

No strings attached to \$700 million for day care [CA]^[1]

Author: Canadian Press

Source: Canadian Press

Format: Article

Publication Date: 23 Feb 2005

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

The minority Liberals will cut a no-strings-attached cheque for \$700 million to the provinces this year in a drive to launch national child care before an election.

The federal budget tabled Wednesday will create a trust fund that provinces and territories can draw on until the end of this fiscal year.

But Finance officials conceded Ottawa has no way of ensuring the money will actually help frazzled parents find regulated child care.

"This is a sign of good faith as there are still ongoing discussions," aimed at striking a national deal based on federal standards, said an official on background.

As those talks continue, provinces will get a share of the \$700-million fund this year based on population.

"They'll have to account to their constituents," if the money isn't used for child care, said the official.

The Liberals have pledged \$5 billion over five years to set up a national early learning system on par with medicare and public education.

In addition to Wednesday's announcement, another \$700 million is promised next year and \$1.2 billion in each of the next three years _ cash that is in no way guaranteed in a tumultuous electoral climate.

Children's advocates had heard rumours of the tactic and decried it as a short-sighted move that will do nothing to guarantee quality services across Canada.

Dryden failed to reach a national deal earlier this month when Quebec and Alberta refused to sign on. Both provinces want federal cash but say Ottawa should not dictate how it's spent.

Dryden is pressured on the other hand by child advocates and several of his own MPs who say the Liberals should spend much more on child care but should strictly monitor progress.

Pressure on parents is immense.

Seventy per cent of women with children under the age of six have jobs, but there are regulated spaces for fewer than 20 per cent of those kids.

Sharon Gregson of East Vancouver, a single mom of four children aged nine to 20, has struggled for 18 years to find good programs.

"There are times when I know that my children were not getting the quality care that they should have been getting, and so the guilt that went along with that."

Gregson now works as a director of child care services and hopes for a system that everyone can afford.

Many middle-income parents shoulder monthly child-care costs that average about \$1,500 for two kids, she said.

"I think that we as Canadians can do more for our families and for our kids than just put together these inadequate patchworks.

"It's part of the collective good. It's the same reason that my taxes go to support the health care system even though I'm a healthy person."

- reprinted from the Canadian Press

Related link: Federal Budget 2005^[2]

Region: Canada^[3]

Tags: budget^[4]

funding^[5]

federalism^[6]

legislation and regulation^[7]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/05/02/no-strings-attached-700-million-day-care-ca>
Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/05/02/no-strings-attached-700-million-day-care-ca> [2]

<https://childcarecanada.org/documents/online-documents/05/02/federal-budget-2005> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [4]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/budget> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/funding> [6]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/federalism> [7] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/legislation-and-regulation>