

## From Ontario Council Pre-Budget Submission, Jan. 27, 2019.

### EARLY YEARS AND CHILD CARE:

Child care is another area which has a heavy economic impact on the economy.

The study *Women and Paid Work* by Melissa Moyser<sup>1</sup> highlighted some interesting points:

- research shows that the labour supply of mothers is sensitive to variations in the cost of childcare
- the gender employment gap was the highest in Toronto (12.6) and Vancouver (11.8); the smallest in Saguenay and Québec City. In Ottawa-Gatineau, the gender employment gap on the Quebec side was 2.6 percentage points, compared to 7.3 percentage points on the Ontario side. This likely reflects Quebec's universal low-fee childcare program.
- Single parents, both male and female, work fewer hours.

As members of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care (OCBCC), we support their *3 Big Ideas* "to build a better early years and child care system in Ontario":

1. Affordable Fees for Every Family
2. Decent Work & Professional Pay for Educators
3. Expansion of Public and Non-profit Child Care<sup>2</sup>

For many years CFUW and its members have been asking governments to consider the importance of the early years as the foundation for the development of the whole child, and linking this with the essential child care necessary as women began working in larger numbers, accounting for 47% of the workforce by 2014<sup>3</sup>.

While the first policies date to the early 70's, the issue was considered important enough to re-affirm this in 2006, asking governments to give priority to the "creation of a quality, universally accessible and comprehensive early learning and child care program which emphasizes the development of the whole child. Funding for this initiative should involve all levels of government through cost-sharing mechanisms, as in other human services such as health, education and social programs"<sup>4</sup>.

1. **Universal and equitable accessible.** The word "accessible" is of fundamental importance.

---

<sup>1</sup> Melissa Moyser, *Women and Paid Work* <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-503-x/2015001/article/14694-eng.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care (OCBCC) *3 Big Ideas* [http://www.childcareontario.org/build\\_a\\_better\\_future](http://www.childcareontario.org/build_a_better_future)

<sup>3</sup> The surge of women in the workforce <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-630-x/11-630-x2015009-eng.htm>

<sup>4</sup> CFUW Policy Book Online, *Early Childhood Education and Care*, pg.3, <https://cfuwontcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Policy-Book-2018.pdf>,

- Affordable for both families no matter what their income is, and for municipalities and providers.
- Availability and flexible no matter where they live and when they work
- A child care system needs to be available to all – those with special needs, be it cultural, emotional, intellectual, physical

## **2. Quality**

- A non-profit provider, using an evidence-based play-based curriculum, that is age and culturally appropriate, with a stable well-paid workforce, well trained in age appropriate pedagogy and care, following standards and regulations that license all child care centre, whether within homes or within larger centres.

## **3. Funding**

- Subsidies for families, and the resources for municipalities who are providing those subsidies.
- Stable funding for providers.
- Cost-sharing programs for governments

**In summary, a high-quality early years and child care system is all about well-trained, well paid, compassionate and caring staff, combined with an early learning program based on pedagogy provided by a not-for-profit service within a safe environment, structured by evidence-based regulations, funded through cost-sharing similar to health.**