

# Child Care already in an "Age of Austerity"<sup>[1]</sup>

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**Source:** Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 28 Mar 2012

## EXCERPTS:

Ontario's child care centres face a grim future of rising parent fees, growing vacancies and child care closures. With the sector having been chronically underfunded and now dealing with poor planning and implementation of full day kindergarten, child care advocates are warning of dramatic cuts in child care services.

Not only was there no funding to sustain child care programs, there was no mention of child care at all in the 2012 Provincial budget.

"We told the government that child care funding was critical this year. I am shocked that the Premier McGuinty would risk watching our child care system collapse" said Tracy Saarikoski, President, Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care.

The early learning and child care sector has joined together this year to sound the alarm on the crisis for Ontario's child care system. Child care provider and advocates called on the government to take the necessary steps to prevent a wave of closures of child care programs:

Immediate funding of \$287 million to stabilize child care centres

Funding adjusted for inflation each year

Develop a new funding model including affordable fees for parents and decent wages for staff

Immediately stop the licensing of new for-profit child care operations

"Child care matters to Ontario families. Parents tell us Ontario needs more child care, not less. Licensed child care programs have never faced so serious a threat than right now. When I hear about austerity, I reflect on the child care sector, where funding has been frozen for 15 years. We have been operating under austerity for these years, and the sector cannot be sustained any longer" said Tracy Saarikoski.

-reprinted from the ONTario Coalition for Better Child Care

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