Advocating to ensure governments make affordable child care available for all is a collective responsibility [1]



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One year ago, the Government of Canada entered into a new five-year child care funding agreement with the BC government, providing the first installment of federal money to make licensed early learning and child care programs more affordable, accessible and inclusive. The Government of Canada quickly reached similar agreements with other provincial and territorial governments, except Quebec, whose "asymmetrical" agreement is funding the province's plan to add 30,000 spaces to its low-fee child care system.

While there is yet to be a full public accounting of how the federal child care funds have been used to date, we know every government has focused mainly on spending measures intended to make fees for licensed child care more affordable for parents. Given the rapid rise in the cost of living and the fact that child care fees take up so much household income for parents, that's a welcome and important objective. Most parents who are able to secure a licensed child care space will see fee relief – often substantial – over the next few years.

But overall, the results of these federally funded measures are so far mixed. How successful they are in moving towards "affordability" and which households benefit depends largely on what approach the provincial and territorial government has taken, and on how affordability is defined.

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternative's most recent annual child care parent fee report, <u>Game Changer</u>, reiterated the important point that the federal government's 2021 budget articulated the principle of affordability as a reduction in average parent fees. The budget, which set out a plan to use the federal spending power to establish a Canada-wide

Morna Ballantyne

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Зрр

In this BRIEFing NOTE, Child Care Now's executive director Morna Ballantyne provides commentary on the rollout of the Canada-Wide Early Learning Child Care (CWELCC) program. She points out the importance of the details of implementation for the program's success, arguing that affordability for all, expansion of non-profit and public programs and addressing the widespread shortage of early childhood educators by raising wages and working conditions are all critical.

Attachment

Size

Advocating to ensure governments make affordable child care available for all is a collective responsibility [2]

203.98 KB

Tags: Canada-wide agreements [3] wages and working conditions [4] child care expansion [5]

BRIEFing NOTES

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