

KEEP THE CHILD CARE PROMISE.

23 January, 2026

Dear Federal, Provincial and Territorial Forum of Ministers Most Responsible for Early Learning and Child Care,

The federal, provincial and territorial investments in licensed child care since the inception of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care system in 2021 have generated significant economic activity, giving rise to major returns including an important increase in women's labour force participation.

Parents have described the program as "life-changing": the supply of licensed programs has grown, and lower parent fees have made life more affordable for many, amidst ongoing inflation. Most provinces and territories have made initial investments in compensation for the female-dominated child care workforce to encourage recruitment and retention.

However, much remains to be done to ensure the ambitious program meets the social and economic objectives.

To continue and build on the admirable and measurable progress achieved to date, it is crucial that at your upcoming ministerial meetings your governments each commit to expanding and strengthening the \$10aDay child care system so that in time all young children have the opportunity to benefit from high quality, inclusive programs.



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Child Care Now

We ask that you agree to strengthen the program using the best available evidence by:

- Increasing public funding to meet the real cost of operating high-quality programs and to expand the availability of licensed child care under the \$10aDay child care system;
- Building a primarily non-profit and public system of child care so that public investments advance high quality, equitable services, not profit-making;
- Achieving a maximum parent fee of \$10aDay with further fee reductions for low income families;
- Investing in the early learning and child care workforce to attract and retain qualified educators;
- Developing and implementing concrete, proactive child care expansion plans with emphasis on making access more equitable;
- Publicly and promptly sharing the text of your child care agreements, associated action plans and results.

Importantly, we call on you to fully fund and support implementation of the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Frameworks.

We applaud you for your early leadership with respect to early learning and child care and we call on you to remain committed to fully implementing the \$10aDay child care program.

As other countries have learned, developing a universal child care system is a complex project that requires governments and community to collaborate guided by evidence. For Canada, doing this right will make it a transformative, generational project that will enhance individual and collective economic security across Canada, providing essential social infrastructure for all other nation-building projects.

Sincerely,

Morna Ballantyne, Executive Director
Child Care Now

Erin Cullen, Founder
ABCs and ECEs Newfoundland and Labrador

Dr. Teale N. Phelps Bondaroff, Chair and co-founder
AccessBC Campaign

Fred Chabot, Executive Director
Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights

Julie Spencer, Executive Director
Alberni Valley Childcare Society

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Angie Gelowitz, Director
Bright Beginnings Early Childhood Centre

Susan Colley, Chair, Board of Directors
Building Blocks for Child Care

Angela Marie MacDougall, Executive Director
Battered Women's Support Services

Leila Sarangi, Chair, National Director
Campaign 2000: End Child and Family Poverty

Meseret Haileyesus, CEO

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Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives

Taya Whitehead, Chair

Canadian Child Care Federation

Nuzhat Jafri, Executive Director

Canadian Council of Muslim Women

Jamie Beagan, Executive Director

Canadian Federation of University Women

Siobhán Vipond, Executive Vice-President

Canadian Labour Congress

Jackie Neapole, Executive Director

Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women

Coleen Jones, 2nd National Vice President

Canadian Union of Postal Workers

Mark Hancock – National President and Candace Rennick – National Secretary-Treasurer

Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)

Nancy Wilson, Founder and Chief Executive Officer

Canadian Women's Chamber of Commerce

Mitzie Hunter, President and CEO

Canadian Women's Foundation

Viveca Ellis, Executive Director

Centre for Family Equity

Martha Friendly, Executive Director

Childcare Resource and Research Unit

Sara Austin, Founder and CEO

Children First Canada

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Creative Beginnings Early Learning & Care

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Early Childhood Educators Human Resources Council

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Ending Sexual Violence Association of Canada

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Fédération des femmes du Québec

Brigitte L'Heureux, Directrice générale
Fédération des parents de la francophonie manitobaine

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First Years Learning Center

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New Brunswick Coalition for Pay Equity

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New Brunswick Federation of Labour

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Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour

Sara-Jayne Dempster, President
Northern Territories Federation of Labour

Yvette Cooper, Co-Chair
Northwest Territories Early Childhood Association

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Nova Scotia Federation of Labour

Carolyn Ferns, Policy Coordinator
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Ontario Equal Pay Coalition

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Ontario Federation of Labour

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Oxfam Canada

Mariam Bouchoutrouch, Executive Director
Pacific Immigrant Resources Society

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South East Saskatchewan Directors Association

Sharon Hope Irwin, Executive Director
SpecialLink | Center for Inclusive Childcare

Emilie Coyle, Co-Executive Director
The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS)

Barb Reid, Co-Chair
The Council for Early Learning and Care

Peter Frampton, Executive Director
The Learning Enrichment Foundation

Christopher Smith, Associate Executive Director
The Muttart Foundation

Julie Savard-Shaw, Executive Director
The Prosperity Project

John Weatherup, President
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Patsy McKinney, Executive Director
Under One Sky Friendship Center

Lana Payne, President
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Anita Khanna, Vice President, Government Relations and Public Policy
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