

Ontario's advocate for children [CA-ON] ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Marie Bountrogianni brings both personal and professional experience to her new provincial cabinet posts - Minister of Citizenship and Immigration and Minister of Children's Services.

She stepped into politics in 1999 when she was elected as Hamilton Mountain's Liberal MPP, and served as opposition critic for colleges and universities and for women's issues. She was re-elected in 2003 and was appointed as Hamilton's representative in cabinet.

She spoke with The Spectator yesterday.

Spectator: How did the new Children's Service's ministry come about?

Bountrogianni: It came about because the premier was concerned that many families had to go to more than one source to get help and it was very frustrating for them. And it also came about because of advocates. Having it all in one ministry will make it less cumbersome and allow for more flexibility.

Spectator: What are the key issues within the Children's Services ministry?

Bountrogianni: The new ministry includes early child care, healthy babies, prenatal care and children's mental health. I'm building this ministry and so I will receive these programs from the other ministries.

The issue to raise the profile and credibility of early childhood educators is so that the early childhood educators have the respect that they deserve by setting up a college of early childhood educators. It will be a regulatory body like the college of teachers.

- reprinted from the Hamilton Spectator

Region: Ontario ^[2]

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