



Letter
on
Early Learning and Child Care
submitted to
The Honourable Marie Bountrogianni
Minister of Children and Youth Services
Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
6th Floor, 400 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M7A 2R9

March 4, 2005

By the

Ontario Council
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Submitted by

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Hon. Marie Bountrogianni, MPP
Minister of Children and Youth Services
Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
400 University Ave, 6th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 2R9

Ottawa, 4 March , 2005

Re: Child Care in Ontario

Dear Ms. Bountrogianni,

Our organization, the Ontario Council of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW/Ontario Council), shares the OECD concerns about child care in Ontario, and we submit that in 2005, it is time that a solution be found that will make available publicly funded quality day care that integrates early learning to all young Ontario children. We regret that the recent federal - provincial summit did not arrive at a definite agreement and we call on the Ontario Government to try anew to find a way to bridge the federal, provincial and territorial divide.

Our members have been concerned about the provision of quality child care and have expressed that concern in CFUW policy since 1978. We support the child care goals of quality, universality, and development, as well as affordability and accountability. We have over the past years asked previous federal, provincial and territorial governments

“...through social and economic policies, to facilitate the provision of an adequate supply of affordable, accessible child care facilities, which fulfill the purposes of providing a safe, healthy, physical, social, emotional and intellectual development. (1987)”

“as well as creating “well-defined standards and criteria” (1988)

In 1994 CFUW reaffirmed its existing policy (CFUW policies, Appendix A) and urged all levels of government

“to give priority to the creation of a quality universal, comprehensive and accessible child care system, which is neither free nor compulsory, but emphasizes the development of the child; the funding to involve all levels of government by establishing cost sharing mechanisms, as in other human services such as health, education and social programmes(1994)”.

Early learning and child care offer benefits to the child, the parents and to society as a whole. The Mustard-McCain Report showed clearly that, “Brain development in the period from conception to six years sets a base for learning, behaviour and health over the life cycle.The better the care and stimulation a child receives, the greater the benefit – for the national economy as well as the child.” The young child is better prepared for school and, in turn, ultimately better prepared to achieve intellectually and economically in life, which is of benefit to the child and the province.

Early learning and child care will also allow both parents of young children to continue their employment, and thus contribute to the financial well being of their family and of the country.

Our members recognize that stable well-trained staff is essential to the proper development and care of young children and have been asking the provincial/ territorial governments to ensure

“that salaries be consistent with professional training, experience and responsibility. (1988)”

We commend your Ministry's Best Start Program and we welcome plans for a College of Early Childhood Educators which will set standards as well as advise on salaries and working conditions for staff.

CFUW Ontario Council expects that all of Ontario's share of the Child Care and Early Learning funds that have been offered by the Government of Canada in its recent budget will be used by your ministry for its intended purpose, to create a programme needed by Ontario's children and their parents. Such a child care program will go towards stemming, what Dr. Fraser Mustard called, the “real brain drain”.

CFUW Ontario Council is made up of approximately 6000 women university graduates from all the regions of Ontario. We are totally member - funded. Our members live in 58 Ontario communities (Appendix B), in big urban areas as well as in rural and northern towns. We are non - partisan and non- sectarian. When voting on policy each of our clubs has one vote so that the voice of members from Thunder Bay and Renfrew and St. Thomas have the same weight as those from the Toronto and Ottawa areas. This results in well-balanced policies that may be embraced by most Ontarians.

We are business women, scientists, teachers, university professors, nurses and physicians, seed specialists and engineers, farm women and artists and accountants, wives, daughters, mothers and grandmothers. All put their skills and education at the service of their community, and work

- in all public affairs
- for a high standard in public education,
- for the improvement of the status of women in Ontario, and
- to ensure human rights in the province.

We are not a charitable fund raising organisation. Our clubs in Ontario, nevertheless, award more than \$200,000 annually in scholarships and bursaries to students in all the regions of our province as well as to charitable and cultural causes.

We are part of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) and have links to the International Federation of University Women (IFUW)

Yours sincerely,

Edeltraud Neal
President, CFUW/Ontario Council

Appendix A



Some Canadian Federation of University Women Policy on Child Care

Note : CFUW /Ontario Council Policy integrates CFUW/ Ontario Council policy, as well as that of the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) and the International Federation of University Women (IFUW).

CFUW /Ontario Council Policy

1987 Child Care

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.

CFUW Policy

1978 Child Care

RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women urge provincial and territorial governments to ensure increased financial support for quality day care, including day care for infants, private home day care, lunch and after-school programs, as well as licensed day care centres.

1987 Child Care

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.

1988 Child Care - Standards and Criteria

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.

1994 Child Care

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 universal, comprehensive and accessible child care system, which is neither free nor compulsory, but emphasizes the development of the child; the funding to involve all levels of government by establishing cost sharing mechanisms, as in other human services such as health, education and social programs.

Prepared March 4, 2005

Appendix B



Ontario Council of The Canadian Federation of University Women Club Locations

Ajax - Pickering	Leaside - East York	Renfrew & District
Aurora - Newmarket	London	Sarnia Lambton
Barrie & District	Markham- Unionville	Saugeen
Belleville & District	Milton & District	Scarborough
Brampton	Mississauga	Southport
Brantford	Muskoka	St. Catharines
Brockville & District	Nepean	St. Thomas
Burlington	Niagara Falls	Stratford
Cambridge	Norfolk	Sudbury
Chatham -Kent	North Bay	Thunder Bay
Cornwall & District	North Toronto	Toronto
Etobicoke	North York	Vaughan
Georgetown	Northumberland	Welland & District
Grimsby	Oakville	Weston & District
Guelph	Orangeville & District	Windsor
Haliburton Highlands	Orillia	
Hamilton	Orleans	
Kanata	Oshawa & District	
Kincardine	Ottawa	
Kingston	Owen Sound & Area	
Kitchener - Waterloo	Perth	
	Peterborough	