

# Creating an anti-racist child care system in Ontario

## Key recommendations to the Ontario government

Ontario's Anti-Racism Strategic Plan commits the Ontario government to “building an anti-racism approach into the way that government develops policies, makes decisions, evaluates programs, and monitors outcomes.” As Ontario makes key funding, policy and implementation decisions in the rollout of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system, we must work to ensure we are creating an equitable and anti-racist early years and child care system for children, families and the early years workforce.

### Child Care and Early Years Act

- Amend the *Child Care and Early Years Act* to enshrine the right of all young children to access regulated, inclusive, culturally safe early learning and child care.

### Access and Inclusion Framework

- Ontario is developing an Access and Inclusion Framework for CWELCC. The development of this framework should include extensive consultation with Black, Indigenous and racialized educators and communities.
- The goals of the framework should include;
  - all child care programs are culturally safe and ready to serve any family regardless of race, language, immigration status or ability;
  - all families have the support to readily access and navigate the child care system. This could include expanding cultural language support services;
  - all families should see themselves included and reflected in child care programs.
- The Access and Inclusion Framework should demonstrate a clear commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

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## Fees

- Ontario should work to replace the current subsidy system with a barrier-free sliding fee scale with a cap of \$10 per day per family. In the short-term, while this is being developed, increase access to the current subsidy system and remove barriers.

## Curriculum

- Ontario's early years curriculum framework, *How Does Learning Happen?*, should be revised to include concepts of anti-oppressive practice, Indigenous world views and anti-racist pedagogy.

## Workforce Strategy: Wages and working conditions

- Ontario should implement a provincial salary scale starting at \$30 per hour for RECEs and \$25 per hour for non-RECE staff.
- Ontario should commit to the AECEO's Decent Work Common Table's Decent Work Standards.
- ECE field placements should be funded through a stipend to remove financial barriers and to recognize the value of ECE students' work.

## Oversight Advisory Committee / Steering Committee

- The implementation of these recommendations and responses to emerging issues should be monitored and informed by an Advisory Committee made up of appointed positions and volunteers.
- The Committee should be able to make recommendations across ministries.
- The Committee should provide public reports to the Minister and legislature.
- The Committee should prioritize the voices, needs, and experiences of Black Indigenous and racialized educators
- Terms of reference need to address accountability to the public, transparency, a work plan, communication process, including the Committee's scope which should include curriculum, pre-service training, access and inclusion framework.

*Over the past year, the OCBCC has been carrying out a project, "Centering the voices of racialized mothers and educators in child care policy", to better understand barriers to access, inclusion and equity in our early learning and child care system. Systemic racism remains a problem across Canadian child-care settings in ways that impact racialized children, families and educators. As we work to expand access and raise the quality of child care we need to ensure we are actively working to create an anti-racist child-care system. The "Centering the voices of racialized mothers and educators in child care policy" project is funded by Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) Canada, but the opinions, recommendations and outputs are those of the OCBCC. Learn more about our project at [www.childcareontario.org/wage\\_project](http://www.childcareontario.org/wage_project)*

