

OCBCC welcomes action on child care wages, but questions remain and more support needed ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care is heartened to learn that the Ontario government is moving forward on the \$1/hr wage enhancement for child care staff promised in the last provincial budget.

Registered Early Childhood Educators and program staff working in licensed centre-based child care, as well as private home day care visitors and private home day care providers will qualify for this increase.

Front-line child care workers - the backbone of quality child care programs - have been eagerly anticipating these wage dollars since they were announced last year. These wage funds will also help support high quality, public and non-profit child care centres who are often caught in a squeeze between providing decent wages for workers and affordable fees for families.

Many high quality, non-profit child care operators have struggled for years to pay their workers decent wages, and welcome this financial support from the Ontario government in helping them provide better wages for every worker.

While this announcement is a positive step for child care workers, we continue to join our partners in the Association of Early Childhood Educators' Ontario in calling for a comprehensive workforce strategy for the regulated child care sector. A provincially established salary grid along with base funding for child care programs must be established to equitably raise the salaries, working conditions and morale of all early childhood educators.

In addition the government's announcement raises questions about the accountability of funds going to for-profit child care. While all child care workers certainly deserve to be well-compensated, the Ontario government needs to explain how they will ensure that funds provided to for-profit child care will be properly used. This predicament highlights the problem of our continued reliance on a child care market for the provision of child care.

The Ontario government should show leadership in moving toward real child care system of public and non-profit delivery based on the principles of universal entitlement, high quality and comprehensiveness. This process should start with a vision and a well-designed policy framework with long-term goals, targets and timetables, accompanied by ongoing sustained funding.

Founded in 1981, the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care advocates for universally accessible, high quality, public and not-for-profit, regulated child care in the province of Ontario. We are a non-partisan public awareness and advocacy group with broad membership including the education, labour, student and women's and francophone communities.

Region: Ontario ^[3]

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[2] https://www.childcareontario.org/ocbcc_welcomes_action_on_child_care_wages_but_question_remain_and_more_support_needed

[3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7856>

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