

Manitoba child care campaign: Manitoba needs a redesigned early learning and child care system ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Learn all about the campaign and sign the open letter on the campaign website ^[2]

Background information:

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN MANITOBA?

Manitoba's Family Choices: Five-year Agenda for Early Learning and Child Care ended in 2013. To prepare for the next plan, the Minister of Family Services launched a Consultation, led by MLA Deanne Crothers. As part of the Consultation, which ran from September to November, the province issued a short document Public Consultation - Early Learning and Child Care - What Matters to You? Concurrently, Kevin Chief, Minister of Children and Youth Opportunities was undertaking a consultation on the early years, titled Starting Early, Starting Strong. Both consultations wrapped up November 2013.

Because the government is developing a new childcare plan and because the government is trying to promote early childhood development, it is the right time to for a child care campaign on early learning and child care services in Manitoba.

WHO ARE WE AND WHAT ARE WE DOING?

The Manitoba Child Care Association and the Child Care Coalition of Manitoba believe that Manitoba needs a redesigned early learning and child care system. Together, we have written an Open Letter to elected officials, asking them to establish a made-in-Manitoba, fully integrated, public system for learning and child care.

We are asking for a Commission on Integrated Early Learning and Child Care with the mandate to develop and propose a multi-year plan for early learning and child care (ELCC). We are asking GROUPS as well as INDIVIDUALS to sign onto the Open Letter.

See the Signatures/Endorsements pages for the most recent additions and totals. We hope you can help to grow the number of signatures to this open letter. Some groups have also written their own letters supporting the call for a Commission.

WHAT ARE WE ASKING FOR?

The Open Letter calls on the Province of Manitoba to establish a Commission on Integrated Early Learning and Child Care for Manitoba, with a mandate to develop and propose a multi-year plan for early learning and child care (ELCC). This plan should be based on:

- a systematic and integrated approach to early learning and child care policy
- a strong and equal partnership with the education system
- a universal approach to access, with particular attention to children in need of special support
- substantial public investment in services and infrastructure
- a participatory approach to quality improvement and assurance
- appropriate training and working conditions for staff
- systematic attention to data collection and monitoring; and
- a stable framework and long-term agenda for research and evaluation.

WHY IS A NEW POLICY APPROACH NEEDED?

You can read the Open Letter for our full explanation. Here is a short summary of our reasons for asking for system redesign:

Manitoba's early learning and child care system was established 40 years ago as a voluntary sector service. The current approach to child care is much like the situation of education before 1890, when the Public Schools Act turned a ragtag collection of one-room schoolhouses into a provincial system of tax-supported public schools for all children.

There are solid economic reasons to invest in early learning and child care. Child care services more than pay for themselves.

Manitoba doesn't have enough child care spaces: just 16.6% of the province's children aged 0-12 years can be accommodated in our licensed system. The waiting list has over 11,400 names. Parent fees are high, and many children are in unregulated informal care where there is no monitoring of health, safety, and wellbeing. Early childhood educators who care for our children in licensed programs earn low salaries that fail to compensate fairly their skills and responsibilities, so there is a shortage of ECEs and turnover is high.

Child care supports children's development and is associated with positive outcomes. Quality child care services can help children enter school ready to learn and succeed.

Accessible child care helps parents work or study. Child care is especially important to women. Child care helps promote social inclusion for the children, parents and families. Cultural diversity and social inclusion - including recognition of the rights of Aboriginal, francophone, and minority communities - is enhanced by quality ELCC.

WHEN DOES THE CAMPAIGN END?

The campaign to collect signatures is on-going. There is no end-date set for the collection of signatures. We will be posting updates about the campaign and the provincial process here on this website.

HOW CAN I HELP?

Please sign the Open Letter. Individuals, as well as groups, are welcome to sign on.

CAN WE WRITE OUR OWN LETTER?

Of course! If you support the idea of a Commission to establish an integrated system, you or your group are welcome to write your own letter. Please send us a copy of your letter, and we will include it on this website.

Region: Manitoba ^[3]

Tags: advocacy ^[4]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/14/01/manitoba-child-care-campaign-manitoba-needs-redesigned>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/14/01/manitoba-child-care-campaign-manitoba-needs-redesigned> [2] <http://lettercampaign.childcaremanitoba.org/> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7857> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/advocacy>