

Child care and extra cash, too [CA] ^[1]

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Source: Toronto Star

Format: Article

Publication Date: 21 Mar 2006

AVAILABILITY
See text below.

EXCERPTS

A deal is a deal and Canada's oldest and largest community agency serving women and girls is not prepared to let Prime Minister Stephen Harper's new Conservative government rip up federal-provincial child care agreements signed last year.

"We are not opposed to income support," YWCA president Paulette Senior said of Harper's promise to replace the national child care initiative with a \$1,200 taxable allowance to parents for every child under six.

"But families also need child care," Senior said.

...

No federal government in recent memory has ever used the standard one-year notice clause to cancel a federal-provincial deal, said Liberal intergovernmental affairs critic John Godfrey (Don Valley West).

...

The YWCA is one of the country's largest child care providers and has been a long-time supporter of a national system. A national study conducted by the YWCA and released yesterday shows that Canadian families, irrespective of where they live or the size of their communities, want a nationally funded public child care system instead of a cash payout.

Harper has said the Conservative plan gives families more personal choice in their child care decisions. But the YWCA study, conducted between the fall of 2004 and the fall of 2005, notes that fewer than 20 per cent of Canadian children have access to licensed child care and without more services, many parents don't have any choice.

...

None of the federal opposition parties are against giving families more money, said Liberal social development critic Carolyn Bennett (St. Paul's).

"But we must de-link the offer of \$1,200 for snow suits or snow boots or other things families need and a child care system," she said.

- reprinted from the Toronto Star

Region: Canada ^[2]

Tags: public opinion ^[3]

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