

# Basic Income: Perspectives, Problems, & Possibilities in Lindsay

## Background:

In 2017, the provincial government of Ontario launched a Basic Income Pilot Program in three communities across Ontario. The Basic Income Pilot Program was designed to address issues related to poverty and income inequality. It provided a monthly, unconditional income to a sample group of low-income residents. The program was scheduled to run for three years, but it was abruptly canceled in 2018 by the Ford government.

## Core Research Questions:

What are the advantages, disadvantages, and effects of basic income as a tool to promote social justice and equality with emphasis on the Lindsay pilot?

What are the advantages, disadvantages, and effects of basic income as a tool to address food insecurity, poverty and lack of employment with emphasis on the Lindsay pilot?

## Preliminary Findings:

- Recipients relied less on food banks and were able to purchase fresher and healthier foods
- Recipients expressed less financial stress surrounding household purchases
- Funds helped many to take time off work to tend family, personal matters & allowed for career changes

## Discussion:

Our findings suggest that basic income has a variety of positive impacts on the lives of individuals who receive it. Improvements occurred in both lives of individual recipients in Lindsay as well as in the community as a whole.

Improvements in the areas of individual health, community engagement, personal finances and food security were all evident. We are only left to question how much greater of an impact could have been observed if the program had run for a full three years.



## Purpose:

The purpose of this project is to summarize the history, current state, and ongoing perspectives on basic income in Ontario with specific focus given to the Lindsay pilot.

## Methodology:

1. Literature Review
2. Semi-structured interviews

**"It felt like they were giving you a hand up, but at the same time their foot was on your neck ."**

-Basic Income Recipient

## Preliminary Findings:

- Recipients felt strongly about reinvesting BIP funds within their community
- Recipients saw significant improvements in their physical and mental health
- Since the cancellation, some recipients feel disengaged politically due to broken trust