

CCAAC: Ontario's plan applauded for supporting healthy children AND working families ^[1]

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The Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada (CCAAC) applauds the report called "With our Best Future in Mind - Implementing Early Learning in Ontario." The recommendations made in this report, if implemented, will ensure that the provincial government meets its commitment to integrate early learning and child care programs across Ontario for 4 and 5 year olds. Authored by Charles Pascal, the Premier's Special Advisor on Early Learning, the report reflects research, international evidence and family needs - all of which support universal access to quality programs that provide both part-time and full-time choices for parents.

"We commend the Ontario plan for ending two 'false divides' often created by governments when it comes to early learning and child care," states Susan Harney of the CCAAC. "The plan recognizes what parents already know - 'good child care educates' and 'good education cares'."

Pascal's recommendations end the traditional divide between education and care, integrating early learning and care into one seamless program. The plan also recognizes that we don't need to choose between social and economic benefits, between short and long-term impacts, between meeting the needs of children or their working parents. Pascal's comprehensive recommendations end the false divide between these benefits and impacts, showing that early learning and care programs provide benefits for children, families, communities AND our economy both now AND into the future.

This plan effectively leverages existing public investments in schools, community services and early childhood educators. 'One stop' access to early care and learning opportunities and supports for Ontario families are provided through school-based community hubs.

The CCAAC therefore calls on the federal government to follow Ontario's lead and end the false divide it has created by indicating that only provinces and territories are accountable for early learning and care.

"The federal government has signed child care commitments on behalf of all children, women and families in Canada: commitments that cannot be left up to individual provinces on their own to fulfill" concludes Jody Dallaire, CCAAC Chairperson. "Without federal leadership and increased financial support in place, access to early care and learning experiences may soon be further divided - between Ontario and Quebec, and the rest of Canada."

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Region: Ontario ^[2]

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