

# Conservative child care plan needs a close look [CA] <sup>[1]</sup>

Letter to the Editor

**Author:** Genge Harris, Michelle

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## AVAILABILITY

See text below.

## EXCERPTS

Sound bites are very effective. Today's society doesn't have time to dedicate their attention to an entire document, so speechwriters depend on sound bites, dedicating much time and effort towards creating effective phrases that can capture the attention and imagination of the public.

In my view, "\$1,200 per child" is such a sound bite. When Stephen Harper first spoke of this policy, he was careful to qualify that the \$1,200 each family would receive per child would be taxed; but recently (and closer to the election) it is noticeable that the dreaded 'tax' word is no longer used. Although this sounds better for the voting public, it is misleading. While it is true that families will receive the monthly cheques, what most people don't consider is what will happen at income tax time when a percentage of what was received must be paid back to the government. It is also important to note that because this plan increases a family's yearly income, it will reduce the amount that qualifying families will receive in (non-taxable) monthly child tax benefits and the quarterly GST tax credits.

According to the Caledon Institute of Social Policy, the 'biggest losers' would be families who are close to the poverty line. Families who have one parent staying at home and earning \$100,000 would receive the most benefit.

At first, \$1,200 sounds great. But don't bite. This is in no way a replacement for a national child care program.

- reprinted from the Charlottetown Guardian

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