations for Canadians with ASDs
  - b. Initiate national surveillance and reporting for autism, and set national standards for treatment and service delivery
  - c. Increase targeted autism research in Canada
  - d. Improve financial and other supports to people with disabilities and their families
3. Will their party support the establishment of an adequately funded Mental Health Commission for Canada?

All responses received by January 9, 2006 will be posted on ASC's website.

ASC is a federation of Canada-wide provincial and territorial autism societies whose collective memberships represent the largest body of individuals affected by ASDs and their families in Canada.

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**For more information please contact:**

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