

Childcare, co-production and the third sector in Canada ^[1]

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Request online through Research Gate ^[2]

Abstract

This paper reviews Canada's market-based childcare 'system' and considers its capacity to deliver universal services. Canada mainly relies on parent-controlled centres for delivery, in the near absence of publicly-provided services. Canadian childcare is characterized by frustrated national and provincial policy capacity, a high degree of commercial childcare, inequities in service distribution, and the burdening of parent-users (particularly mothers). This form of co-production poses considerable problems for the federal government, which has recently declared its intention to build a national system of early learning and care. The policy architecture makes a national system of early learning and childcare structurally unobtainable. This gap between political vision and local feasibility is explained through an analysis of service delivery, management and policy development. The paper concludes that co-production must shift if Canada is to implement a universal early learning and childcare program, but warns such change does not appear to be forthcoming.

Related link:

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