

Today's letters: Support Canadian hockey teams, and praising child-care plan ^[1]

Letter to the editor

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AVAILABILITY

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EXCERPTS

Child-care plan a step forward for Ontario

Our government recently took a big step forward to transform the way we deliver licensed child care in Ontario, announcing a \$200-million investment to expand access and make it more affordable.

It was a decisive step towards delivering on our historic commitment to double the number of spaces in Ontario and give 100,000 more kids, up to age four, access to child care.

The announcement to create 24,000 new, licensed child-care spaces in 2017-18 was applauded across the province. But Randall Denley disagreed; he does a disservice to Ontario families struggling to find affordable, quality child care.

Our announcement will help middle-income families. By investing more in child-care subsidies, we are bringing down the costs of quality licensed care across the province. With a subsidy, an eligible family in Ottawa, making \$60,000 per year, with an infant in licensed child care could save more than 50 per cent on their fees.

Our consultations told us that affordability and accessibility were the top concerns. That's why we're taking action immediately, and developing long-term solutions with a renewed child-care framework.

We will keep working hard on behalf of Ontario families to help them succeed and give our kids the best possible start in life.

Indira Naidoo-Harris, Ontario's Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care, Milton

Denley's case contradictory

Randall Denley's child-care piece is mystifying, especially for a former Conservative candidate. He seems to be saying that Ontario childcare is "a mess" because it isn't accessible to all families, leaving out the middle class. He also touts Quebec's publicly funded approach, observing correctly that it's fairer, more affordable and accessible, albeit costing much more provincial money.

So it's hard to understand why he takes issue with the Ontario government's promise to transform child care, committing much more money, increasing spaces where they're needed and making child care more affordable so more parents who need it can use it.

Many of us are hoping that quality will be strengthened too — better support and decent wages for the "specialized staff" and good staff-child ratios that research shows are needed for children to benefit. As an advocate for fairer, accessible, affordable child care for all families (we have this in common) his lack of enthusiasm seems counter-intuitive.

Martha Friendly, executive director, Childcare Resource and Research Unit, Toronto

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Region: Canada ^[3]

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