

Another February 6: One more year -- and whaddya get? (Not more and better child care) ^[1]

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Excerpts:

Another February 6th, and for those of us in the child care community, it's a time to reflect on Canada's close-but-no-cigar national child care program. You remember, right?

Everyone knows the story - after years of advocacy for a national child care program, it seemed that one would really materialize. But the story ended with a clunk for children and families when the Harper Conservatives won the January 2006 federal election and cancelled the bilateral agreements between the federal government and the provinces/territories that Ken Dryden had spent months negotiating.

The cancellation was lickety-split. As just about his first act as Prime Minister after the swearing-in ceremony on February 6th 2006, Mr. Harper stepped to a microphone to announce cancellation of the signed child care agreements. Objections from the child care community and parents were ignored. The provincial/territorial Child Care Action Plans developed as part of the intergovernmental process were abandoned or-at best-scaled back.

So on every February 6 since 2006, many of us in the child care world have cause to reflect on what could have been - if Stephen Harper hadn't cancelled the just-budding national child care program before it got off the ground.

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