Martha Friendly: Why high-quality universal child care is part of a more equal Canada for all of us

Author: Friendly, M. Source: Broadbent Institute Format: Article Publication Date: 16 Jan 2013

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Excerpts:

Economic, generational, gender and racial equality means creating public structures to sustain families and children by ensuring that the necessary resources to support them are provided using public funds generated through a fair tax system. With respect to child care, it means creating the universal, high quality, publicly managed early childhood education and childcare system that—if well designed as a system, not a market—can be the backbone of support for families.

Canada's child care situation "shows" very poorly in comparative international analyses. Just last month, a United Nations Committee examining Canada's progress towards our compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child admonished Canada on child care, commenting on the lack of public funding, inadequacy of provision, reliance on private, for-profit operations and absence of a coordinated, holistic approach – not the first time Canada has been taken to task regarding child care as a human right. Surely if Canadian children aren't to have 'first call', as the Convention specifies they should, their call on Canada's resources shouldn't – at the least–be last.

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