

What we want in an early learning and child care framework for Canada

The federal Liberals promised they would take action to develop affordable, accessible, inclusive, high-quality early learning and child care for every child.

After the election, Prime Minister Trudeau mandated the federal Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and the federal Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs to launch a process with provinces, territories and Indigenous communities to develop a National Early Learning and Child Care Framework beginning with a meeting "within 100 days."

Federal, provincial and territorial representatives are now negotiating the basis of federal funding agreements. The first Liberal federal budget set aside \$500 million for child care in 2017, of which \$100 million is earmarked for Indigenous child care.

We are concerned that these negotiations will result in a federal government hand-over of money to the provinces and territories to merely bolster the current patchwork and inadequate approach to child care.



We want federal, provincial/territorial governments to take time to get the national framework right.

We want child care recognized as a collective social responsibility—not a commodity to be sold and bought in a child care marketplace.

We want a framework that paves the way for a well-designed child care system that takes into account the diversity of needs: not a one-size-fits-all.

We want recognition that Indigenous Peoples need resources to develop their own child care systems.

The new Framework **must** include:

- A commitment to build universal, affordable, inclusive, high-quality child care systems across Canada
- A commitment to provide long-term sustained federal funding to ensure affordable, high-quality services together with a planned expansion of child care programs so that, by 2020, child care can become accessible to every child whose family chooses it

- An agreement to shared child care initiatives, such as a strategy to strengthen the child care workforce, and a shared data system and research agenda
- A commitment to work together to strengthen family supports including better and more equitable family leave from work and study, as well as access to more flexible work arrangements
- Commitment to use data and policy research to make evidence-based child care policy decisions

The child care sector, including child-care advocates, the early childhood education field, researchers and others, must be involved in the development of the Framework and in its implementation. The Liberal government promised evidence-based, transparent, and accountable government. We are still waiting.

For further information:

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