

The child care policy that wasn't ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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Excerpt:

Canada does not have a national child-care system; the licensed child-care that does exist is provincially regulated and under-funded. In fact, there have never been enough licensed child care spaces to meet the needs of Canadian families, and the challenge is even greater today with the changes in family structure and paid work, as a majority of women are now in the labour market.

We would argue that the inadequate state of child care in Canada results from the fact that Canada does not have formal social policy on child care. This situation stems from the fact that Canada, with the exception of Quebec, does not have formal family policy, unlike many European countries where citizen action enforced the "political will" to respond to social needs.

In what follows, we will...address the need for and benefits of child care, in terms of child development and the needs of employed mothers. We will then discuss the conditions that impede the development of formal child care policy, including the shift from a Keynesian to a neo-conservative policy climate since 1980.

(This is a revised and updated version of a paper presented to the conference "Childhood and Youth: A Universal Odyssey", University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, July 1998.)

Region: Canada ^[4]

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