

To boldly go: Towards a comprehensive child care system in Ontario ^[1]

An Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care position paper

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AVAILABILITY

See excerpts below. Contact the [Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care](#) ^[2] for copies.

Excerpts from the executive summary:

The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care has developed recommendations for a provincial child care system in Ontario that will provide long-lasting benefits to children, families, the economy and our society. The recommendations would be implemented through a 10-year strategic plan that includes moving to direct funding of programs, province-wide consultations to determine jurisdiction and a non-profit model of delivering child care services.

The need for such a plan is critical to ensuring that all children in Ontario will eventually have access to high quality child care services. The system we envision is not- for-profit and publicly funded, universal, inclusive and high quality.

Central to our goal is the concept of a single comprehensive system of policies and integrated care and education services that provide healthy development opportunities for all children 0-12 and supports for parents to work, study and parent effectively. The early learning and care system we recommend is community-based, providing services that meet the diverse and distinct needs of different communities and families. Services will be universally accessible, regardless of children's abilities, cultural or linguistic backgrounds, or regional circumstances, and regardless of family income or parents' employment status. These services will be non-compulsory but available to all children to the extent their parents wish to use them and regardless of their parents' employment status. Service development will be flexible according to what makes sense for each community, rather than a "one-size- fits-all" approach. Services will be delivered using a hub model of integrated services.

The system will be concurrently phased in, with services for children aged 0-3 and school-age children up to age 12 being expanded at the same time that 4- and 5- year-olds make the transition to a full kindergarten program. By Year 10, all children aged 0-12 will have universal access to high quality early learning and care.

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