

Affordable child care needed in Ontario [CA-ON] ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

Dear Editor - I believe that all parents have a strong and common passion to do the best for their children, to do all they can to ensure their children get the best possible care. Sadly, in this province, quality child care is neither accessible nor affordable.

In his April 2003 Throne speech, Premier Ernie Eves stated: "every child in Ontario deserves an excellent education and an equal opportunity for success in life, regardless of economic circumstances, geographic location, ethnic background or religious belief."

However, since the Tories were elected in 1995, they have failed to meet the very basic child care need of families. In Ontario, there are 1,320,000 children with mothers in the workforce, and there are only 167,000 regulated child care spots.

Ontario is alone among the provinces in refusing to spend any of the \$350 million received from the federal government for children's services on licensed child care.

The average cost of a regulated childcare spot in Ontario is in excess of \$6,000 a year. The Tory government was the first ever to cut child care funding, taking \$160 million annually from children and families.

Sadly, high quality, affordable child care in this province is not a matter of choice -- the spaces are neither available nor affordable. This government has shown a consistent lack of commitment to the children and families of this province.

Young children have only a few years to accomplish the growing, learning, and acquiring of skills that they will continue to use throughout their lives. They can't wait. Research and common sense has consistently shown that what a child learns in their early years gives them the tools they need to meet the challenges they face the rest of their lives.

We need to change the attitudes of children as a drain on our system. To put us back on track as a province that cares about our children, it is our voices, as parents, that need to be raised.

Young children cannot represent themselves, they need someone to advocate for making their world a better place -- one that offers every child the opportunity to thrive. Child care is important to the economy of this country. If we as a community ignore the actions that reduce standards of care, we are cheating the future well being of this province.

- reprinted from Guelph Mercury

Region: Ontario ^[2]

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