

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION



CHEF DE L'OPPOSITION

February 18, 2010

Ms. Jody Dallaire
Ms. Laurel Rothman
Campaign 2000, c/o Family Service Toronto
355 Church Street
Toronto, Ontario
M5B 1Z8

Dear Ms. Dallaire and Ms. Rothman:

Thank you for your open letter of February 10, 2010, regarding your call for the development of a national early childhood education and child care program.

I agree with you completely that Canada needs to have an early learning and child care program and I recently committed publicly that a future Liberal government would work to implement one. Currently, there are only enough child care spaces in Canada to meet about 20% of the demand and this means that in effect there is no real choice for Canadian families. A National Child Care program would truly mean choice for parents.

Starting a child's education at an earlier stage gives them a head start – one they're going to need to reach their full potential and compete with kids around the world for the jobs of tomorrow. In study after study, the evidence is conclusive: early learning and childcare programs only benefit our children's learning and development experience and will only help them excel later in life. Our children are the future of our country; they deserve the best possible start.

In addition, child care and early learning are a good investment in our economy: for each million invested in child care, there are 39.54 jobs created, almost 10 times the number of jobs generated by \$1 million invested in construction spending. Every dollar invested in child care and early learning increases the economy output (GDP) by approximately \$2.30.

Once again thank you for writing and I hope that we can work together to help build a National Child Care program that Canadians can be proud of.

Please accept my warmest regards.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Ignatieff".

Michael Ignatieff, M.P.