

Put children first ^[1]

Letters to the Editor

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EXCERPTS

During this election campaign and prior to it, the current Government of Canada claims it spends \$5.6 billion annually on early learning and child care. But most of that goes directly to parents as a Universal Child Care Benefit. This taxable family allowance benefit pays for, on average, about three days of child care per month and does nothing to create much needed quality child care spaces across Canada.

As such, early learning and child care continues to be a public issue affecting millions of Canadian children and their families, yet our current public discourse on a national level fails to address the importance of children's safety, their positive development or the needs of real Canadian families.

The Government of Canada needs to take advantage of the vast early learning research we have and apply it to a pan-Canadian system that offers quality early learning and child care to all Canadian families who require it. It would be refreshing to see future public policy based on the development of high quality child care spaces and all that entails rather than a political ideology that does not reflect the real needs of children and families.

We live in a society that has national standards for light bulbs but none for child care. We pay front page attention to the issues of puppy mills but give only cursory glances to the care and well-being of children while their parents are contributing to Canada's economy. This is simply wrong. The time has come to put children first by supporting families and investing where early learning research and good practice tell us will reap the most success: quality early learning and child care.

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