

Surrey Board of Trade makes case for national child care program ^[1]

Author: Carman, Tara

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Full article online ^[2]

EXCERPTS

The Surrey Board of Trade will take the business case for a national child care program to the Canadian Chamber of Commerce convention in September with the aim of shoring up support for such a scheme.

The board recommends in a resolution "that the federal government work with the provinces and territories to develop, improve and expand access to a Canadian child care program that will determine an appropriate child care rate for parents and rate of public investment per space."

Parents of young children, who form an integral part of the shrinking Canadian workforce, earn incomes that have remained stagnant in real terms since the 1970s, while child care and housing costs have increased. This struggle to keep pace with the cost of living hurts employers, the resolution says.

"The result is higher absenteeism rates for this group of employees, greater turnover, and increased use of extended health benefits - all of which employers pay for."

The University of B.C.'s Paul Kershaw and his team estimate work-life conflict among employees with preschool-aged children costs the B.C. business community in excess of \$600 million annually, and the Canadian business community more than \$4 billion.

UNICEF ranks Canada last when it comes to investing in families with kids under age six. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) ranks Canada last for investing in child-care services for children under six.

Region: British Columbia ^[3]

Tags: federal programs ^[4]

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