

# Ontario provincial election 2018

## Introduction

Less than a month out from the Ontario provincial election, most major parties have released their proposed plans for child care. This ISSUE file outlines party platforms, news coverage, and organizational responses to help inform Ontarian voters.

Before the leadership changes from Patrick Brown to Doug Ford, the PC party had announced a platform on child care. The current PC child care platform under Ford appears to be substantially the same except that it is no longer committed to funding 100,000 new child care spaces. It appears they are still committed to covering up to \$6,750 of child care costs for "lower-income" families using all varieties of child care through a tax rebate program.

Practically, analysis of this platform shows that even low income families who are eligible for the full \$6,750 will not be able to cover actual child care costs, as Ontario fees in regulated child care range from \$9,000 to over \$20,000 per child per year. Families who do not meet the low income criterion will still be in a position where they will be expected to pay on average 23.5% of after-tax family income per child on child care or 67% of the net income contribution of the main care giving parent.

As well, the updated platform does not address the shortage of spaces nor staff wages. Overall, the best evidence shows that providing child care funds to parents in a cash or tax measure does not translate into developing quality spaces or supporting the early childhood workforce with better wages and working conditions.

The Green Party's strategy to address 'Social Inequality and Institutional Discrimination' includes a policy for supporting women in the workplace. It is under this policy that the Green Party notes funding free child care for children under age three. The platform suggests that the party intends to support businesses to set up onsite centres to help correct the shortage of child care spaces. Although the platform acknowledges pay equity for midwives, it omits recognition of pay equity for other caring professionals, such as early childhood educators. The provincial platform also highlights "additional ECE supports".

Both the Ontario Liberal Party and the NDP have made sizeable fiscal and policy commitments to increasing the accessibility and affordability of child care for Ontario families. Both parties have also acknowledged the need for higher compensation for early childhood professionals.

The Liberal government commissioned an affordability strategy and workforce strategy to structure the party's early years platform. In the March 2018 provincial budget, the Liberal government committed \$2.2 billion over the next three years to make full day licensed child care free for all 2.5 to 4 year olds and to improve access for infants and toddlers through additional fee subsidies starting in 2020. As well, it commits to 100,00 new licensed spaces for children under age 4 by 2021 and 14,000 spaces for preschoolers by 2024 favouring the not-for-profit and public sector. The platform addresses these and promises to raise low child care staff wages through increased public funding together with the development of a wage grid by 2020. Thus, the Liberal platform acknowledges the binary concerns of affordability and child care work force wages.

The NDP platform also addresses affordability by committing to affordable child care (free under \$40,000 family income) for children under age 4, with the average cost being \$12-a-day. The NDP says they will start phasing in affordable child care for infants and toddlers in 2019-2020 and preschoolers the years after that. The NDP commits to expanding regulated spaces by 202,000 (51% or 10% per year) in the first term, as well as, explicitly committing to a starting wage of \$25 an hour for the early childhood workforce in non-profit centres. The platform also highlights the party's commitment to only use public dollars to fund not-for-profit and public providers.

Child care models similar to those proposed by the PC, NDP, and Liberal parties (tax credits, sliding scale, and free child care respectively) were evaluated in a recent affordability study authored by University of Toronto's Gordon Cleveland. Cleveland found tax credits were notably less effective, requiring families with higher incomes to pay a lower percentage of their net income. The funding approach resembling the NDP platform had issues with phasing-in the rapid expansion but dramatically improved affordability. The Liberal funding approach of free child care for children aged 2.5 to 4 together with a sliding scale for infants and toddlers was found to be the most affordable for families in all income categories.

Please see the table of contents in the side bar on the right. Information will be updated throughout the campaign.

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## Ontario party platforms

Below are links to Ontario party platforms for the 2018 provincial election. Excerpts are included from platforms that make explicit mention/commitment to child care.

### Ontario Liberal Party

The Liberal Party, led by Kathleen Wynne, has committed 2.2 billion over the next three years to expand child care spaces and provide free care for children aged two-and-a-half until full-day kindergarten. The Liberal government recently commissioned an affordability and workforce strategy.

Budget 2018 "Making preschool child care free for children aged two-and-a-half until they are eligible for full-day kindergarten. This saves a family with one child \$17,000, on average, and families in cities like Toronto where child care costs are highest will save even more. This builds on the savings families are already seeing thanks to full-day kindergarten."

### The Ontario New Democratic Party

The NDP, led by Andrea Horwath, have made a commitment to publicly fund only non-profit and public childcare. The platform highlights child care policy with a focus on affordability and the workforce.

#### **\$12-a-day child care**<sup>[1]</sup>

"Nothing's more important than knowing your children have the best, safest care possible. But the cost of child care is priced far out of reach for too many Ontario parents.

Andrea Horwath and the NDP will make sure every family can access affordable, high-quality, not-for-profit child care, based on three key principles:

Child care must be affordable for everyone

Public child care dollars should go to not-for-profit and public providers — funds shouldn't pad the profits of private companies

Early childhood educators deserve a fair wage that respects the vital work they do

If your household income is under \$40,000, you won't have to pay for public, licensed, not-for-profit child care. And if your household earns more, your fees will be based on ability to pay — with the average cost coming to \$12 per day.

Over a first term, we will expand the number of not-for-profit, licensed, affordable child care spaces in Ontario by 202,000 spaces — a 51% increase, adding more than 10% every year."

## Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario

As the Official Opposition in the outgoing Legislative Assembly of Ontario, the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario is now led by Doug Ford. The PC party has not yet released a complete formal platform.


"In recognition of the high cost of childcare in Ontario, Doug Ford will introduce a new Ontario Childcare Rebate to pay up to 75% of a family's childcare expenses, or up to \$6,750 per child. This plan will cost the Government \$389 million annually.

This fully refundable rebate will work on a sliding scale, covering 75% of childcare costs for low-income families, and gradually decline to 26% for families with an income of \$150,000 or higher."

## Green Party of Ontario

The Green Party, led Mike Schreiner, released their platform on May 14th, 2018. The party is hoping to receive their first seat in the Ontario legislature in the 2018 provincial election. The provincial platform proposes funding to support free child care for children under age three as part of their 'support women in the workplace [2]' policy. (Under strategy D: Address social inequality and institutional discrimination)

"Phase in funding for a comprehensive program for early childhood education and care to support free daycare for working parents with children under age three, support for stay-at-home parents and additional ECE supports."

Attachment	Size
 <a href="#">Change for the Better</a> [3]	2.6 MB

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## Campaign events

### Toronto

Critical issues in childcare policy: Why do they matter? [4]

When: May 16 2018 at 4pm- 6pm

George Vari Engineering and Computing Centre (Ryerson University)

245 Churtch St., Room ENG-106, Toronto Ontario

General public - Register [5]

#### Details

The School of Early Childhood Studies, in partnership with the Ryerson Student Childcare Advocacy Association, presents: Critical Issues in Childcare Policy: Why Do They Matter?

This expert panel discussion will provide you with the tools you need to make informed decisions in the upcoming Ontario General Election in June.

Learn about the current Ontario Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework, how to interpret political party positions and the individual and community implications of policy decisions.

Panel:

Olivia Chow, distinguished visiting professor, Ryerson University

Gordon Cleveland, associate professor emeritus, Department of Management, University of Toronto Scarborough

Lyndsay Macdonald, coordinator, Association of Early Childhood

Educators Ontario (AECEO)

Brooke Richardson, School of Early Childhood Studies, Ryerson University

## Waterloo

**All Candidates Debate (Waterloo riding): with focus on child care, education gender equality** <sup>[6]</sup>

Early Years Coalition Waterloo Region - 2018 Ontario Provincial election

When: May 22 2018 at 6:30pm- 7:30pm

Emmanuel at Brighton Child Care Centre

65 Noecker Street, Waterloo Ontario N2J 2R6

### Details

The Early Years Coalition | Waterloo Region are advocating for high quality, universal child care that includes professional pay and decent work for educators.

In the lead up to the provincial election, we are hosting an All Candidates Debate on child care, education and gender equity issues.

Candidates confirmed to attend thus far:

- Catherine Fife, NDP

- Dorothy McCabe, Liberal

- Zdravko Ggunjevic, Green

Child minding will be available during the debate. If you require this service, please RSVP to [mlittle@owlchildcare.org](mailto:mlittle@owlchildcare.org) <sup>[7]</sup>

## Ontario

**Submit a question for the provincial leaders' debate** <sup>[8]</sup>

The leaders of the Liberal Party, the Progressive Conservatives, and the NDP will head-to-head in a televised debate on Sunday, May 27.

Ontarians are being called on to help shape the agenda.

Anyone with a question for Kathleen Wynne, Doug Ford or Andrea Horwath, can [submit it here](#) <sup>[9]</sup>.

Include the following details:

- Name
- Address

- Phone Number
- email address

The debate is being held in Toronto, and begins at 6:30 p.m.

You can watch it live on CTV or online at [Toronto.CTVNews.ca](https://toronto.ctvnews.ca) <sup>[10]</sup>

## News coverage

How the child-care plans of Ontario's main parties stack up <sup>[11]</sup>

The Globe and Mail, 6 June 2018

PC, NDP candidates trade barbs on Metro Morning <sup>[12]</sup>

CBC Radio One, 5 June 2018

Public money 'shouldn't pad profits': Ontario NDP signals shift away from private-sector delivery of services <sup>[13]</sup>

National Post, 31 May 2018

Analysis: Daycare fees on the rise across Canada <sup>[14]</sup>

CTV News, 24 May 2018

Ontario PCs announce tax rebate for up to \$6,750 of child-care costs <sup>[15]</sup>

CTV News, 28 April 2018

Duelling daycare plans pit Liberals against NDP in battle for parent votes <sup>[16]</sup>

Toronto Star, 22 April 2018

Opinion: Doug Ford, what is your child care plan? <sup>[17]</sup>

Toronto Star, 24 April 2018

NDP promises \$12-a-day child care and lower deficits if elected <sup>[18]</sup>

Toronto Star, 16 April 2018

Opinion: Ontario's child care budget delivers bold pre-election blueprint – at a cost <sup>[19]</sup>

Toronto Star, 28 March 2018

NDP vows to 'do better' on child care than free preschool care <sup>[19]</sup>

Toronto Star, 2 April 2018

Ontario budget throws down the election gauntlet <sup>[20]</sup>

Behind the Numbers, 28 March 2018

## Organizational responses

Ontario votes 2018: Where the parties stand on child care <sup>[21]</sup>

Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario

Universal child care IS possible: Election campaign toolkit [22]

Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care

Limiting for-profit child care key to quality care [23]

Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care

Child care in the Ontario election [24]

Policy Options - Cleveland, Gordon

Show up for social justice: Vote this election [25]

YWCA Toronto

Childcare: What's at stake in Ontario [25]

Ontario Thrive

## VOTE!

**Vote Compass** is a tool developed by political scientists that calculates how your views compare with those of Ontario's political parties.

Vote Compass is a civic engagement application developed by the team of social and data scientists from **Vox Pop Labs** [26]. Its objective is to promote electoral literacy and public participation during election campaigns.

<https://votecompass.cbc.ca/ontario/home> [27]

**Elections Ontario** are responsible for running provincial elections in Ontario. They are a non-partisan office of the **Legislative Assembly of Ontario** [28], which means they have no political affiliation.

Elections Ontario provide Ontarians with information they can use to learn more about provincial elections, the electoral process and how they can participate. The following link is specific to voter information.

<https://www.elections.on.ca/en/voting-in-ontario.html> [29]

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Source URL (modified on 7 Aug 2020): <https://childcarecanada.org/resources/issue-files/ontario-provincial-election-2018-1>

### Links

[1] <https://www.ontariondp.ca/new-services> [2] <https://gpo.ca/vision/people/#1521514742535-df3e310b-61ed> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/Change-for-the-better.pdf> [4] <https://www.ryerson.ca/ecs/news-and-events/events/2018/critical-issues-in-childcare-policy-why-do-they-matter/> [5] <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeO7xz60e5oCIGwqEz7YTsLIQ0FzylFAK4ye14crD2AzDYWQ/viewform> [6] <https://www.facebook.com/events/239883959923123/> [7] <mailto:mlittle@owlchildcare.org> [8] <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/ontario-election-2018/submit-a-question-for-the-provincial-leaders-debate-1.3929618> [9] <mailto:debatequestions@ctv.ca?subject=Provincial%20Leaders%27%20Debate%20Question&amp;body=Name%3A%0AAddress%3A%0APhone%20Number%3A%0Aemail%20address%3A%0A%20%0AQuestion%3A> [10] <https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/> [11] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/06/how-child-care-plans-ontario%E2%80%99s-main-parties-stack> [12] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/06/pc-ndp-candidates-trade-barbs-metro-morning> [13] <https://nationalpost.com/news/public-money-shouldnt-pad-profits-ontario-ndp-signals-shift-away-from-private-sector-delivery-of-services> [14] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/05/analysis-daycare-fees-rise-across-canada> [15] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/04/ontario-pcs-announce-tax-rebate-6750-child-care-costs> [16] <https://www.childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/04/duelling-daycare-plans-pit-liberals-against-ndp-battle-parent-votes> [17] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/04/opinion-doug-ford-what-your-child-care-plan> [18] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/04/ndp-promises-12-day-child-care-and-lower-deficits-if-elected> [19] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/04/ndp-vows-%E2%80%98do-better%E2%80%99-child-care-free-preschool-care> [20] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/04/ontario-budget-throws-down-election-gauntlet> [21] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/05/ontario-votes-2018-where-parties-stand-child-care> [22] [https://www.childcareontario.org/election\\_campaign\\_toolkit](https://www.childcareontario.org/election_campaign_toolkit) [23] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/06/limiting-profit-child-care-key-quality-care> [24] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/05/child-care-ontario-election> [25] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/05/show-social-justice-vote-election> [26] <https://voxpoplabs.com/> [27] <https://votecompass.cbc.ca/ontario/home> [28] <http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/home.do> [29] <https://www.elections.on.ca/en/voting-in-ontario.html>