


Rock-a-bye, Brian: The national strategy on child care ^[1]

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Child care has been the major piece of social policy offered by the Conservative government since it came to power in 1984. The need for non-parental care of Canadian children has risen dramatically as more women are engaged, by necessity or choice, in full-time employment outside the home and as the number of single parent families increases with escalating divorce rates. When the Royal Commission on the Status of Women first gave child care saliency on the agenda of social issues in 1970, 20 per cent of women with children under the age of 14 years were in the labour force. By 1987, this figure had jumped to 65 per cent. While there were 243,545 licensed day care spaces in Canada in 1987, of which approximately 125,000 were government subsidized, it is estimated there were more than 1.9 million children under the age of 13 who had potential need of some type of supervision because their parents worked or studied outside the home. The existing system of licensed child care, thus, meets about 13 per cent of the need in Canada.

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