

Neo-conservatism and child care services in Alberta: A case study ^[1]

Jacqueline Hayden
14 Jan 1997
Occasional paper 9
30pp
\$8

The development and delivery of child care services in Canada has never been without controversy. Although stakeholders from opposing spheres of influence have battled for divergent demands, the concept that some form of support for child care falls within the realm of state responsibilities has been acknowledged for many decades.

In the 1990s, a political swing to the right is precipitating a reassessment of this principle. Child care advocates are finding that traditional goals for state support such as enhanced services, improved conditions for workers, increased accessibility, and higher standards of care are becoming secondary to fundamental debates about the need for any form of state intervention in services.

This paper describes the development of the child care system in the province of Alberta, shows how the role of the state (government) proceeded through four distinct phases, each determining a different outcome for child care stakeholders. Under the tenets of neo-conservatism, the current fifth phase is redefining the child care paradigm. To the extent that the example of Alberta serves as a prototype of child care developments elsewhere, the analysis of developments and outcomes can assist in forewarning those who are concerned about the maintenance and development of public child care as we know it.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract

Introduction: Choice of Alberta for case study

Historical developments: Child care in context

National context

Alberta context

Five phases of policy directions: Overt policies

Child care policies and related developments in Alberta 1942-1996

Power mechanisms and covert policy making

1) Failure to develop a bureaucratic infrastructure

2) The creation of tensions in the community

3) Limiting resources

4) Studying an issue to delay action

Covert policy developments result in marginalization of child care

The neo-crisis: Principles of neo-conservatism and their application to child care

Child care as a means to other ends

Child care as a welfare service reinforces the break down of "normal" community self-help programs

Child care as a female equity program constrains mothers from taking responsibility for their offspring

Conclusion: The neo-crisis


A warning?

About the Author

End Notes

References

Download this publication

Attachment	Size
 Neo-conservatism and child care services in Alberta: A case study [30pp] ^[2]	283.99 KB

Tags: privatization ^[3]

Occasional paper series

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/publications/occasional-paper-series/97/01/neo-conservatism-and-child-care-services-alberta-case-study>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/publications/occasional-paper-series/97/01/neo-conservatism-and-child-care-services-alberta-case-study> [2]

<https://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/op9.pdf> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/privatization>