

Political will, child care, and Canadian federalism ^[1]

Author: Cameron, B.

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EXCERPTS

Discussions about moving forward around child care too often seem to end up in squabbles between the federal and provincial governments around who has responsibility for what. The fundamental problem, however, is not the constitutional division of powers; it is political will. If there is the will, the constitution provides plenty of space for governments, either federal or provincial, to act — and the space to take the initiative independently of one another or together. This article outlines the scope for action on child care services available to federal and provincial governments within Canada's federal system of government. It then considers some of the complications of the federal division of powers, particularly as they relate to the federal spending power, and concludes with some observations about how to deal with these complications.

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