

On-campus flash mob rallies in support of a national child care system^[1]

Author: Nick Lypaczewski

Source: Ryersonian

Format: Article

Publication Date: 10 Mar 2011

EXCERPTS

...

Braving a cold day, more than 100 students, parents, grandparents and children took over the corner of Gould and Victoria for an International Women's Day rally. The event, organized by a group of early childhood education students, was a call for Canada to implement a federally-funded childcare system.

"Together we are calling for a national childcare system in Canada," fourth-year early childhood education student Lyndsay Macdonald said in her speech to the crowd. "Our federal government must recognize its responsibility to families in this country."

Macdonald was one of the students who helped put the event together after getting the idea from her contemporary issues in early childhood education class. She was pleased with the rally despite the fact the event's Facebook group suggested a bigger turnout.

The most notable speaker was Toronto City Councillor Janet Davis, who graduated from an early childhood education program at Conestoga College in 1976.

"We must absolutely raise our voices to make sure childcare is on the agenda of every single political party and we see a commitment to a national childcare system in this country," she said in her speech.

Davis also took the opportunity to throw a shot at Mayor Rob Ford, who announced in February plans to report on expanding access to affordable, quality child care.

"Our new mayor says he cares a lot about childcare. He says he cares about childcare so much and that he is going to talk about diverse models of delivering childcare," she said. "Now we all know what those code words can mean. It could mean privatization, it could mean lowering the standards... and we're not going to let any of that happen, are we?"

Part of the mayor's recent \$150-million request to Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty was meant to maintain the city's 24,000 subsidized childcare spots, but, according to CBC, more than 17,000 children are on the waiting list for subsidized daycare. Ford's request has since been rejected by the premier.

In an interview after her speech, Davis said there's room in Stephen Harper's most recent budget to create 1.37 million new spaces for children in early childhood education.

"That would fund every child who's eligible for subsidy. In this country, it's always just a matter of priorities," she said.

..

A report released Monday by YWCA Canada-entitled Educated, Employed and Equal: The economic prosperity case for national child care-claims that since women in the Canadian workforce are increasingly well-educated and obtaining more university and college degrees than men, a national child care services plan is "essential" to Canadian prosperity.

"(A national child care plan is) a crucial support for children and parents and should become as normalized in our social structure as the public school system as a choice for parents," it reads.

Early childhood studies graduate student Shani Halfon was at the rally and said she agrees with the highlighted initiatives.

"I think childcare is an incredibly important issue and I'm very passionate about the fact that we need a national childcare plan," she said.

"We need national childcare funding. We need a lot more than we have right now in Canada. I think it's a very valuable cause."

-reprinted from the Ryersonian

Region: Canada^[2]

Tags: advocacy^[3]

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/11/03/campus-flash-mob-rallies-support-national-child-care-system> [2] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/advocacy>