

Introduction

Since the election of the Ford government in June 2018, child care advocates have campaigned hard to protect the funding and policy gains that we worked for years to secure for children, families and educators. Over the past year we have faced setbacks, but we have also had hard-won victories.

- Our pre-budget MPP meetings and petition campaign with over 15,000 signatures helped secure the continuation of the \$2 per hour wage enhancement for over 30,000 ECEs and child care workers.
- Following the provincial budget, child care was facing over \$80 million in funding cuts. Our members and allies sent thousands of messages to their MPPs, collected petitions, took part in a day of action and banded together with municipal leaders to push back against the cuts. After a two month campaign, the Premier announced that the cuts have been put on hold.



These victories show just how effective our coalition can be when we work together on a common goal. We have momentum, but our work is far from over! *It's time to double down on campaigning.*

The Ford government has warned that funding cuts have only been put on hold until next year and that the government is “working on a new child care plan” and a new funding formula. They have already made troubling changes to safety regulations with Bill 66 and opened up more funding to big box for-profits, including allowing for-profit child care in public schools. This next year is critical to protect child care funding and to push forward our 3 Big Ideas for Child Care: affordable fees for parents; decent work and pay for educators; and more public and non-profit child care spaces. We believe that we can continue to have gains under this government, but it will take a strong strategy and organization.

The legislature is in recess until October 28th, meaning that MPPs will be in their local communities for the next several months. We need to use this time to secure MPP meetings in our local communities to explain the importance of community child care programs, to invite MPPs to visit local child care programs, and to engage the community to join our movement. Every MPP needs to hear exactly how important child care programs are to their local constituents and their local economies.

This tool kit will provide you with the resources that you need to take the lead in your community. Our campaign is not about having a one-off meeting with an MPP, but rather becoming the MPP's link to the child care community, a resource person that they can come to when they have questions, and a trusted local constituent who can bring important issues facing our sector to the MPP's attention. We also suggest community engagement strategies to begin to change the conversation about early learning and child care and to make it an important local issue.