

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention. Concluding observations: Canada ^[1]

Author: UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

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AVAILABILITY

Full document in pdf ^[2]

Excerpts:

Early childhood education and care

71. The Committee is concerned that despite the State party's significant resources, there has been a lack of funding directed towards the improvement of early childhood development and affordable and accessible early childhood care and services. The Committee is also concerned by the high cost of child-care, the lack of available places for children, the absence of uniform training requirements for all child-care staff and of standards of quality care. The Committee notes that early childhood care and education continues to be inadequate for children under four years of age. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned that the majority of early childhood care and education services in the State party are provided by private, profit-driven institutions, resulting in such services being unaffordable for most families.

72. Referring to General Comment No. 7 (CRC/C/GC/7/Rev.1, 2005), the Committee recommends that the State party further improve the quality and coverage of its early childhood care and education, including by:

- (a) Prioritizing the provision of such care to children between the age of 0 and 3 years, with a view to ensuring that it is provided in a holistic manner that includes overall child development and the strengthening of parental capacity;
- (b) Increasing the availability of early childhood care and education for all children, by considering providing free or affordable early childhood care whether through State-run or private facilities;
- (c) Establishing minimum requirements for training of child care workers and for improvement of their working conditions; and
- (d) Conducting a study to provide an equity impact analysis of current expenditures on early childhood policies and programs, including all child benefits and transfers, with a focus on children with higher vulnerability in the early years.

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Standard of living

67. While the Committee appreciates that the basic needs of the majority of children in the State party are met, the Committee is concerned that income inequality is widespread and growing and that no national strategy has been developed to comprehensively address child poverty despite a commitment by Parliament to end child poverty by 2000. The Committee is especially concerned about the inequitable distribution of tax benefits and social transfers for children. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned that the provision of welfare services to Aboriginal children, African Canadian and children of other minorities is not comparable in quality and accessibility to services provided to other children in the State party and is not adequate to meet their needs.

68. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Develop and implement a national, coordinated strategy to eliminate child poverty as part of the broader national poverty reduction strategy, which should include annual targets to reduce child poverty;
- (b) Assess the impact of tax benefits and social transfers for and ensure that they give priority to children in the most vulnerable and disadvantaged situations; and
- (c) Ensure that funding and other support, including welfare services, provided to Aboriginal, African-Canadian, and other minority children, including welfare services, is comparable in quality and accessibility to services provided to other children in the State party and is adequate to meet their needs.

Related link: Early childhood education and child care is a human right ^[3]

Region: Canada ^[4]

Tags: children's rights ^[5]

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