

Child care co-operatives in Canada 2007: A research report ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Report in pdf ^[2]

Excerpts from the report:

This report examines the situation of co-operative child care in Canada. Through research based on qualitative methods, including interviews with child care co-operative spokespersons and government officials, as well as the latest statistical data available, the report paints a complete portrait of co-op child care and provides an analysis of the enabling environment and possibilities for future development. The situation of co-operative child care in New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States is also examined and lessons drawn for possible application in Canada.

The report first sets out a typology of co-op child care. It outlines the origins and history of the movement in Canada, and then provides a brief history of child care policy at the federal level and looks at key provincial policy decisions. It also portrays the overall situation of child care across Canada and charts recent trends. It notes the wide differences in development between provinces both in overall space creation and in spending. The dominance and generally superior quality of the non-profit model (80% of spaces), which includes all co-operative child care centres, is also examined.

The heart of the report is a comprehensive examination of co-op child care in Canada and in each province. As child care is regulated by the provinces and territories, regulations and funding vary greatly and this, along with a series of factors such as the strength of cooperative culture and the support mechanisms in each province, contributes to the strengths or weaknesses of co-operative child care in each province.

The report examines the situation of the over 400 child care co-operatives (over 500 if we include parent-run child care centres, which are not legally co-operatives but operate like them in BC, Alberta, and Ontario). The report notes that while not increasing in membership or quantity of centres, co-operative child care has generally maintained its numbers and, in 2005, had about 34,000 family memberships. Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba have the largest concentration of formal child care co-operatives, with British Columbia having a considerable number of co-op-like organizations. We have estimated that about 9% of Canadian child care spaces are in centres operated by co-operatives.

Region: Canada ^[3]

Tags: statistics ^[4]

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