

**From:** Erik Minty

**To:** Dan Howe <[dhowe@specialolympics.bc.ca](mailto:dhowe@specialolympics.bc.ca)>

Hi Dan,

First my apologies in the delay responding to you on this. And thank you for reaching out with passion. As I'm sure you are aware, the idea of ensuring nobody gets left behind is fairly well burned into the ethos of all Greens. I'm no exception.

Mental health is personal to me. My oldest son is "gifted" with autism. He graduated with honours from Riverside secondary and was accepted this past June into a highly esteemed culinary arts program. Without the intervention made possible by the Autism Funding unit I don't know if we could say the same thing. I know you deal with a wider set of concerns but this is just to say that I share them.

Stigmatization and lack of support were the realities we faced as parents two decades ago. I lived this and wish it on nobody. We were fortunate - many people who came before us paved the way, through the courts and legal system at ruinous personal expense, to advocate for us. Many others are far less fortunate.

I know you're looking for specific answers. I wish I could just say "yes" to everything you've outlined. I'm the kind of person who takes my commitments very seriously, especially when people's lives are at stake. The pressures of this snap election on candidates makes it very tempting to over-promise things that, while sincere, may not be feasible. Yet this conversation you've started is an important one.

Here is what I can commit to right now. We need a deep conversation around health overall. I will commit to ensuring that people with mental disabilities are properly represented in that conversation - whatever form that needs to take. Good policy must be properly informed or it's not worth doing.

Obviously you are much closer to these issues than I can hope to be. We don't really have a health care system that is outcome focused. We have a "medical care" system that is more treatment focused. The evidence supporting the need for preventive action is overwhelming. To not do this is irresponsible.

I'm not sure how well that translates into your survey questions. The conversation is important, as is your need and right to be a part of it.

I wish you the best in your campaign.  
Cheers  
Erik

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