



## ONTARIO CHILD CARE CONSULTATIONS, DEC.2016/JAN.2017

### **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

Ontario is currently having child care consultations both on online and in person.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/consultation-early-years-and-child-care-strategy> includes the discussion paper, *Building a Better Future: A Discussion Paper for Transforming Early Years and Child Care in Ontario*

### **ONLINE CONSULTATION:**

<https://www.ontario.ca/form/early-years-and-child-care-strategy> CLOSING DATE **JAN.15, 2017**

They are looking for experience and ideas, among others. **Two main questions:**

- What can governments, communities, employers and providers do to increase access to childcare and early years programs?
- Please share any other ideas you have on how to make child care better in Ontario.

### **IN PERSON CONSULTATIONS:**

The questions here are somewhat different. Please link to discussion paper below

Dec.12	Milton Sports Center, Banquet Room	7-9pm
Dec.13	Peterborough Evinrude Centre Banquet Facility	7-9pm
Dec.15	Kitchener Victoria Hill Community Centre	7-9pm
Jan.16	Ottawa Shaw Centre	7-9pm
Jan.17	Kingston St. Lawrence College, Davies Hall	7-9pm
Jan.23	London Centennial Hall	7-9pm

### **CONSULTATION DOCUMENT:**

*Building a Better Future: A Discussion Paper for Transforming Early Years and Child Care in Ontario, November 2016*

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/building-better-future-discussion-paper-transforming-early-years-and-child-care-ontario>

### **WHAT THEY<sup>1</sup> KNOW AS WRITTEN IN THE CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

- “Ontario has long recognized the importance of quality learning experiences for our

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<sup>1</sup> THEY – Early Years Division, Ministry of Education

- **youngest learners”** (pg.2)
- early years programs can support children’s developments in three areas:
  - academic achievement
  - health and well-being
  - lifelong success... (pg.2-3)
- clear **economic benefit** (pg.3)
- **accessible and affordable** child care options support economic empowerment for women, be it in the labour force or in post-secondary education (pg.3)
- emphasize the importance of **play- and inquiry-based learning** (pg.6)
- recognize the value of **culturally-appropriate** early years and child care programs in First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities (pg.7)
- the **demand for child care exceeds the supply**, especially for children aged 0-4; 20% have access to licensed child care (pg.8)
- **access and affordability are significant challenges** (pg.8)
- **struggle to find flexible** care (pg.8)
- Both urban and rural ... **difficult to find infant and toddler spaces”** (pg.8)

### WHAT THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION HAS DONE

- Full-day kindergarten
- Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014
- \$120 million to create 4000 new child care spaces; \$100 million in child and family programs
- Supporting the use of schools as community hubs
- Providing wage enhancements to staff working in licensed child care settings
- Special needs resourcing funding
- Ban on fees for waiting lists
- Expanding before and after school care for 6-12 years olds

### WHAT THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION WANTS TO DO

- Create a renewed early years and child care policy framework to guide the next phase of work
- 100,000 new licensed spaces over 5 years (20,000/year)
- spaces for 40% of children by 2021 (2015 – 20%)
- Key pillars to the renewed vision:
  - **Access** to licensed child care and early years programs;
  - **Responsiveness** to needs of families and children through early years programs and child care in schools, communities, workplaces and at home;
  - **Affordability** for families that need support;
  - **Quality** programs that contribute to healthy child development measured through established province-wide outcomes (pg.10)

### WHAT THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION IS ASKING OF PARENTS, CAREGIVERS AND THE COMMUNITY

- **Access** – what are the strengths of current system, problems and what can be done?
- **Responsiveness** – what are the strengths, and what can be done to make it better?

- **Affordability** – what does affordability look like; strengths and weakness of subsidy model in Ontario; what can government, communities, providers and employers do to make early years program more affordable?
- **Quality** – what is "high quality"; what role for province; how to measure quality?

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

- Toronto has the highest:
  - median infant fees at \$1,649 a month, or \$19,788 a year, more than twice what Ontario university students pay in tuition fees.
  - toddler fees at \$1,375 a month.
  - preschool fees in the country at \$1,150 a month
- Seven cities (Kitchener, Calgary, Vaughan, Markham, Ottawa, Mississauga and London) are not far behind with fees close to \$1,000 a month
- Markham and Vaughan, both suburbs of Toronto, monthly infant fees are \$1,454 and \$1,363 respectively.
- “Three things are clear from three years of surveying child care fees in Canada’s big cities.
  - fees vary significantly across the country; they are the lowest in provinces that set the fees provincially and they are highest in the cities where the market determines the price.
  - fees continue to rise rapidly, constraining the budgets of parents with young children.
  - low-income parents pay out of pocket for considerable sums in many of the cities surveyed (if they can afford to use regulated child care). This includes cities in provinces using both fee subsidy systems and those with set fees and base funding.”

*A growing concern: 2016 child care fees in Canada’s big cities,*  
David Macdonald & Martha Friendly Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

<https://www.policyalternatives.ca/growing-concern>

- 2012 national survey - Ontario median fees with \$1152 for an infant, \$925 for a toddler and \$835 for a pre-schooler.
- Municipal and regional governments play a major role in Ontario, responsible for planning and managing child care services, fee subsidies.
- 2014 – regulated space for 17.7% of 0-12 and 23% of children 0-5; 24% is owned by private, for-profit organizations

<http://findingqualitychildcare.ca/ontario>

## **WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE CONSULTATIONS**

### **Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development**

- The first initiative was for ages 4 to 12 with full-day kindergarten and extended day programming. Now there is also more programming for the 6-12 years old.
- “new spaces without addressing affordability will only result in empty spaces”
- Suggestions:
  - Provide funding for 2-4 years old with 15 hours a week of preschool programming
  - Remove the “activity” requirement for child care subsidy
    - **NOTE** - Toronto - 3 months unemployed, and 4 weeks after birth of another baby
  - Enshrine within Education Act a requirement to ensure that community schools are configured to accommodate the services for younger children
  - Provide municipal flexibility to address affordability and capacity in a planned approach based on local circumstance
  - Develop a strategy for meaningful parental leave in both length and level of income – a made-in-Ontario parental leave policy

### **Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care**

- Share your experience at the consultations
- Access to child care depends on convenient location, affordable fees, good quality programs and a system that is simple to navigate
- Quality: well-trained, well-compensated workforce is the key to child care; studies show that there is a quality advantage in the public/non-profit care
- System development needs a vision and long term goals
- Ontario has the highest fees in the country
- In Toronto licensed child care was unaffordable for 75% of families

### **Shared Framework for building an early childhood education and care system (ECEC) for all – Campaign 2000, Canadian Child Care Federation, Childcare Resource and Research Unit, Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada**

- ECEC is a public good and human right
- Requires long-term sustained funding – capital and operating
- System-building and policy and system development shared by federal/provincial/territorial and local governments, with stakeholders

### **CFUW National, Dec.1, 2016**

CFUW has been advocating for universal, accessible, affordable, publicly-funded child care since 1972. Our clubs have worked tirelessly to rally the voices of children and families around the need for high quality, affordable child care. CFUW is calling for a national program, in cooperation with all levels of government, to provide nationally regulated and affordable early-learning and child care.

- Recommendations:
  - Follow through on the Government promise towards the creation of a quality, affordable, universally accessible and comprehensive early learning and childcare program
    - emphasizing the development of the whole child that includes a variety

- of services to meet the needs and preferences of families;
  - that involves all levels of government through costsharing mechanisms, as in other human services such as health, education and social programs;
  - that recognizes the importance of cultural and linguistic diversity and of family types and needs.
- Public Funding: providing adequate, dedicated and sustained child care transfers directly to provinces and territories;
- Public Planning: requiring provincial and territorial childcare plans, with timelines and targets to reduce parent fees, to raise staff wages and to provide adequate resources to meet the needs of the community; policy based on evidence and best practices.

## **WHAT IS HAPPENING ELSEWHERE**

### **Alberta**

\$25-a-day daycare pilot project coming to 18 Alberta early learning child care centres

By Karen Bartko Global News, Nov.15, 2016

The Alberta government is launching a \$10-million pilot project that will allow 18 Alberta early learning child care (ELCC) centres to offer daycare at a maximum of \$25 a day.

The province said the project will create an estimated 1,000 new child care spaces and up to 230 new child care jobs. It may also help some families save hundreds of dollars a month.

...

“Improving access to child care will support more women to remain in or enter the workforce,” Minister of Status of Women Stephanie McLean said. “[Tuesday’s] investment will improve the lives of women and move us one step closer to equality in Alberta.”

## **CFUW TELLING OUR STORIES PROJECT**

<http://www.cfuwadmin.org/AdvocacyResolutions/NationalInitiatives/EarlyLearningandChildCare.aspx>

### **Child Care: Stories from Our Community**

#### **GUIDELINES**

So, your club has decided to take on childcare as an advocacy issue! National Office has created several documents to help you be effective in your advocacy. One tool is Childcare: Stories from Our Community. Once filled in, your club can use this document to illustrate the real need for childcare in your community – and by extension, Canada. We recommend filling in this template with short stories about how real people have experienced the current childcare system (or lack thereof). CFUW club members can share their own stories, or ask their neighbours, children and friends. These questions are meant to elicit the lived experience of people who could not access adequate childcare, and the consequences of the limited access.

Here are some sample questions to get your discussion started

- What's your experience with childcare?
- What kind of barriers have you encountered when attempting to access child care?
- Have you been able to access the type of child care you want?
- Have you had to make any compromises (in your budget, family arrangements, career) to accommodate childcare?
- How has your childcare arrangement impacted other aspects of your life?

We recommend telling these stories using short quotes from people. If you opt to use names, make sure you have permission!

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## **APPENDIX**

### **RELEVANT CFUW & CFUW ONTARIO COUNCIL POLICY**

#### **Early Childhood Education and Care 2006**

Revised Resolution (Original Resolution 1994)

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women reaffirm its existing policy and urge the Government of Canada to give priority to the **creation of a quality, universally accessible and comprehensive early learning and child care program which emphasizes the development of the whole child**. Funding for this initiative should involve all levels of government through cost-sharing mechanisms, as in other human services such as health, education and social programs.

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#### **Child Care - Standards and Criteria 1988**

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge:

1. the Government of Canada to include in its National Strategy on Child Care national and well-defined standards and criteria including a safe and healthy environment, parental participation in decision-making, approved child/staff ratios, and inspection and licensing of all facilities; and
2. Provincial / Territorial governments to ensure that salaries be consistent with professional training, experience and responsibility

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#### **Child Care and Early Learning 1987**

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge the Government of Canada to commit itself, through social and economic policies, **to facilitate the provision of an adequate supply of affordable, accessible child care facilities, which fulfil the purposes of providing a safe, healthy, physical, social, emotional and intellectual development**.

## **ONTARIO COUNCIL**

### **Child Care - Position Paper 1987**

RESOLVED: That the following position paper of the Canadian Federation of University Women/Ontario Council on Child Care be accepted.

#### Position Paper:

1. We recommend a program for child care be introduced to work towards development of child care which would be:
  - accessible and affordable to Ontario families no matter what their income, employment status or where they live and work;
  - comprehensive and flexible enough to meet their families needs;
  - developed with parent and community participation to meet the social; physical, language and intellectual needs of their children in a caring and safe environment;
  - developed to ensure optimal use of public funds and public accountability.
2. We recommend that the federal government provide direct grants to the provinces and territories to stabilize current child care services, encourage growth of new services, provide for new and special needs, and improve wages and benefits of child care workers.
3. We recommend that the federal government introduce a "Child Care and Family Support Services Act", dealing with cost-shared funding by the federal government and the provinces and territories for child care.
4. We recommend that the government encourage by way of funding, development of new child care services in regions where child care services are inadequate or non-existent such as rural, remote and native communities.
5. We recommend that the government establish a "child care development fund" for the next five years to encourage new services targeted at: special needs such as children at risk, disabled children, immigrant groups and teen-age parents;
  - development of family support services including parenting skills and educational programs and resource materials;
  - development of early childhood educational materials for research;
  - new opportunities for early childhood education and caregiver training.
  - We recommend the establishment of a Secretariat for Children within Health and Welfare Canada to promote the above goals and to administer funding.

#### ADDENDUM

We recognize that paragraphs # 2, 3 and 6 are recommendations dealing with federal jurisdiction. However, we did not feel comfortable omitting these items and leaving a half formed slate of ideas. Child care must be an issue tackled by federal provincial and municipal governments. Having included these paragraphs, however, we reaffirm our mandate as Ontario Council is for PROVINCIAL ACTION WITHIN ONTARIO, and we neither attempt to set policy for nor to lobby on behalf of CFUW at the federal level.