

Submission by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) to the Ministry of Education Consultation on Child Care and Early Years Strategy ^[1]

Author: Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)

Source: Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)

Publication Date: 30 Jan 2017

AVAILABILITY

Full submission PDF ^[2]

Introduction

CUPE Ontario represents 240,000 workers in municipalities, health care, school boards, social services, child care and post-secondary education. CUPE has a keen interest in early childhood education and child care (ECEC) for three main reasons. First, we represent ECEC workers across these diverse settings. Second, child care affects our own members who are parents and grandparents. Finally, high quality, publicly-funded, public and not-for-profit child care for all is a key social justice issue and a crucial strategy for addressing the gender wage gap.

CUPE has a long history of fighting for child care with our labour and community partners. From CUPE's perspective, high-quality ECEC for all children is in our collective best interests. As such, we were pleased to hear of the government's intention to create 100,000 new child care spaces in Ontario. This is an opportunity to begin a transition from a mismatched patchwork of market-based services to a cohesive system of quality child care that all families can afford, access that that meets their needs.

In principle, CUPE supports the pillars of access, responsiveness, affordability and quality that have been identified by the government. This is with several caveats:

- Services must be made available to all children regardless of income, family type, where they live, ability or disability, ethnicity or race.
- Expansion of spaces does not occur in the for-profit child care sector, where public resources are directed toward corporate profits with resulting negative impacts on quality care.
- A workforce strategy be a core component of a renewed framework for early years and child care to address the low wages, and poor working conditions that make it difficult to recruit and retain child care workers.

The reality is that the pillars interrelate: access is integrally linked to affordability—families do not have access to child care if fees make it unaffordable; responsiveness and access go hand in hand—if child care services are not available to shift and/or precarious workers, you have neither a responsive nor accessible system; quality and responsiveness connect—quality and responsive programming is best achieved with a workforce of child care workers with good wages, benefits and working conditions.

Our more detailed response to the consultation [see above link] will include some cross over in addressing the four pillars given their overlap.

Region: Ontario ^[3]

Tags: government consultation ^[4]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/17/02/submission-canadian-union-public-employees-cupe-ministry>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/17/02/submission-canadian-union-public-employees-cupe-ministry> ^[2]

https://cupe.ca/sites/cupe/files/final_submission_new_child_care_spaces_2017_01_27.pdf [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7856> [4]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/government-consultation>