

Manitoba Child Care Association hopes to make child care priority in provincial election ^[1]

Author: Dawkins, Glen

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Excerpts

The Manitoba Child Care Association is hoping to make child care a priority in the upcoming provincial election and they took to the streets Tuesday evening to get their message across.

After gathering at the Manitoba Legislative Building, representatives from MCCA, Early Childhood Educators, and parents spoke to the crowd before leading the march down Broadway.

“We know that over the last three years one of the greatest lessons from the global pandemic is simply this, everybody relies on someone who relies on child care,” said MCCA Executive Director Jodie Kehl, speaking prior to the rally and march. “Whether Manitobans personally need to use child care, unequivocally they rely on someone who does so we’re asking Manitobans: First, to please get out there and vote on Oct. 3 because their voices are important; Second, be informed. We as an association are asking the hard questions of the parties, asking how they’re going to continue to support child care in Manitoba to make it the successful system it needs to be; and third, we want Manitobans to be champions for child care. Understand the platforms, ask the hard questions and I’m sure that Manitobans will make child care a priority in this election.”

...

While the government has started to invest in Manitoba’s Early Learning and Child Care Sector, it is not enough to address the shortage of Early Childhood Educators or to provide affordable, accessible, and quality child care for all Manitobans, MCCA said in a release.

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“I think that as we have moved to a far more affordable child care system in Manitoba with an average of \$10 a day, what families are quickly understanding is that affordable child care does not guarantee a space. As the child care fees have been reduced, there’s more and more families that would like access to child care but wait lists at facilities have exploded.”

Child care waitlists have increased by 100%, with parents waiting up to five years to get their child into a licensed child care facility. Many facilities have had to close their wait lists out of recognition that it is futile to put families on a list when they will never get a space, Kehl said.

“The other key part that we really want to keep sharing with everyone is that in order for the system to be successful, we need to prioritize the workforce,” Kehl said. “Because new spaces will be empty spaces without Early Childhood Educators. They really are the cornerstone on which the system needs to be built upon for it to be successful for Manitobans in every part of this province.”

Related link: NDP vow to make \$10-a-day child care available over summers, holidays for school-age children ^[3]

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