

A TALE OF TWO CANADAS

**Implementing Rights
in Early Childhood**

APPENDICES

FEBRUARY 2011



COALITION OF
**child care
advocates**
OF BC



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The Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada (CCAAC) and the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (CCCABC) are non-profit, membership-based and regionally representative organizations working collaboratively to promote a publicly funded, inclusive, high-quality, affordable, publicly-owned and operated child care system. For more than 25 years, both organizations have worked with families, early childhood educators, community organizations and partners from multiple sectors in order to advance child care as a cornerstone of progressive family policy. The pan-Canadian CCAAC and the BC-based CCCABC have jointly undertaken the “Child Care is a Right” project, which seeks to raise public awareness about, and promote government action on, Canada’s commitments to child care services. For further information about this joint project, please see www.ccaac.ca/resources/projects/CCisaRight.php or www.cccabc.bc.ca/res/rights.html

APPENDIX 1

Selected Excerpts from General Comment 7¹

General Comment 7 (GC7) requires governments to:

- encourage recognition of young children as social actors ... with particular interests, capacities and vulnerabilities ...
- emphasize the vulnerability of young children to poverty, discrimination, family breakdown and multiple other adversities that violate their rights and undermine their well-being
- contribute to the realization of rights for all young children through ... comprehensive policies, laws, programmes, practices, professional training and research specifically focused on rights in early childhood.

GC7 also observes that states parties are required to

render appropriate assistance to parents, legal guardians and extended families in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities ... The Committee is concerned that insufficient account is taken of the resources, skills and personal commitment required of parents and others responsible for young children ... Early childhood is the period of most extensive (and intensive) parental responsibilities related to all aspects of children's well-being covered by the Convention: their survival, health, physical safety and emotional security, standards of living and care, opportunities for play and learning, and freedom of expression. Accordingly, realizing children's rights is in large measure dependent on the well-being and resources available to those with responsibility for their care. Recognizing these interdependencies is a sound starting point for planning assistance and services to parents, legal guardians and other caregivers.

For example:

- (a) An integrated approach would include interventions that impact indirectly on parents' ability to promote the best interests of children (e.g. taxation and benefits, adequate housing, working hours) as well as those that have more immediate consequences (e.g. perinatal health services for mother and baby, parent education, home visitors); ...
- (c) Assistance to parents will include provision of parenting education, parent counselling and other quality services ...

21. Appropriate assistance to parents can best be achieved as part of comprehensive policies for early childhood ... including provision for health, care and education during the early years. States parties should ensure that parents are given appropriate support to enable them to involve young children fully in such programmes, especially the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. In particular, article 18.3 acknowledges that many parents are economically active, often in poorly paid occupations which they combine with their parental responsibilities. Article 18.3 requires States parties to take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from childcare services, maternity protection and facilities for which they are eligible. ...

In many countries and regions, early childhood has received low priority in the development of quality services. These services have often been fragmented. They have frequently been the responsibility of several government departments at central and local levels, and their planning has often been piecemeal and uncoordinated. In some cases, they have also been largely provided by the private and voluntary sector, without adequate resources, regulation or quality assurance... A comprehensive framework for early childhood services, provisions and facilities is required, backed up by information and monitoring systems. Comprehensive services will be coordinated with the assistance provided to parents and will fully respect their responsibilities, as well as their circumstances and requirements ... Parents should also be consulted and involved in the planning of comprehensive services.

23. ... States parties must ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for early childhood conform to quality standards, particularly in the areas of health and safety, and that staff possess the appropriate psychosocial qualities

1 Committee on the Rights of the Child [CRC] (2005). General Comment No. 7. *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Retrieved from <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/AdvanceVersions/GeneralComment7Rev1.pdf>

and are suitable, sufficiently numerous and well-trained. Provision of services appropriate to the circumstances, age and individuality of young children requires that all staff be trained to work with this age group. Work with young children should be socially valued and properly paid, in order to attract a highly qualified workforce, men as well as women ...

24. ... The Committee calls on States parties to ensure that all young children (and those with primary responsibility for their well-being) are guaranteed access to appropriate and effective services, including programmes of health, care and education specifically designed to promote their well-being. Particular attention should be paid to the most vulnerable groups of young children and to those who are at risk of discrimination ...

26. ... Young children are entitled to a standard of living adequate for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development ... Growing up in conditions of absolute poverty has even more serious consequences, threatening children's survival and their health, as well as undermining the basic quality of life. States parties are urged to implement systematic strategies to reduce poverty in early childhood as well as combat its negative effects on children's well-being. All possible means should be employed, including "material assistance and support programmes" for children and families ... in order to assure to young children a basic standard of living consistent with rights ...

28. ... The Committee interprets the right to education during early childhood as beginning at birth and closely linked to young children's right to maximum development ...

29. ...The principle that parents (and other primary caregivers) are children's first educators is well established ...

(b) In planning for early childhood, States parties should at all times aim to provide programmes that complement the parents' role and are developed as far as possible in partnership with parents, including through active cooperation between parents, professionals and others ...

30. ... Research evidence demonstrates the potential for quality education programmes to have a positive impact on young children's successful transition to primary school, their educational progress and their long-term social adjustment. Many countries and regions now provide comprehensive early education starting at 4 years old, which in some countries is integrated with childcare for working parents. Acknowledging that traditional divisions between "care" and "education" services have not always been in children's best interests, the concept of "Educare" is sometimes used to signal a shift towards integrated services, and reinforces the recognition of the need for a coordinated, holistic, multisectoral approach to early childhood.

31. Community-based programmes. The Committee recommends that States parties support early childhood development programmes, including home- and community-based preschool programmes, in which the empowerment and education of parents (and other caregivers) are main features. States parties have a key role to play in providing a legislative framework for the provision of quality, adequately resourced services, and for ensuring that standards are tailored to the circumstances of particular groups and individuals and to the developmental priorities of particular age groups, from infancy through to transition into school. They are encouraged to construct high-quality, developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant programmes and to achieve this by working with local communities rather by imposing a standardized approach to early childhood care and education. ...

32. ... States parties are responsible for service provision for early childhood development. The role of civil society should be complementary to — not a substitute for — the role of the State. Where non-State services play a major role, the Committee reminds States parties that they have an obligation to monitor and regulate the quality of provision to ensure that children's rights are protected and their best interests served.

38.... In order to ensure that young children's rights are fully realized during this crucial phase of their lives (and bearing in mind the impact of early childhood experiences on their long-term prospects), States parties are urged to adopt comprehensive, strategic and time-bound plans for early childhood within a rights-based framework. This requires an increase in human and financial resource allocations for early childhood services and programmes ... States parties are encouraged to develop strong and equitable partnerships between the Government, public services, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and families to finance comprehensive services in support of young children's rights. ...

... The Committee urges all States parties to develop a system of data collection and indicators consistent with the Convention and disaggregated by gender, age, family structure, urban and rural residence, and other relevant categories.

APPENDIX 2

Selected Excerpts from the 2008 UNICEF Report Card²

The 10 benchmarks suggested, drawn up in consultation with government officials and academic experts ... represent a first attempt towards evaluating and comparing early childhood services.

First, more than two thirds of all women of working age in the OECD countries are today employed outside the home. Many are postponing childbearing by a decade or more compared with mothers of previous generations and many have well-established careers to take into consideration. In as much as this reflects progress towards equality of opportunity for women, it is cause for celebration. But in as much as it represents mounting economic pressures, it is cause for concern. Even among the well-paid, two incomes are often necessary if housing and other expenses are to be met ... For many millions of mothers, therefore, rising employment pressures reflect not new opportunities but new necessities.

... some OECD countries have come to see child care services as a prop to falling birth rates. "If Europe is to reverse its demographic decline," noted the European Commission in 2005, "families must be further encouraged by public policies that allow men and women to reconcile family life with work."

... despite significant differences in policy and practice, it is clear that the industrialized nations as a whole are moving not only towards out-of-home care for a significant percentage of infants and toddlers but also towards systems of universal education that begin not with formal schooling at the age of five or six but with early childhood education beginning at the age of three.

All countries in the European Union, for example, now guarantee at least two or three years of pre-school. European Union leaders have agreed that by 2010 they should be providing free or subsidized full day-care for at least 33 per cent of children under the age of three and for 90 per cent of those aged three-to-six.

The benchmarks are:

1. A minimum entitlement to paid parental leave

... one parent be entitled to leave of at least a year ... at 50 per cent of salary (subject to upper and lower limits). For parents who are unemployed or self-employed, the income entitlement should not be less than the minimum wage or the level of social assistance. At least two weeks parental leave should be specifically reserved for fathers.

2. A national plan with priority for disadvantaged children

All countries ... should have undertaken extensive research and evolved a coherent national strategy to ensure that the benefits of early childhood education and care are fully available, especially to disadvantaged children... This dimension of early childhood services cannot currently be assessed and compared in a satisfactory way. Rather than omit such a critical factor, benchmark 2 records, as a proxy measure, whether governments have at least drawn up a national plan for the organization and financing of early childhood services.

3. A minimum level of child care provision for under threes

The minimum proposed is that subsidized and regulated child care services should be available for at least 25 per cent of children.

4. A minimum level of access for four-year-olds

The minimum proposed is that at least 80 per cent of four-year-olds participate in publicly subsidized and accredited early education services for a minimum of 15 hours per week.

2 UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (2008). Report card 8: The child care transition: A league table of early childhood education and care in economically advanced countries. *UNICEF*. Retrieved from http://www.unicef.ca/portal/Secure/Community/502/WCM/HELP/take_action/Advocacy/rc8.pdf

5. A minimum level of training for all staff

The minimum proposed is that at least 80 per cent of staff having significant contact with young children, including neighbourhood and home-based child carers, should have relevant training. As a minimum, all staff should complete an induction course. A move towards pay and working conditions in line with the wider teaching or social care professions should also be envisaged.

6. A minimum proportion of staff with higher level education and training

The minimum proposed is that at least 50 per cent of staff in early education centres supported and accredited by governmental agencies should have a minimum of three years tertiary education with a recognized qualification in early childhood studies or a related field.

7. A minimum staff-to-children ratio

The minimum proposed is that the ratio of pre-school children (four-to-five year-olds) to trained staff (educators and assistants) should not be greater than 15 to 1, and that group size should not exceed 24.

8. A minimum level of public funding

The suggested minimum is that the level of public spending on early childhood education and care (for children aged 0 to 6 years) should not be less than 1 per cent of GDP.

9. A low level of child poverty

Specifically, a child poverty rate of less than 10 per cent. The definition of child poverty is that used by the OECD — the percentage of children growing up in families in which income, adjusted for family size, is less than 50 per cent of median income.

10. Universal outreach

To reinforce one of the central tenets of this report — that early childhood services should also be available to the children of disadvantaged families — this last benchmark attempts to measure and compare demonstrated national commitment to that ideal.

As no direct measure is currently possible, the suggested proxy measure is the extent to which basic child health services have been made available to the most marginalized and difficult-to-reach families. Specifically, the benchmark of ‘universal outreach’ is considered to have been met if a country has fulfilled at least two of the following three requirements: a) the rate of infant mortality is less than 4 per 1,000 live births b) the proportion of babies born with low birthweight (below 2,500 grams) is less than 6 per cent and c) the immunization rate for 12 to 23 month-olds (averaged over measles, polio and DPT3 vaccination) is higher than 95 per cent.

Overall, Sweden tops the table by meeting all 10 benchmarks, followed closely by Iceland which meets 9, and by Denmark, Finland, France, and Norway which meet 8. Only three countries — Australia, Canada, and Ireland — meet fewer than 3...

Most OECD governments have responded by formulating policy and investing public resources in the provision of early childhood education and care. In almost every industrialized country, support for parents in the bringing up of children is now regarded as a duty of governments and is explicitly recognized as such by the Convention on the Rights of the Child which almost all OECD countries have ratified

PRIVATE PROVISION

... There are also arguments against the private provision of early childhood services. Consistent monitoring and enforcement of standards can be both expensive and fallible. Some private providers are tempted to reduce less visible costs such as training, pay, and conditions of work. And staff turnover in for-profit services tends to be higher (a factor which, from the child’s point of view, translates into instability of care).

Furthermore, what is offered by private providers of child care is not a consumer product but a child’s once in-a-lifetime opportunity to pass successfully through critical stages of cognitive, emotional, and social development. As UNICEF has argued for many decades and in many contexts, the child’s name is ‘today’.

This gives rise to two particular problems, both of which have to do with the information available to the consumer. First, the quality of early childhood education and care being provided may not always be evident to parents — either because they have insufficient knowledge of what constitutes ‘quality’ or because providers fail to communicate adequately the quality of the services they offer. This problem of ‘imperfect information’, it may be argued, applies to all transactions in the marketplace, it being the responsibility of consumers to keep themselves informed and make correct decisions.

But here a second danger arises; poor quality early childhood education and care is not a product that can be returned, repaired, exchanged, or refunded. It may take years for the lack of quality to show its effects; the cause may never become apparent; and the consequences are likely to fall not only on the child but on society as a whole.

...Overall there would seem to be strong arguments for focusing public policy and public funding on diversely delivered but universally available early childhood services funded and supervised by governmental agencies. This is the broad strategy that has been adopted by almost all OECD governments in response to the educational needs of older children, and there is no reason in principle to pursue a different strategy for early childhood services.

“The evidence suggests,” says the 2006 OECD Starting Strong review of early childhood services, “that direct public funding of services brings more effective governmental steering of early childhood services, advantages of scale, better national quality, more effective training for educators and a higher degree of equity in access.”

APPENDIX 3

Sampling of Links to Policy Observations and Recommendations Provided by Canadian Civil Society Groups and Relevant to the Implementation of Rights in Early Childhood

Numerous civil society groups across multiple sectors in Canada have published reports between 2003 and 2009 which provide observations and/or policy recommendations to federal and provincial governments that are broadly consistent with the requirements outlined in General Comment 7 of the UN CRC. A range of government committees and advisory bodies have also made similar recommendations. This Appendix highlights a few examples, organized by sector and with full references or report links provided for those interested in more details:

FIRST NATIONS AND ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES SECTOR

Assembly of First Nations

Early Childhood Development Single Window Strategy: Summary Report of First Nations Regional Dialogue Sessions
<http://64.26.129.156/cmslib/general/ECDSWS.pdf>

Where to From Here?: Building a First Nations Early Childhood Strategy

A Dialogue Initiative Undertaken by The Assembly of First Nations, Discussion paper, February 28, 2005
http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_new/pdf_documents/AFN%20ECD%20Strategy2%20final.pdf

BC Aboriginal Child Care Society

http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_new/resources.html

BC Aboriginal Child Care Society Responds to Ministry of Education Draft Early Learning Framework (2007)

http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_new/documents/BCACCSResponsetoMofEDraftFrameworkforEarlyLearning.doc

BC ACCS's response address to the Ministry of Education on their recently issued Draft Framework for Early Learning.

Excerpts:

... we have long advocated for a holistic, inter-governmental and inter-Ministerial approach to healthy child development ...

ACCS encourages the Ministry of Education to engage BC Government Ministries, Federal Government Departments and BC communities in the design and implementation of an early childhood development strategy that addresses the fundamental impact of poverty on children's health and well-being...

The Framework needs to be supported by increases to the BC budget for children 0 to 6 years...

We cannot emphasize too strongly the need to address the value and compensation of Early Childhood Educators....

One of the basic and most obvious differences between First Nations and mainstream early childhood care, education and development approaches is understanding the child as a sacred, spiritual being and caregiving/educating as a sacred responsibility and activity.

Cultural identity and ancestral languages have been consistently, over a period spanning three or four decades and in various forums, identified as the priority for early childhood care, education and development programs.

Many Voices, Common Cause: A Report on the Aboriginal Leadership Forum on Early Childhood Development (March 2003)

http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_new/pdf_documents/PuttingChildrenFirst.pdf

Many Voices, Common Cause: A Report on the Aboriginal Leadership Forum on Early Childhood Development, Follow-Up Session II. Addressing Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Education and Training Needs (April 2004)

http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_new/pdf_documents/AddressingTrainingNeeds2004.pdf

COMMUNITY SECTOR — GENERAL

In addition to the analyses and policy recommendations generated by Campaign 2000 and the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada, other relevant community reports include:

Canadian Child Care Federation

“CCCF Urges Federal Government to Play Leadership Role in Ensuring Quality Child Care for Families” (News release) March 20, 2007

http://www.cccf-fcsge.ca/pressroom/federal_budget07_March19_en.htm

YWCA Canada

Building a Community Architecture for Early Childhood Learning and Care: Blueprints for Community Architecture for Early Childhood Learning and Care, March 2006

<http://ywcacanada.ca/data/publications/00000014.pdf>

First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition

<http://www.firstcallbc.org/earlyChildhood-resources.html>

Early Childhood Development in BC: First Call's Framework for Action (Revised 2008)

<http://www.firstcallbc.org/pdfs/EarlyChildhood/1-framework 2008.pdf>

This paper highlights the research, policy and advocacy links to Early Childhood Development and describes the five components of First Call's ECD basket framework.

New Brunswick Child Care Coalition

<http://www.nbccc-csgnb.ca/resources-e.htm>

Brief submitted during Consultation on Early Learning and Child Care, June 2007

http://www.nbccc-csgnb.ca/downloads/BriefNBCCC_elcc.doc

Child care in New Brunswick at a crossroads. The Coalition makes 15 recommendations that will transform child care in New Brunswick from a private good purchased by parents to a public good. This transformation will lead to quality programs that are available to children and affordable to parents.

Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care

<http://www.childcareontario.org/?cat=17>

OCBCC Releases “A Transformational Vision for Early Learning and Care”

The OCBCC has publicly released our submission to the Early Learning Advisor Charles Pascal with a vision full day learning for 4 and 5 year olds as a part of a comprehensive child care system in Ontario. That means affordable care for families, child care services for every child in Ontario and significant wage increases for Early Childhood Educators across the province.

<http://www.childcareontario.org/?p=169>

Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC

<http://www.cccabc.bc.ca/index.html>

Moving to a System of Integrated Early Care and Learning in BC

This project examines the relationship between free, universal and publicly-funded full school-day kindergarten for 5 and 4 year olds and BC's existing child care services.

The rEvolution of Community Controlled Child Care in BC

Final report of the Child Care Governance Project, November 16, 2007

http://www.cccabc.bc.ca/cccabdocs/governance/ggcc_final_report.pdf

HEALTH SECTOR

Canadian Paediatric Society

“Let’s Put a National Child Care Strategy Back on the Agenda” Danielle Grenier MD and Denis Leduc MD, *Paediatric Child Health*, Vol 13 No 10 December 2008

<http://www.cps.ca/English/advocacy/Grenier.pdf>

Canadian children have the right to quality childhood care and education.

That is why the Canadian Paediatric Society (CPS) is urging governments to develop a national strategy on early childhood education and care.

... After reviewing the literature, the statement calls for deliberate design of high-quality centres, appropriate child-to-staff ratios, trained staff, and a system of affordable, accessible and high-quality care (8).If we expect practitioners and program planners to deliver high-quality services, our country must commit to creating a framework in which this care can be systematically and thoughtfully planned, delivered, monitored and evaluated. The belief that such a system can create itself in the absence of national leadership is simply flawed.

Chief Public Health Officer

Chief Public Health Officer’s Report on the State of Public Health in Canada, 2008, p. 3

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/2008/cpho-aspc/pdf/cpho-report-eng.pdf>

Attention should be given to the following priority areas for addressing health inequalities: social investments, particularly investments in families with children living in poverty and in early child development programs...

RESEARCH

Childcare Resource and Research Unit

The Childcare Resource and Research Unit (CRRU) focuses on research and policy resources in the context of a high quality system of early childhood education and child care (ECEC) and family policy in Canada and internationally.

<http://www.childcarecanada.org/>

CRRU plays an integral role in the policy development process by:

- anticipating the need for information resources on particular ECEC issues;
- collecting, organizing, packaging and disseminating ECEC information resources;
- keeping up-to-date on new information and developments related to programs, research and policy in the ECEC field;
- facilitating communication among people involved in ECEC;
- providing interpretations of research and policy materials in a form useful for people with an interest in ECEC in Canada;
- undertaking research and evaluation as well as supporting and consulting with others involved in these activities.

Human Early Learning Partnership

The Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) is a BC-based research institute whose vision is to create, advance and apply knowledge through interdisciplinary research to help children and families thrive.

<http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/about/mission-vision/>

Other Publications

Indigenous early childhood development programs as 'hook' and 'hub' for inter-sectoral service delivery

Jessica Ball, School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria.

<http://www.ecdip.org/docs/pdf/conf/hookhubintersector.pdf>

Early Years Study: Reversing the real brain drain.

McCain, M. N. & Mustard, J. F. (1999). Toronto, ON: Publications Ontario.

http://action.web.ca/home/crru/rsrscs_crru_full.shtml?x=123235

After the election: Which direction for child care and family policy?

Cleveland, Gordon, Fortin, Sarah and Friendly, Martha. Publication date: 9 Dec 08.

http://action.web.ca/home/crru/rsrscs_crru_full.shtml?x=123235

New evidence about child care in Canada: Use patterns, affordability and quality.

Cleveland, Gordon; Forer, Barry; Hyatt, Douglas; Japel, Christa & Krashinsky, Michael. Publication date: 7 Oct 08

http://action.web.ca/home/crru/rsrscs_crru_full.shtml?x=121973

The benefits and costs of Quebec's centres de la petite enfance.

Cleveland, Gordon. Publication date: 9 May 07.

http://action.web.ca/home/crru/rsrscs_crru_full.shtml?x=103008

Financing early learning and child care in Canada.

Cleveland, Gordon & Krashinsky, Michael. Publication date: 1 Nov 04.

http://action.web.ca/home/crru/rsrscs_crru_full.shtml?x=69536

Centre for Spatial Economics, Executive Summary: Literature Review of Socioeconomic Effects and Net Benefits: Understanding and Addressing Workforce Shortages in ECEC Project, Child Care Human Resources Sector Council, September 2009.

Overall, high quality ECEC is found to provide a multitude of positive outcomes ... most literature concerning the impact on mothers of children in ECEC programs indicates that higher program fees will decrease a mother's hours of work and their tendency to participate in the workforce ... a 1% increase in fees could decrease the mother's labour supply by as much as 0.92% ... by all measures, the ECEC sector provides one of the largest — if not the largest — boost to short-term economic activity of all the major sectors of the economy through direct, indirect, induced and mothers' workforce participation ... the analysis ... shows that for every dollar invested in ECEC the estimated net present value of benefits is \$2.54.

BUSINESS SECTOR

Conference Board of Canada

How Canada Performs: A Report Card on Canada. Conference Board of Canada. 2008.

Countries that have reduced poverty rates have turned away from passive, benefits-only poverty reduction schemes in favour of national anti-poverty strategies that incorporate a number of “active” policies. Active policies are social policies that integrate strategies across governments, departments, and service providers to reduce poverty and increase self-sufficiency. For example, active job policies may be set up to help people overcome obstacles to get jobs through a combination of: funding jobs training, providing child care, introducing tax incentives for lower-paid workers.

Canadian Chamber of Commerce

The following policy resolution was brought forward by the Burnaby Board of Trade and approved by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. *The federal government, in cooperation with the provinces and territories and other stakeholders, should fund and assist in the development of a provincially delivered early childhood development program to improve the long term productivity of Canada through a better educated, more highly skilled workforce, resulting in superior economic performance.* An excerpt from the preamble to the resolution states that *a universal early childhood development program is financially viable. A recent economic analysis commissioned by YWCA Vancouver confirms a two-to-one return on every dollar invested in quality child care.*

<http://www.chamber.ca/images/uploads/Resolutions/2009/PolicyBook09.pdf>

LABOUR SECTOR

Canadian Labour Congress

Child Care Report Cards

<http://www.canadianlabour.ca/news-room/publications/child-care-report-cards-2008>

Federal government must ensure that all children and families have equitable access to quality, affordable child care services. This requires adequate and sustained transfers to provinces and territories with accountability for reducing parent fees, raising staff wages and adding public spaces...

*The federal government needs to increase **public funding** to provinces and territories, ensuring **public planning** with timelines and targets and public reporting on actual results achieved.*

Canadian Union of Public Employees

Why public early childhood education and care? Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Publication date: 26 Oct 09

http://action.web.ca/home/crru/rsrscs_crru_full.shtml?x=127653

Big box operator eyes Canada’s child care. Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Publication date: 24 Oct 07

http://action.web.ca/home/crru/rsrscs_crru_full.shtml?x=110649

Establishing a national system of early learning and child care in light of Canada’s obligations under NAFTA and the WTO.

Shrybman, Steven. Publication date: 12 Nov 04

http://action.web.ca/home/crru/rsrscs_crru_full.shtml?x=69925

GOVERNMENT SECTOR

Each year the federal Standing Committee on Finance conducts pre-budget consultations. Typically, they recommend investments in early child development, including child care. A recent example follows:

A prosperous and sustainable future for Canada: Needed federal actions

Report from the Standing Committee on Finance on pre-budget consultations, December, 2009

<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?DocId=4304866&Language=E&Mode=1&Parl=40&Ses=2>

The federal government, recognizing the jurisdiction of the provinces and territories as well as the need to compensate those provinces and territories that decide not to participate in a country-wide measure, implement a national child care plan providing high-quality, affordable and inclusive child care services. This goal should be achieved through federal transfer payments to participating provinces and territories, and the plan should include measurable targets and time-lines.

The federal government has also sought and/or received advice on investments in early childhood from ministerial advisory and Senate committees. For example:

Child care spaces recommendations. Ministerial Advisory Committee on Child Care Spaces (2007). Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

Retrieved from http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/publications_resources/social_policy/mac_report/page01.shtml

Amend Employment Insurance Maternity and Parental Benefits ... through extending the length of the benefits period and expanding eligibility for benefits, including increasing the duration of the benefits period, increasing fathers' access to benefits ... enhance the provisions for flexible work arrangements in the Canada Labour Code and promote flexible work arrangements within the federal civil service including permanent part-time, job sharing, and alternative career paths ... to support parents and increase their access to pre-primary education and high quality child care, the Committee considered ways to fairly and equitably support families in managing the cost of high quality child care.

In from the Margins: A call to action on poverty, housing, and homelessness. Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology (2009).

Retrieved from <http://www.parl.gc.ca/40/2/parlbus/commbus/senate/com-e/citi-e/rep-e/rep02dec09-e.pdf>

APPENDIX 4

Canada's Public Reporting

Selected excerpts, relevant to young children and their families, from Canada's 2009 report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child³.

A. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

... The percentage of children in low-income families fell from a peak of 19 percent in 1996 to 13 percent in 2004. Although challenges remain, governments continue to make concerted efforts to improve the lives of children in Canada and further enhance the implementation of the CRC ...

- In August 2007, the Government of Canada released its third report on the well-being of Canada's young children aged 0 to 5. The report, based largely on data from 2002-2003, and issued pursuant to the Federal-Provincial/Territorial Early Childhood Development Agreement of 2000, reports on a common set of indicators to provide an overview of the well-being of young children and the families and communities in which they are growing up including development and health indicators (http://www.socialunion.ca/well_being/2007/en/index.shtml). ...

... Reports on Government of Canada resource allocations for children can be found online. For example:

Government of Canada activities and expenditures for early childhood development and early learning and child care, as well as the well-being of Canada's young are reported on the Social Union Framework web site (http://www.socialunion.gc.ca/ecd_e.html) ...

- The provinces and territories have jurisdiction over the majority of programs and services for families with young children, including child care. The Government of Canada plays a supporting role by providing a range of child and family benefits and transferring funds to other governments in Canada based on shared goals and objectives. Since 2000, improving and expanding programs and services for young children has been a joint priority for all governments in Canada.

Child and family benefits and other initiatives addressing child poverty

- Total federal support to families with children through income benefits and tax measures targeted at children exceeded \$13 billion for 2007-2008, with the majority directed to low- and middle-income families.
- The National Child Benefit (NCB) Supplement was increased by \$482 plus indexation adjustments between 2003 and 2006...
- An evaluation of the NCB in October 2004 found clear evidence that the NCB has resulted in significant positive impacts in reducing the incidence of families with children living in low-income conditions, as well as the severity of low-income conditions for those families who continue to live below the low-income threshold. There is evidence of a mixed impact in promoting attachment to the labour market.
- The Universal Child Care Benefit (UCCB) introduced in 2006, provides direct financial support (\$100 per month for each child under the age of six) to help parents with the costs associated with raising their children. The UCCB is part of the Universal Child Care Plan, which also supports the creation of child care spaces. In 2007, the Government of Canada introduced a 25 percent investment tax credit (to a maximum of \$10,000 per space created) for businesses that create new licensed child care spaces for children of employees and, potentially, for children in the surrounding community.
- The Child Tax Credit (CTC) and the Working Income Tax Benefit (WITB) were introduced in 2007. The CTC, an investment of \$1.4 billion per year in tax support for families and children, provides up to \$300 of tax relief per child to

3 Canada's 2009 report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.
Downloaded from <http://rightsofchildren.ca/wp-content/uploads/canadas-third-and-fourth-report-on-crc.pdf>

more than three million Canadian families. The WITB provides tax relief for eligible working low-income individuals and families who are already in the workforce and encourages other individuals to enter the workforce.

- The Government of Canada's community-based children's programs specifically target vulnerable populations, including Aboriginal children...
 - » The Government of Canada funds First Nations and Inuit communities to deliver evidence-based programs and services to support the development of children in an effort to address gaps in life chances between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children. Through a continuum of maternal and child health programming focused on pregnant women, new parents, and children under six years of age, programs such as Aboriginal Head Start and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program support the growth of healthy families living on- and off-reserve and in Inuit communities. Activities like screening and assessment, home visits, case management, service coordination, mentoring, nutrition, breastfeeding education, cultural teachings and language training, support children and their families to reach their fullest developmental and lifetime potential.

B. PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS

Newfoundland and Labrador

Under the Poverty Reduction Strategy, Newfoundland and Labrador has made significant investments in child care services. There has been an emphasis on increasing capacity to provide more child care spaces and the allowable income of parents receiving subsidy has increased, thus allowing more families access to subsidized child care. In an effort to improve services, resources have been put in place to support inclusion of children with special needs in child care settings; training in quality child care has been offered to child care centers; and recruitment and retention measures to attract trained and qualified staff are on-going.

Prince Edward Island

Plans are underway for the integration of kindergarten with the public education system. The Best Start program is being expanded to assist families with children up to two years of age. An additional \$389,500 has been allocated to fund child care maintenance and child care special needs as part of the Early Learning and Child Care Action Plan.... Since 2002, the Prince Edward Island Healthy Eating Alliance has helped with the development, support and implementation of a variety of food programs (breakfast and snack) in schools... These programs would be optional for schools as needs are identified (as outlined in the School Nutrition Policies) and universally accessible for all students in a non-stigmatizing way.

Nova Scotia

To provide additional options to families for child care, the Government of Nova Scotia supports family home child day care ... to reduce their isolation, provide them with professional support and help them enhance their services. The program is designed to provide healthy, safe and appropriate environments for young children who are being cared for in private homes across Nova Scotia (<http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/provider/FamilyHomeDayCare.html>). The Government of Nova Scotia has implemented an Early Learning and Child Care Plan which will add more day care spaces, increase subsidized spaces, and provide ongoing support for the province's child care sector over 10 years (<http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/ELCCProgram.html>). In addition, partial funding is available to eligible lower-income families who require child care (<http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/childcare/ChildCareSubsidy.html>).

New Brunswick

The Early Learning and Child Care Trust Fund was established by the Government of New Brunswick in June 2007. The Quality Improvement Funding Support Program, which began in 2002, continues funding investments to support wage enhancements for child care staff, professional development opportunities, and equipment and materials. Child care costs are eligible to be deducted from income and reduce taxable income. As a result, New Brunswick residents' taxable income and personal income tax payable are reduced.

Québec

Since 2004, a program offering integrated perinatal and early childhood services to vulnerable families has been in force throughout the province of Québec. This prevention and promotion program, focussing on the health and well-being of children and parents, includes family support components and the establishment of favourable environments. The measures aim at reducing the risks linked to the social determinants of health, including abuse and neglect, and favour early and intensive intervention. Following an ISQ study on the quality of educational services, in 2004, the Government of Québec announced its Ongoing Quality Improvement Plan regarding educational child care... In December 2004, the *Mesure exceptionnelle de soutien à l'intégration dans les services de garde pour les enfants handicapés ayant d'importants besoins*, came into effect in Québec. This measure supports the integration in the day-care system of children with disabilities that have special needs. It consists of an allowance provided to daycare service providers to cover part of the additional costs incurred due to the extra hours required to support a child with a severe disability. Since 2006-2007, the Government of Québec has been funding community-based drop-in child care centres with a \$3 million budget allocated to the consolidation of services, which enable parents, primarily from disadvantaged areas and who take care of their children full-time, to benefit from relief care and to participate in social and professional integration activities, including volunteer work. With respect to Aboriginal institutions and cultures, the Government of Québec is working towards opening child care services in each Aboriginal community. As of December 31, 2007, Aboriginal communities had access to 3,303 child care spaces. The Government of Québec's educational child care program, entitled *Accueillir la petite enfance*, was updated in 2007. This new edition of the program introduces terms of reference for educational child care and addresses, among other things, different aspects of educational intervention, the structuring of activities and the environment, and the relationship with parents. Particular attention is given to children with special needs.

Ontario

Since 2005, under the Best Start Strategy, the Government of Ontario has funded the creation of more than 22,000 new child care spaces across the province. As of January 2007, child care fee subsidies are assessed based on income, which has replaced the previous needs test... In November 2006, amendments to the *Day Nurseries Act* were implemented to provide consistency with governmental and local school board policies and the flexibility needed to achieve the Best Start goals of integrating early learning and child care. Also in November 2006, the Government of Ontario increased the maximum allowable deduction for recipients of the Ontario Disability Support Plan for informal child care costs to \$600 per child per month and the up-front child care benefit for informal child care to \$600... In 2007: A special advisor was appointed to advise on implementing full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds starting in 2010-2011...

Manitoba

A multi-year plan for child care in Manitoba (2002 to 2007) was announced to maintain and improve child care quality, accessibility and affordability (http://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/childcare/five_yr_plan.html). Funding was provided to support an increase to the number of spaces receiving an operating grant throughout the period. Training initiatives were established or expanded to increase the number of trained early childhood educators in the province (between 2003 and 2006). Operating grants were increased to child care centres and family child care homes (2004, 2005 and 2007), to increase wages for early childhood educators, and help improve recruitment and retention in the sector. In 2005, nursery school funding was enhanced to increase the number of subsidized spaces. In 2006, a recruitment fund was established to attract qualified staff back to the field of child care and a Capital and Leasehold Improvements Program was created for child care centres. In 2007, the child care subsidy program was improved by adjusting income levels and allowable deductions and Quality Enhancement Initiatives were started, including using the Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale to support the development of quality enhancement plans, and quality and curriculum frameworks.

Alberta

In October 2005, the Government of Alberta Five-Point Child Care Investment Plan was launched. The five points include: affordable child care, support for parents who stay home with their children, improved child care services for children with disabilities, improved quality of child care, and enhanced access to early intervention programs. The *What We Heard: Consultation on the Proposed Child Care Licensing Regulation* report, published in October 2007, summarized the results of the government's first phase of public consultation on a new Act and Regulation. In June 2007, the Government of Alberta revised its Child Care Accreditation Funding Program. A range of investments have been put in place to improve access to quality child care, including increased wage top-ups, child care bursaries, increased subsidy rates, space creation incentives, staff attraction, and subsidies for stay-at-home parents. In 2005, a new Targeted Major Capital Grants Program began supporting project costs to create new licensed child care spaces by non-profit providers in communities.

British Columbia

In 2005, improvements to British Columbia's Child Care Subsidy Program included increases in family subsidies and in the qualifying annual income threshold. In 2006, the Government of British Columbia committed to fund the child care subsidy on a continuous basis, and exempted the federal Universal Child Care Benefit from the income test for subsidy. In 2007, the provincial government improved the subsidy rate system for kindergarten children and increased subsidy rates for school-age children (http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/subsidy_promo.htm)... In 2006-2007, significant funds for Quality Improvement Enhancements were provided to facilities to support licensed child care providers with operating costs. Funding was allocated to develop and expand 22 neighbourhood hubs for early years' programs by co-locating and integrating early years' services for families. In 2007, there were over 86,000 licensed child care spaces receiving on-going funding through the Child Care Operating Fund — nearly a 20 percent increase since the launch of the program in 2003-2004. British Columbia's Supported Child Development Program enables more than 5,800 children with special needs to participate in child care settings (see http://www.cf.gov.bc.ca/spec_needs/scd.htm for more information). In 2007, partnerships facilitated the creation of child care spaces in social housing developments, eliminating some barriers to child care, employment, and schooling for vulnerable families. Investments have been made to support Young Parent Programs (YPP) to assist young parents in completing secondary education and to access parenting resources while receiving YPP licensed infant/toddler child care. Investments were increased for community-based Family Resource Programs (FRPs), for families to strengthen parenting skills and access stimulating environments for children....



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