

# Government urged to 'completely rethink' focus of childcare from needs of adults to children <sup>[1]</sup>

Early Childhood Ireland says policy has been 'underpinned by economic requirements' for years

**Author:** Pope, Conor

**Source:** The Irish Times

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 20 Aug 2023

## AVAILABILITY

Access online <sup>[2]</sup>

## Excerpts

The young people of Ireland are being let down because of a decades-long focus on the provision of childcare for economic reasons instead of looking more at what the needs of the children are, according to Early Childhood Ireland.

The advocacy and support group has called on the Government and policymakers to "completely rethink" their approach to early years and school age care.

According to its director of policy Frances Byrne, childcare policy has, for years, been "underpinned by economic requirements, rather than what children need and deserve".

Ms Byrne suggested that the emphasis has been on "facilitating parents' access to the workforce and providing a much-needed service for adults [but] in the midst of all that, the rights of the child have been neglected".

Commenting in advance of the reopening of many early years settings this week after the summer break, Ms Byrne suggested that the "consequences of this failure have been well-documented: salary rates are low but costs for parents are high".

She also noted how many settings "struggle to attract and retain staff; and some children are not getting access to the quality early years education they deserve".

Ms Byrne suggested that the upcoming budget gives the Government "an opportunity to completely rethink the approach they take to early years care and education".

...

"Ireland now needs a plan to create a unified, publicly-funded model of early years care that incentivises the recruitment and retention of a graduate workforce, is affordable and accessible for parents, and – crucially – places children's rights and wellbeing at its heart."

Ms Byrne concluded by saying the Government has promised a "children's budget" for 2024 and "must put children's rights at the heart of everything".

"For too long, we have let the needs of adults dictate the type of care delivered to our children. It is time, now, for us to recognise that our children deserve so much more."

**Region:** Europe <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** reconceptualization <sup>[4]</sup>

public policy <sup>[5]</sup>

child's rights <sup>[6]</sup>

**Source URL (modified on 21 Aug 2023):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/23/08/government-urged-%E2%80%98completely-rethink%E2%80%99-focus-childcare-needs-adults>

## Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/23/08/government-urged-%E2%80%98completely-rethink%E2%80%99-focus-childcare-needs-adults> [2] <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/social-affairs/2023/08/20/government-urged-to-completely-rethink-focus-of-childcare-from-needs-of-adults-to-children/> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/europe> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9193> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/public-policy> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/childs-rights>