

About Martha Friendly, CRRU Executive Director ^[1]



Martha Friendly is a leading member of the Canadian child care movement, championing an equitable, universal, high quality child care system for almost 50 years. Born in New York City and raised in its suburbs, she immigrated to Canada in 1971.

A social science researcher by education, she had begun working on early childhood education and child care research in the late 1960s. Becoming part of grassroots child care activism in Toronto in the 1970s firmly cemented her belief that access to quality child care is central to women's equality. Martha founded the Childcare Resource and Research Unit at the University of Toronto's Centre for Urban and Community Studies in the early 1980s as a policy research group with a mandate to work to bring about a universal child care system — a role that the now-independent non-profit organization continues to play.

Martha is the author of numerous popular and academic articles, reports, chapters and two books on child care policy. She has been the recipient of a number of awards and honours, including an honorary Doctorate of Laws from Trent University (2015), a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal, inclusion in Women and Gender Equality's (WAGE Canada) Women of Impact Gallery and the Broadbent Institute's *Charles Taylor Prize for Excellence in Policy Research* (2021). In 2024, she received a King Charles III Coronation Medal and the Key to the City of Toronto and was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada.

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/about/martha-friendly>