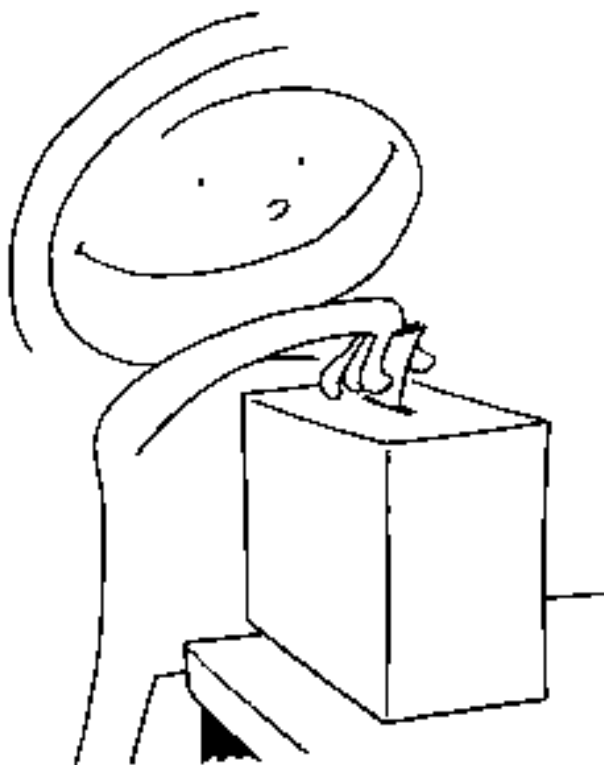


**You
have
the
right
to
vote!**

GET THE VOTE OUT

Election 2011

**Information and
Participation Guide**



If you have a
question about
voting you can call:
Elections Canada
1-800- 463-6868

TTY 1-800-361-8935

This call is free.

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Election 2011

This spring there will be a Federal Election for the Government of Canada. The election will held on Monday, May 2, 2011.

During the election each party can put forward a candidate in every voting region (called Ridings).

You vote for the candidate you want. The candidate that gets the most votes becomes a Member of Parliament (MP). That MP represents the people in your Riding. The party that gets the most MP's elected forms the Government. The party with less MP's elected forms the Opposition.

Everyone who is a Canadian Citizen and who is 18 years of age has the right to vote in this election.

This package gives you some ideas about how to get involved in the election. It explains some things about how an election works. This package has:

- Written information in plain language and large print,
- a small poster that you can put up where people gather in your community.

Please make copies of this information and give it to your friends.



Voting allows you to choose who you think will best represent you and your community. Your choice helps decide who will form the government in Canada.

Voting for the first time can be intimidating because often people do not know what to expect. This guide will help you understand what voting is about.

We hope this information will help make your voting experience a good one.

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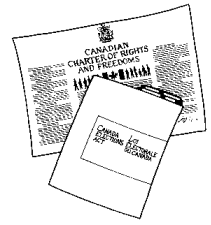
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Questions & Answers About Voting

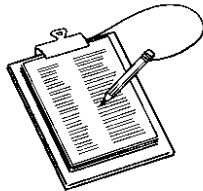
Who can vote?

Every person who is a Canadian citizen and who is 18 years or older can vote in this election if they are on the voters' list.



How do I get on the voters' list?

If you are already on the voters' list you will receive a voting card in the mail. If you do not receive a voting card, call Elections Canada. They will tell you how to get on the voters' list.



If I am not on the voters' list can I still vote on Election Day?

Yes. If you do not get on the voters' list before the Election, you can register to vote at the polling station on Election Day.

However, there will likely be line-ups and you will need two pieces of I.D. with your name, address, and signature. They will accept Hydro bills, rent receipts, health cards, etc.



Where do I vote on Election Day?



On Election Day you vote at a place called a "polling station". The address of the polling station will be sent to you in the mail along with your voters' card. Polling stations can be schools, town halls, or other places in your community where people gather. If you don't get this information, call your Elections Canada office and ask them where you should vote.

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What if I live in a hospital or an institution?

All people who live in hospitals or institutions have the right to vote. Sometimes they send a “mobile polling station” to places like group homes and hospitals. Ask the staff if this is going to happen where you live.

What if I need a ride?

- Ask a friend or person you trust to take you.
- Phone one of your local candidates and tell them you need a ride. You don't have to vote for the person who gave you a ride.

How do I vote?

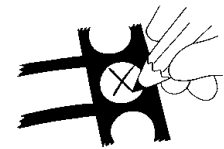
1. Take your I.D., or your voters' card, to the polling station.



2. Someone will give you a piece of paper with the names of all the people you can vote for. This is called a “ballot”.



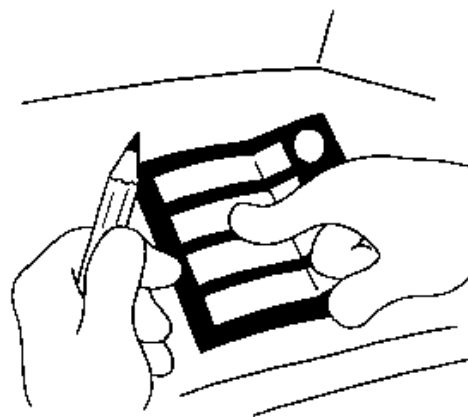
3. Pick one person you want to vote for and put a mark (X) inside the circle beside their name. If you have a visual impairment or if you are blind, you can get a special cardboard ballot with holes on it to make voting easier for you.



4. After you mark your ballot put it in the box.



Remember, you can only vote for one person.



You have the right to vote!

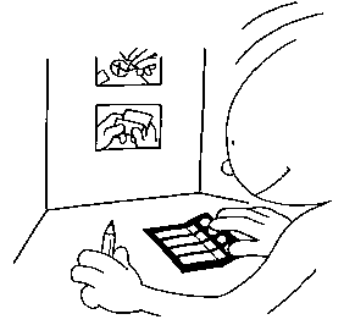
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What if I need help when I vote?

You can bring someone you trust with you to help you vote. The person you choose has to sign a declaration that they are there to assist the voter with a disability. Or, you can ask one of the staff at the polling station to help you. This person can read you the names or help you mark your ballot.



How do I get information about voting?

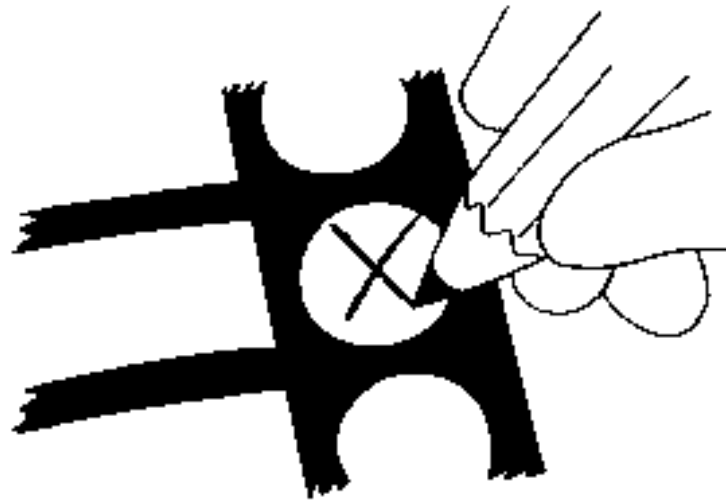
Phone Elections Canada and ask them to send information. Tell them if you want: LARGE PRINT or CD.



you

If you have a visual impairment you can get a "Braille Template" (a special cardboard with holes on it to make voting easier for you). Also, you can get information on TV by watching the news. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, phone TDD/TTY: 1-800-361-8935

special



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Political Parties & Their Leaders

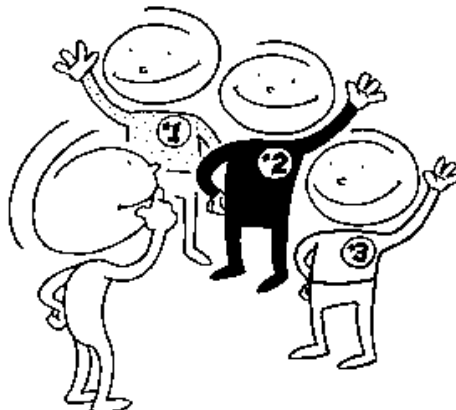
In this election, people vote for the person they want to speak for them in the Government of Canada. This person usually belongs to a “political party”.

Every political party has a Leader, but **the Leader’s name is not on the ballot**. The ballot only has the name of the local person who is a candidate in your area and the name of the political party they are with.

Political Parties	Their Leaders
New Democratic Party	Jack Layton
Liberal Party	Michael Ignatieff
Conservatives	Stephen Harper
Green Party	Elizabeth May

There may be other parties with candidates running in your area. These parties could be the: Marijuana Party, Communist Party, etc; or an independent candidate.

If you want to know more about the candidates who are running for election in your community, visit their campaign offices or go to an all candidates meeting. If you have access to the internet you can look up websites for each party. These websites will have information on each party’s platform. A platform talks about what the party believes and the things that they will do if they are elected.



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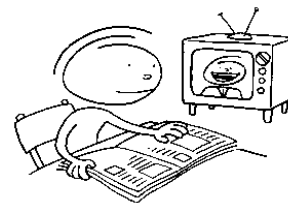
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Participating in the Election

There are lots of ways to learn about voting and how the election works. Here are some ideas you can do on your own or with a group.

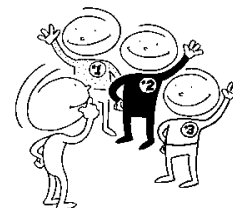
1. You can ask someone to give you a workshop on voting. Or, you can get together with a friend that you trust to explain how it all works.

2. Pay attention to the local TV news, radio stations and newspapers. They will have updates on the election campaign. They will also have regular election specials.



3. Self-advocates can get together and invite all the candidates to come and attend a "Question and Answer" meeting on your issues.

4. You and your friends can go to an "All Candidates Meeting" in your area to meet the candidates and ask questions on issues that are important to you.



5. You can practice voting by role-playing with practice ballots.

You can call Elections Canada and ask them for an election kit.

6. You can phone your candidate and get him or her to answer your questions.

7. You can visit all the candidates' offices in your area to see how they are running their campaigns; you can learn a lot and meet new people.

8. If you know who you want to vote for, you can volunteer to help them at their campaign office.

9. You can check out where your polling place is before Election Day.



10. The candidates and their helpers may come to your place to give you information and talk to you about why you should vote for them. This is OK, BUT you don't have to talk to anyone you do not want to. And you do not have to let anyone into your house who you don't want to talk with.

11. Be a letter writer. Tell candidates, and newspapers about the issues that are important to you.

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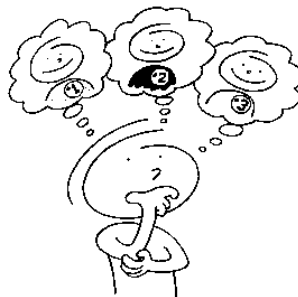
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Questions to Ask Your Candidates

Here are some examples of questions you may want to ask the candidates who are running for election in your community. You probably have other questions. You can ask these questions at an all candidates meeting, or you can phone your candidate directly at their campaign office. **For more information on the issues, visit the CACL website: www.cacl.ca**

1. Do you think Canada should make a plan to carry out the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities?
2. Do you believe that kids with disabilities belong in regular classrooms?
3. Will you help to make sure that people with developmental disabilities get the support they need to live in the community?
4. What will you do to get housing that self advocates can afford?
5. What will you do to create jobs for people with developmental disabilities so that we can have a fair chance at getting work?
6. Will you fight for better medical and dental benefits for people who get PWD?
7. Do you believe that people with developmental disabilities have the same rights as everyone else?
8. Do you support making the disability tax credit refundable for low-income Canadians?



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Rights & Responsibilities

Why you should vote?

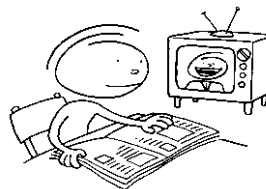
Your right to vote is one of the most important rights you have. It is the way you help choose who will represent you in Canada's government. When you vote you are participating as a full citizen in Canadian society.

Your Rights

1. You have the right to get on the voters' list.
2. You have the right to vote.
3. Your vote is your own personal choice.
4. Your vote is a **secret** - you don't have to tell anyone who you vote for if you don't want to.
5. You have the right to talk to the candidates and ask them questions.
6. You have the right to put a sign on your lawn or window for the candidate of your choice. You also have the right to refuse.
7. No one can tell you who to vote for.

Your Responsibilities

1. Get your name on the voters' list.
2. Find out who the candidates are.
3. Know the issues. Get the information you need.
4. Make arrangements to get to the place where you vote.
5. Bring your voter's card (or I.D.) with you when you go to vote.
6. Bring a friend who you trust to help you vote if you need it.
7. Try to get the candidates to talk to you and your friends - phone calls, meetings, etc.
8. Keep informed after the election is over. Find out if the person who got elected in your area is keeping the promises they made during the election.



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What does it mean?

Voting:



Choosing the person you want to speak for you in the Government.

Federal Election:

Voting for the Government of Canada.

Returning Officer:

The person in your community who is in charge of making sure the election is fair and everyone gets to vote.

Ballot:



The piece of paper with the names of all the people who are trying to get elected in your area.

Federal Government:

The people who are elected to run the country of Canada.

Riding:

The area you live and vote in.

Polling Station:



The place where you go to vote on Election Day.

Candidate:



A person who is trying to get elected.

Political Party:

An organization which has certain ideas about how to run the country. A candidate usually belongs to a political party. for example, NDP, Liberal, Green, etc.

All Candidates Meeting:



A meeting where all the people who want to be elected come together to talk about the issues.

MP:

or Member of Parliament: the person who represents your Riding.

Vote Your Values

Compare your own values with the values of the candidates

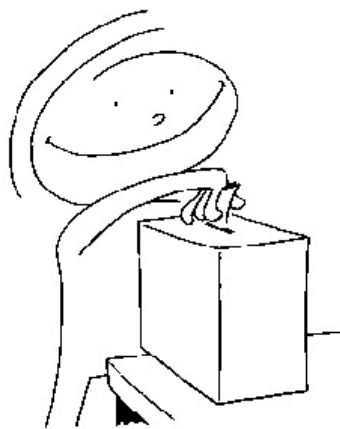
Issue	What I think	What the candidate thinks	Match
• UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities			<input type="checkbox"/>
• health care			<input type="checkbox"/>
• housing			<input type="checkbox"/>
• crime and safety			<input type="checkbox"/>
• helping seniors			<input type="checkbox"/>
• medical and dental coverage			<input type="checkbox"/>
• Poverty			<input type="checkbox"/>
• other _____			<input type="checkbox"/>

Credit for "Vote Your Values" worksheet: © 2004 by *ACT Advocating Change Together*
 1821 University Avenue West, Suite 306 S; St. Paul, MN 55104

800-641-0059 • fax 651-641-4053 • www.selfadvocacy.org • act@selfadvocacy.org

ELECTION 2011

You *can* **Vote**



Monday
May 2, 2011

It's Your Right
It's Your Choice

Phone Elections Canada for more information:

1-800-463-6868

This call is free