

Universal child care the perfect Mother's Day gift ^[1]

Opinion

Author: Ferns, Carolyn

Source: Toronto Star

Format: Article

Publication Date: 8 May 2016

AVAILABILITY

Read online ^[2]

EXCERPTS

If Ontario legislators are searching for the perfect present for Ontario's moms this Mother's Day, here's a great gift idea. A universal, quality child care program. With regulated child care spaces for less than a quarter of children and the highest fees in the country, it is the policy solution that could make a difference for Ontario's moms (hint: it would make a great Father's Day present too). And it's the gift that keeps on giving: benefiting children, communities and the economy.

That's why, to mark Mother's Day, the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care is launching a letter and petition to the legislature calling for a quality child care system all families can afford and trust. But if legislators need a little more evidence, here's a refresher.

Over the last year the Ontario government has been holding consultations about how to close the gender wage gap – that stubborn 30 per cent disparity between women's and men's pay. The consultation report came out in April and it turns out that one of the answers has been staring us in the face for years. According to the report "child care was the number one issue everywhere" and "participants called for public funding and support that provides both adequate wages and affordable fees." For both mothers and the child care workforce, a child care system is key to closing the wage gap.

But not any child care approach will do. Ontario children and families deserve quality. A few weeks ago the Ontario government was forced to back down from a set of proposals that would have seen some young children in child care placed into larger groups with fewer staff per child. It was no wonder the government stepped away. Parents and ECEs had been screaming like a toddler fighting a nap since the plan was made known in February. Thousands of Ontarians decried this threat to quality and access. Clearly a new direction is needed.

Happily, there has never been a better time to step up and do what countless parents, educators and researchers have recommended for decades: build a real child care system that moves us from the patchwork that Ontario clings to, to the publicly managed, evidence-based system that can deliver what modern families need.

There is no better time than now. As the Trudeau government has indicated a willingness to be a partner, Ontario must seize the opportunity to be a provincial leader. We call on Ontario to begin this work by committing to a transparent policy process with the clear goal of developing a universal early childhood education and child care system where all families can access and afford quality child care programs.

A belated gift – even one that's 40 years overdue – is far better than another year of inaction.

-reprinted from Toronto Star

Region: Ontario ^[3]

Tags: quality ^[4]

access ^[5]

universal ^[6]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/16/05/universal-child-care-perfect-mother%E2%80%99s-day-gift>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/16/05/universal-child-care-perfect-mother%E2%80%99s-day-gift> ^[2]

<https://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2016/05/08/universal-child-care-the-perfect-mothers-day-gift.html> ^[3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7856> ^[4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/quality> ^[5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/access>

^[6] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/universal>