

Kira Heineck [CA-ON] ^[1]

People to watch 2005

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EXCERPTS

If Kira Heineck was tired after four intense days during November's national child care conference in Winnipeg, she didn't show it. "Wasn't it great?" she asked a reporter. "But we have so much to do between now and January."

An understatement.

As executive director of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, Heineck heads the biggest provincial child care lobby group in the country, representing 500 organizations and individuals who have lobbied for 22 years for a national child care system. Now Ottawa has pledged \$5 billion for such a plan, and Heineck and other activists want to be sure their advice finds its way into a federal-provincial agreement.

Heineck, 36, joined the coalition in August 2002, after three years in the social justice movement. She has seen both sides of the social divide, serving wealthy guests at her parents' Muskoka hotel and helping some of the most disadvantaged as program director for Ontario Coalition for Social Justice.

Martha Friendly says Heineck's youth, energy and fresh perspective will be crucial in the year ahead. "She's a really good leader, a great communicator and a really nice person."

Heineck has helped turn the organization's \$70,000 deficit into a \$35,000 surplus and expanded provincial membership.

And she wrote the book on entering the corridors of power. In 2003, Heineck published *Woman Power and Politics*, to help women navigate the system.

Her thrill in playing a leading role in a vital new social program is palpable. Her dream, she said, is to become a mom in a country with a national daycare system. "I feel like my whole life has been in training for this job."

- reprinted from the Toronto Star

Tags: advocacy ^[2]

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