

CUPE members hold "kitchen table" conversations on public child care ^[1]

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Excerpts from press release:

CUPE members from across Manitoba met to discuss the importance of public child care, and the need for a national child care strategy.

This meeting took part during CUPE's Winter School in Gimli, Manitoba (January 25-27) where approximately 80 CUPE members gathered to discuss stewarding, financial officer training, health and safety, and public speaking.

The "kitchen table" discussions were an informal way for members to talk about their personal experiences with both public and private childcare centres. Members discussed the need to create a greater awareness of the current child care situation, and how it affects families and communities.

These conversations are the first part of a multi-year child care campaign. With the active support of CUPE members we will be making the call for public and non-profit child care a priority in the 2015 federal election.

During these discussions, members highlighted the fact that many are paying over \$1,000/month in childcare expenses, while others are on five-year waiting lists for public child care facilities. Additionally, private child care centres are exploiting the opportunity to move in and "fill the gap" caused by insufficient public funding for childcare nation-wide: costing families more, for less.

One member told the story that they had to move into an apartment from a home in order to pay for their child's care.

One member told the story that he and his "buddies" were discussing their family's child care needs during a "Winnipeg Jets" NHL game and how difficult it is to find childcare spots in Manitoba for their children.

One member told the story that her family could not afford to invest in a home because child care costs were too high.

One member told the story about how childcare workers are underpaid, and often can't afford child care themselves.

Discussions also centred on broader issues, including work-life balance priorities, social and economic rights, women's equality and human rights.

Maureen Morrison, CUPE Equality Representative and kitchen table discussion organizer notes that holding a conversation on child care is exciting and easy to do: just arrange a time and place, and the conversation happens naturally as members share their stories.

These kitchen table discussions are happening every day as parents and families struggle to provide for their children. The time to take the conversation from the kitchen table to the government is now. CUPE along with other unions, the CLC and coalition partners are organizing "kitchen table" discussions with members across the country to build an action plan to re-think child care in Canada.

Region: Manitoba ^[2]

Tags: advocacy ^[3]

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Links

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[2] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7857>

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