

Good food policy and a national child care program. What are the links?^[1]

Food Secure Canada's 9th National Assembly

Author: Friendly, M. & Ferns, C.


Source: Childcare Resource and Research Unit

Format: Report

Publication Date: 14 Oct 2016

AVAILABILITY

Access the PDF document attached below

Attachment	Size
 Food Secure presentation ELCC.pdf ^[2]	1.27 MB

Excerpts

Our starting points

- “Food is a cultural, social, educational and aesthetic experience, as well as a necessity for good health.” – Peter Moss.
- Good meals are an essential part of good early learning and care.
- Good food policy should be part of a good child care policy.

...

Current policy context

- Provincial/territorial licensing regulations lay out requirements for food provision in regulated child care programs.

...

Provincial/territorial context con't.

- A few provinces require menus to be posted.
- Even the provinces that do require centres to provide meals, do not require them to be prepared on site.
- Generally, PT's require centres to “follow the Canada Food Guide” when food is provided.

As a result...

- There is great variation in the food and meal experiences provided in licensed child care programs.
 - Some provide meals on-site
 - Some require parents to send boxed lunches.
- Some programs have on-site kitchens and cooks on staff to prepare meals. Others use outside catering.

Despite this context

- Some programs provide excellent food and meal experiences.
- Good child care programs view food and meals as part of the pedagogical process not separate from it.
- Growing food, preparing it, sharing it and enjoying it are integral parts of the care and education of young children.

Beyond box lunches and the *Canada Food Guide*...

- At their most rigorous, child care licensing standards specify adherence to the *Canada Food Guide* as the pinnacle of good food.
- So while good child care programs recognize the importance of growing, cooking and eating fresh, local and culturally appropriate food, this is far from the norm.
- How do we make good, healthy food the norm in early learning and child care?

...

Reconciliation and the role of ECEC

- The Truth and Reconciliation called upon “the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.”

- An Assembly of First Nations survey found that 78% of children up to the age of five have no access to licensed child care.

...

Linking national child care policy and national food policy

- Good child care programs that already go beyond basic policy requirements can serve as models for school food programs. These programs:
 - integrate food, food systems and curriculum;
 - value the nutritional and social aspects of food and meal times;
 - value the care of children as a key part of their education.
- Good food needs to be seen as *part* of the child care system that we're aiming for. Good food policy needs to be incorporated into child care policy.

Related link: Child Care and Learning Centre food sustainability report ^[3]

Europe, children and food ^[4]

Region: Canada ^[5]

Tags: food ^[6]

food culture ^[7]

meal-times ^[8]

Truth and Reconciliation ^[9]

Source URL (modified on 20 Sep 2023): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/23/09/good-food-policy-and-national-child-care-program-what-are>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/23/09/good-food-policy-and-national-child-care-program-what-are> [2]

<https://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/Food%20Secure%20presentation%20ELCC.pdf> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/23/09/child-care-and-learning-centre-food-sustainability-report> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/23/09/europe-children-and-food> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/food> [7]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/food-culture> [8] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/meal-times> [9]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9172>