



EMPOWERING CARE PROGRAM UPDATES: SPRING/SUMMER 2026 PUBLISHED: AUGUST 2026

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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 multiple barriers—due to gendered injustices such as violence, discrimination, and inequities affecting agency and inclusion.

PRACTICAL CARE IS A GENDER JUSTICE ISSUE



The ***Empowering Care Program*** (ECP) is a low-barrier, community-rooted program designed to provide relief and supplementary supports to 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 may include food assistance, baby and child-related essentials, telecommunication support, gift cards, personal care items, wellness/care packages, and other supports related to safety and well-being. Where appropriate, some supports may be provided through gift cards, direct purchases, or payments made on a participant's behalf.

ECP provides short-term practical support, referrals, and pathways to additional care. Where participants require ongoing resource navigation, community support, or longer-term follow-up, they may be connected to GOOD TO BE GOOD's Peer Support Services.

ON THE FIELD: WHAT OUR TEAM NOTICED

This quarter, we continued to see how rising costs of living and intersecting barriers are making it harder for community members to meet basic needs related to food, housing, healthcare, transportation, and everyday essentials.

SEVERAL APPLICANTS SHARED THAT



They were living with limited or no income, while others were navigating housing instability, disability, health-related barriers, caregiving responsibilities, and the impacts of gender-based violence.



Some community members also reached out to GTBG to access ECP for a second or third time, reflecting the ongoing systemic pressures people continue to face long after a single moment of crisis or emergency has passed.

The increase in applications reminds us that programs like ECP remain necessary because too many women and gender-diverse people continue to navigate intersecting barriers without adequate support from existing systems. While short-term practical relief cannot resolve the systemic conditions creating these needs, what we see through this work is clear: when people are left without enough support, access to essentials can reduce immediate pressure, protect dignity, and help prevent community members from being pushed further into instability.

WOMEN AND GENDER-DIVERSE PEOPLE WHO CONNECTED WITH ECP

Between April to June 2026, ECP received five applications from community members navigating a range of barriers affecting their access to basic needs, safety, and stability. Applicants shared experiences related to:

**Income insecurity | Housing instability | Living with mental health conditions
Disability and health-related barriers | Barriers to accessing healthcare | Refugee,
refugee claimant, or newcomer experiences | Gender-based violence | Other
systemic barriers**

Applicants ranged from 18 to 44 years old, and were primarily based in the Greater Toronto Area. The group was racially and culturally diverse, including 20% Hispanic/Latine, 40% Black, and 40% West Asian community members. Applications came through direct intake, word of mouth, and trusted community referrals, including referrals from organizations such as Black Connections for Moms and Family Service Toronto.

Because ECP operates with limited quarterly resources, not every applicant could be confirmed for support this cycle. Applications were reviewed based on eligibility, triage, priority needs, and available program capacity.



SUPPORTS PROVIDED THIS QUARTER



Essential needs assistance such as food and utility-related expenses.

Information about GOOD TO BE GOOD's Peer Support Services for participants who may benefit from additional support, resource navigation, or community connection.

Wellness Care Packages with a consent-based selection of toiletries, clothing, menstrual products, and care items.

Where applicants could not be confirmed for ECP support, the team provided high-level resource information where appropriate and identified possible pathways to Peer Support Services when more individualized or ongoing support was needed.

PROGRAM TRANSITION UPDATE

This quarter also marked an important transition for the Empowering Care Program. As Mecca supported the close-out of Q2 applications, documentation, and reporting, Kayla Gumiran began stepping into program coordination and frontline community work for the next phase of the Empowering Care Program.



Kayla (she/her) is a Registered Social Worker whose ongoing practice is rooted in care, community, and a deep commitment to supporting women, girls, and young people navigating systemic barriers.

Kayla will help lead and coordinate our key programs and community spaces, continuing to build trusted connections with diverse women and gender-diverse participants, and supporting spaces rooted in dignity, safety, agency, and collective care. In this role, she will help coordinate ECP intake, participant communications, support tracking, and connections to GOOD TO BE GOOD's broader programs and services where appropriate.

This transition helps strengthen continuity across the program as ECP moves into its next quarterly cycle, while ensuring participants continue to be met with dignity, care, and clear pathways to support.

Want to connect with Kayla about the Empowering Care Program?
Email Kayla at kg@goodtobegood.ca

COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPANT REFLECTIONS



These reflections were shared by ECP participants after receiving support this quarter:

"My children were so happy to receive the care package. They loved everything in it, and it brought them so much joy."

"The support really helped during the difficult time. It may not have solved everything, but it made things a little easier."

CONTINUING THE WORK

The reflections shared through ECP remind us that practical support matters. When people are navigating income insecurity, housing instability, caregiving responsibilities, health barriers, or the impacts of gender-based violence, access to essentials can create breathing room and help protect dignity during difficult periods.

This work is part of GOOD TO BE GOOD's broader commitment to advancing gender equity through community care, access, and advocacy. While ECP cannot meet every need, it helps reduce immediate barriers for women and gender-diverse people who are too often left without enough support from existing systems.

We invite our community to continue learning about, advocating for, and supporting the Empowering Care Program. Please share this work within your networks and communities.

Learn more or support the Empowering Care Program:

www.globalgiving.org/projects/empoweringcareforwomenandgirls

Explore our programs and resources: www.goodtobegood.ca/programsandresources

Thank you for being part of a community committed to collective care, dignity, and gender equity for all.

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