

# Federal budget falls short for Canadian children and their families<sup>[1]</sup>

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**Source:** Canadian Newswire

**Format:** Press release

**Publication Date:** 27 Feb 2008

*Link to press release no longer available*

## EXCERPTS

OTTAWA, Feb. 28 /CNW Telbec/ - According to the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF), the federal government's budget tabled this week is disappointing for teachers, children and youth, and does little to address social justice issues in Canada.

"The federal budget is extremely short-sighted when it fails to focus on innovative and dynamic long-term approaches that would positively affect families and the health, well-being and education of children and youth," says CTF President Emily Noble. "CTF believes that strong social cohesion for all Canadians is an investment in long-term prosperity. Investing in children and families is the most effective way to develop active and engaged citizens who will contribute to the social and economic health of our country.

"As teachers, we observe many children and youth who are denied the opportunity to develop their full potential because their families are not receiving the range of supportive services they need," explains Noble. "The federal government has a responsibility to help schools and school boards who are struggling, for example, to provide language and other educational services to immigrant and refugee children as well as a range of ancillary support services for children and youth.

"Not only should the federal government address non job-related services and resources required by immigrant families, but it should take the lead in helping to provide the most basic services such as translation and interpretation in schools, and to develop programs for teachers, students and parents to understand and nurture cultural differences.

"At a time when Canada is ranked as one of the best countries in the world in which to live, our poverty levels among our First Nations and Aboriginal children, youth and families are unacceptable. Although the federal government had the opportunity to fund home support and prevention services to help First Nations children and their families, it turned away from its responsibilities.

"The federal government's own research clearly shows that prevention and early intervention strategies produce tangible results. Yet, this country is not taking any positive steps to move closer to developing a national child care program that provides quality child care and early learning opportunities to every child at affordable levels. The current approach to child care works against those with lower incomes and fosters the growth of corporate, for-profit child care services. Canada has the resources to be a world leader in this regard.

"It is also unfortunate that the federal government has not seen fit to restore funding of valuable programs that provided opportunities for Canadians to have a stronger voice on social justice issues," she further adds. "Renewed funding support to many organizations, such as the Status of Women Canada, and the reinstatement of the Court Challenges Program would go a long way in moving Canada forward on social and human rights."

CTF speaks for 220,000 teachers in Canada as their national voice on education and related social issues. CTF membership includes Member organizations in every province and territory in Canada as well as an Affiliate Member in Ontario. CTF (<http://www.ctf-fce.ca><sup>[2]</sup>) is also a member of the international body of teachers, Education International (<http://www.ei-ie.org><sup>[3]</sup>).

**Related link:** Federal Budget 2008 <sup>[4]</sup>

**Region:** Canada <sup>[5]</sup>

**Tags:** budget <sup>[6]</sup>

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