

Affordable child care for all is long overdue: Sign the petition ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

[Access petition online](#) ^[2]

EXCERPTS

Over the last year, the impact of COVID-19 has been devastating for women.

Not only have women been disproportionately affected by lockdown-related job losses, the closures of school and daycare centres have made the pre-existing crisis of unaffordable and inaccessible child care worse — creating an even greater burden for those with children.

The statistics are grim: in Canada, mothers were 12 times more likely to leave their jobs in the past year to care for their children than fathers — and those rates are even higher among racialized and immigrant women.

In fact, women's participation in paid employment has dropped to levels not seen since the 1980s.

Without bold action in the next year, we face a significant rollback of women's hard-won progress in all sectors.

So far, federal and provincial investments in child care have consistently fallen short, leading to a shortage of affordable, accessible, and high-quality child care across the country.

What's more, early childhood educators — most often women — continue to be driven out of the child care sector because of low pay, causing existing child care spaces to sit empty without qualified educators to staff programs.

The need for reliable and affordable child care in Canada has never been more urgent.

Women and their families can't wait

Right now, we have a unique opportunity to collectively push for a national action plan that addresses Canada's current "she-cession" — a term acknowledging how women have been hit hardest by job and income losses during COVID-19.

By strengthening public investments in child care — and ensuring fair wages for child care workers — our government can enable more women to get back to paid work, while also creating more and better jobs in the female-dominated care sector.

As the Canadian government prepares a formal Action Plan on Women and the Economy this spring, they must commit to increased investments in the creation of more and safer child care spaces, with the goal of offering child care for all by 2030.

To make this goal a reality, Canada's federal government must invest an initial \$2 billion to early learning and child care (ELCC) in 2021, with an increase of \$2 billion each year until 2030.

Momentum for bold action

To address the "she-cession", Canada's government has made clear commitments to implementing a feminist recovery, including a new gender equality task force to advise on the 2021 federal.

Importantly, Canada has established a Feminist Response and Recovery Fund — one of the recommendations YWCA Canada called for in our Feminist Economic Recovery Plan. Just recently, our CEO Maya Roy was also appointed to the federal government's women-only task force, making it clear that we have their ear — and the momentum.

We are within striking distance of monumental changes for women, the economy, and affordable child care for all.

With your voice, we can hold the federal government to their promises, while building on the momentum from other wins around women's equality this past year.

Please join us in demanding critical investments in affordable child care now.

Sign the petition [HERE](#) ^[2]

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