



EMPOWERING CARE PROGRAM

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Good To Be Good is a grassroots, community-wide nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing gender equity by supporting and empowering women and gender-diverse individuals in Canada who face significant barriers due to gendered injustices such as violence, discrimination, and inequities affecting inclusion.

The *Empowering Care Program (ECP)* is a low-barrier, community-led program designed to provide one-time relief and supplementary support to racialized women and gender-diverse individuals from our priority communities — particularly those who experience challenges such as precarious housing, economic insecurity, and other intersecting social barriers. Support can include essential support and care packages such as food, baby products, phone data, gift cards, personal care necessities, and products related to their well-being and safety. The program prioritizes flexibility and responsiveness, recognizing that urgent needs often fall outside formal systems or are not adequately addressed by existing safety nets.

ECP offers practical and social choice-based support tailored to individual circumstances. Supports may include assistance with essential needs related to leaving violence, obtaining permanent resident status or Canadian citizenship, and accessing reproductive or gender-affirming health care services, among other needs. ECP is intended to be supplementary and wraparound support that helps address urgent needs and income gaps.

The program is intentionally aimed to meet folks where they're at with supplementary and wraparound care, complementing—not replacing—other services. Participants are supported through relational check-ins and resource navigation, with an emphasis on dignity, autonomy, and connection to longer-term community support where possible

The Women We Served and Supported

The *Empowering Care Program* continues to reach women and gender-diverse people who are often underserved or excluded by formal systems, including those navigating economic insecurity, housing precarity, caregiving responsibilities, insecure immigration status, disability, and experiences of violence or isolation. While ECP helps address urgent gaps, we also recognize that structural barriers—such as limited eligibility for public benefits, long wait times, and inaccessible services—continue to constrain stability for many participants.

In response, we adapt our approach to meet participants where they are. Participant feedback and outcomes informally indicate that this approach contributes to short-term stabilization—such as reduced financial stress and allowed participants to regain short-term stability while working for longer-term financial stability, like employment. During periods of crisis, the ability to attend appointments or pursue economic opportunities, and increased access to essential needs—while also strengthening connection to community supports through referrals and vital services. These outcomes, while often modest and incremental, are meaningful within the broader context of systemic inequity and reinforce the importance of responsive, dignity-centred care.

“The program has been incredibly supportive in helping me manage through difficult times. The resources provided were invaluable, and the staff's responsiveness made a huge difference. I felt genuinely cared for, and the support helped me regain stability.”

– GTBG Participant

Between July-December 2025, the women and gender-diverse people who engaged with the Empowering Care Program shared a wide range of lived experiences and systemic barriers that impacted their access to basic needs and stability.

Applicants primarily ranged from 25 to 55+ years old, with many identifying as Black, Indigenous, Caucasian, or South Asian, primarily from Ontario.

Many were navigating one or more of the following intersecting realities:

- **Unemployment or underemployment**
- **Precarious housing or experiences of being unhoused**
- **Low or unstable income**
- **Supporting dependents or caregiving**
- **Lacking official immigration status, or identifying as a recent arrival or newcomer to Canada**
- **Living with a disability (visible or non-visible)**
- **Managing ongoing or chronic medical conditions**
- **Experiences of gender-based violence or sexual exploitation**
- **Difficulty accessing essential social supports like healthcare, income assistance, or legal aid**

This demographic snapshot reflects the diversity within our community and underscores the shared, ongoing challenges many navigate in meeting their basic needs.

The Empowering Care Program continues to be essential and is receiving a higher volume of applications through direct intakes, word-of-mouth referrals, and partner organizations, including a small number of returning applicants. Although we have asked community partners and referral organizations to limit referrals to two applicants per intake phase, many individuals continue to struggle with basic needs, such as clothing, healthy food, transportation expenses, shelter and medical expenses.

As we continue to support new community members through ECP in 2026, we will continue to enhance and update our application forms to better capture a wide range of lived experiences and barriers as well as strengthening collaborations and community organizations for referral pathways.

Financial support requests reflect urgent and ongoing needs driven by unemployment, housing insecurity, and caregiving responsibilities on low or no incomes. These emergency-related needs include access to nourishing food, and personal hygiene products, medications and assistance with paying bills or utilities.

Through ECP, participants received flexible, low-barrier forms of practical support and care, including:



100% of participants

received assistance with essential needs such as food and utilities.



100% of participants

received supportive and personalized resource navigation and referrals to community agencies and programs, connecting program participants to further local services and support networks.



100% of participants

were offered continued care through GOOD TO BE GOOD's Peer Support Services, including access to 1:1 case management and monthly groups.



40+ community members

received Wellness Care Packages offering a consent-based selection of toiletries and clothes intended to support dignity, comfort, and overall well-being.

“Thanks to the team for the packages and for handling all the logistics, we loved everything!” – GTBG Participant

Systemic Factors, Constraints, and Learnings

Women and gender-diverse people will continue to face systemic conditions that undermine stability and access to support, including rising costs of living, inadequate income supports, discriminative practices, gaps in healthcare and childcare access, and restrictive eligibility criteria tied to immigration status, disability, or employment.

These intersecting factors disproportionately affect those already navigating violence, caregiving responsibilities, or social isolation, and cannot be resolved through short-term interventions alone. Within this context, programs like the Empowering Care Program remain critical as responsive, gap-filling supports that help mitigate harm while broader structural inequities persist.

We continue to refine how ECP operates, including strengthening intake processes, adjusting care kit contents based on participant feedback and seasonal needs, improving referral tracking, and prioritizing follow-up support where possible. These adjustments help ensure that limited resources are used thoughtfully, equitably, and with care.

“It gave me a chance to look for jobs and other important appointments as I was fortunate to buy a bus pass this month with the funds and also got some school essentials for my children with these funds. This help was life saving during our crisis time. This program was very much needed in our community.”– GTBG Participant

Community Testimonials

“The Empowering Care Program really helped me when times were rough for me, especially with my Internet bill.”

“The much-needed morale boost aka bountiful blessing for blissful living arrived.”

“I received the box today—thank you again for all of your support for me and my daughter.”

“My kids are very happy with the box, a beautiful winter Jack that my child loved to fit her very well and she's very happy about it so thank you very much.”

“Provided vital support at a time when I needed it most. The financial assistance has allowed me to take care of my family's basic needs without added stress, making a real difference in my healing process. I am incredibly grateful.”

“The gift pack came right on time for the back to school just when we really needed it the most. I really appreciate all the support me and kids have received from good to be good. This is such an incredible organization for women struggling.”

ECP HIGHLIGHTS: JULY TO DECEMBER 2025

ECP supported a diverse community navigating intersecting realities, including unemployment, low income (with and without dependents), experiences of incarceration, disability, mental health and chronic medical conditions, insecure or absent immigration status, social isolation, and experiences of gender-based violence or sexual exploitation.

Many participants also faced barriers accessing essential support such as healthcare, income assistance, or legal aid.

50+ women and gender-diverse individuals served meaningfully through the Empowering Care Program.

100% surveyed recipients reported satisfaction with the support they received through the program.

40+ Holiday Care Kits containing 2000+ essential items were distributed in December, supporting dignity, comfort, and well-being.

We invite you to support and amplify the Empowering Care Program by sharing this work within your networks and communities.

Every act of care—whether through connection, advocacy, or contribution—helps ensure that more women and gender-diverse people can access the dignity, stability, and support they deserve.

Learn more or support the Empowering Care Program:
www.globalgiving.org/projects/empoweringcareforwomenandgirls

Explore our work:
www.goodtobegood.ca/programsandresources



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