

COALITION ONTARIENNE POUR
de meilleurs services
éducatifs à l'enfance



ONTARIO COALITION FOR
Better Child Care

ANNUAL REPORT

2020/21

Annual General Meeting, September 23, 2021

WHO WE ARE

Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care Officers, Board and Provincial Council

Officers – 2020/21

President	Vice-President	Secretary	Treasurer	Past President (1yr following presidency)	Member-at-large
Sheila Olan-McLean	Tracy Saarikoski	Michel Laflamme	Carrie Lynn Poole-Cotnam	Not currently applicable.	Christina Gilligan

Board of Directors – 2020/21

Position	Name
Individual member	Erin Filby, Toronto
Individual member	Christina Gilligan, Toronto
Organizational member	Carrie Lynn Poole-Cotnam, CUPE Ontario
Organizational member	Brooke Richardson, Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario
Organizational member	Rosemary Judd-Archer, Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation
Organizational member	Ogho Ikhalo, Ontario Federation of Labour
Regional: GTA	Lisa Johnston, Early Years Professionals Rise UP T.O.
Regional: Southwest	Christa O'Connor, Creative Beginnings, Baden
Regional: Eastern and Southeast	Michel Laflamme, Service à l'enfance Aladin Childcare Services, Ottawa
Regional: Northwest	Lynn Carlson, Kenora
Regional: Northeast	Tracy Saarikoski, Discovery Early Learning & Care, Sudbury
Regional: Central	Sheila Olan-MacLean, Compass Early Learning and Care, Peterborough
Special constituencies - Francophone	Sylvie Charron, L'association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario
2484 rep	Jess Tomas

Provincial Advisory Council – 2020/21

ORGANIZATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Organization	Name
Association of Early Childhood Educators	Brooke Richardson
Canadian Federation of Students	Vacancy
Canadian Federation of University Women	Margaret McGovern
Canadian Union of Public Employees	Carrie Lynn Poole-Cotnam
Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario	Phyllis Hession-White
Ontario Campaign 2000	Claudia Calabro
Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association	Peter MacDonald
Ontario Federation of Labour	Ogho Ikhalo
Ontario Public Service Employees Union	Vikki Poirier / Luisa Quarta
Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation	Rosemary Judd-Archer
Unifor	Lisa Kelly
YWCA	Sarah Boesveld

REGIONAL CENTRE AND LOCAL ADVOCACY GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

Member area	Name
Greater Toronto Area City of Toronto, Regional Municipality of Halton, Regional Municipality of Durham, Regional Municipality of Peel, Regional Municipality of York	1. Abigail Doris, Toronto Community for Better Child Care, Toronto 2. Lisa Johnston, Early Years Professionals Rise UP T.O.
Southwest Chatham–Kent, Haldimand County, Norfolk County, City of Brantford, City of Hamilton, City of London, City of St. Thomas, City of Stratford, City of Windsor, Oxford County, Waterloo Region, Bruce County, Grey County, Huron County, Lambton County, Wellington County, Regional Municipality of Niagara	1. Christa O'Connor, Creative Beginnings, Baden 2. Lori Prospero, RisingOaks Child Care Services & Early Years Coalition – Waterloo Region, Waterloo
Eastern and Southeast United Counties of Prescott and Russell, City of Cornwall, County of Lanark, County of Renfrew, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, City of Kingston, County of Lennox and Addington, City Ottawa	1. Michel Laflamme, Service à l'enfance Aladin Childcare Services, Ottawa 2. Jessica Scallen, ECE Power Ottawa
Northwest Kenora District, Rainy River District, Thunder Bay District	1. Lynn Carlson, Kenora 2. Willow Lem – Thunder Bay ECE Unite!, Thunder Bay
Northeast Algoma District, City of Greater Sudbury, District of Cochrane, District of Timiskaming, District of Nipissing, District of Manitoulin, District of Sault Ste Marie	1. Tracy Saarikoski, Discovery Early Learning & Care, Sudbury 2. Vacancy
Central Kawartha Lakes, City of Peterborough, Parry Sound District, District Municipality of Muskoka, Dufferin County, Hastings County, Northumberland County, Simcoe County	1. Sheila Olan-MacLean, Compass Early Learning and Care, Peterborough 2. Debbie Milne, First Adventure Child Development Centres, Belleville
Special constituency - Francophone	Sylvie Charron, L'association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario
2484 rep	Jess Tomas, Toronto

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

1. Erin Filby, Toronto
2. Athina Basiliadis, Ottawa
3. Christina Gilligan, Toronto
4. Kim Gilbert, Windsor

President's Report

Sheila Olan-MacLean

What a year this has been. How could any of us have been prepared for the truly extraordinary times that we had in 2020/21? I am so proud to be working in this field. We have demonstrated that we are a fierce sector. We have shown once again that we can rise above the noise and do what needs to be done. Our province came through the first waves of the pandemic because our people got to work and provided emergency child care for emergency care workers during the shutdowns. We also read stories to children isolated at home, dropped off activity kits to their homes and made videos to say how much we missed them and couldn't wait to see their smiling faces again in person. When the children came back into our care, we welcomed them with open arms – and a mask and face shield. We showed that communication with children goes far beyond what they can see. Love cannot hide behind a mask. We are child care, we care because that is what we do.

We also advocated for the funding needed to support the ongoing operations of the child care sector. When the province put out their sustainability plan for child care in May, we united across this province and said, NO. Calling a plan “a sustainability plan” does not make it a sustainability plan. Thousands of us came onto Facebook Live to have our voices heard, Twitter was atwitter with the hashtags #FordFailsFamilies and #ListenUpLecce. And we were successful in getting the government to amend their “plan”, so that all our staff could be paid and our organizations could stay viable.

Thank you to child care people across this province who have gone to extraordinary measures to keep children, families and ourselves safe. We are grateful for your dedication to our children.

To our Board of Directors, who represent regions across our province, thank you for the raising your voices for child care and leading your advocacy efforts in your communities and at the provincial OCBCC Board table. Thank you to our organizational board members who support child care as a vital part of a thriving society.

Carolyn and Kim, you have continued to support our organization through these tough times. Moving to a virtual space has not slowed you down. Thank you on behalf of the board and the province. Kim, your tireless support to members and your excellent administrative skills have put the OCBCC in a great position for the future. Our finances are strong, our membership is growing and we are positioned to take on supporting a national child care plan. Carolyn, your advocacy through social media, newspapers and TV has been effective and inspiring. We have been able to influence government to provide supports needed to keep child care going. Thank you for your commitment. So grateful for your efforts.

As we continue through the pandemic, our voices will be more important than ever. There is much work to do to realize The 3 Big Ideas – Affordable fees, decent wages and working conditions and a system of early learning and care that is public and not for profit. Stay safe everyone.

Public Policy and Government Relations Coordinator's report

Carolyn Ferns

Key goals 2020/21

- Monitor and respond to policy developments provincially and federally;
- Campaign for our vision of a comprehensive early learning and child care system;
- Campaign against funding cuts to child care and deregulation
- Raise public awareness of child care issues through media and public events;
- Collaborate with supporters and allies provincially and nationally to keep child care on the public agenda.

2020/21 was a period that changed the shape of child care in Ontario and across Canada. The beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic saw the emergency closure of all licensed child care centres across Ontario. Thus began a months-long struggle to get child care programs and educators the resources and supports that they needed to safely reopen and to move toward recovery.

Throughout this most stressful and chaotic of years, the child care movement showed its usual strength and indefatigability. We supported our families, our communities and each other – all while working toward a better future.

The OCBCC worked over the past year to support the child care sector through closure, reopening, regulation changes, instability, and seemingly endless health and safety changes. It was a year where we relied more than ever on each other – collaboration was the key to every campaign, every effort. Moving to virtual events and working from home meant that our team had to develop new ways to work effectively. I am so grateful for the core team of OCBCC, AECEO and TCBC staff who met every morning for “coffee chat” during the early days of the pandemic. Sometimes we cried together, more often we laughed, but we always focused on how we could best support the community that we love so dearly. Thank you to all of you for making our work matter.

The pandemic also laid bare Canada's child care crisis. Suddenly many more people became aware of just how essential child care is to our

economic and social wellbeing. Political leaders and economists began joining long-time advocates in calling for child care to be at the core of Canada's pandemic recovery response. What was child care's deepest crisis also became an opportunity to move child care forward in a way that sometimes seemed impossible. The 2020 federal Throne Speech committed to creating a pan-Canadian child care system, a commitment that was later followed up with \$30 Billion in federal funding in the budget.

As we head into the next year we will focus on how to ensure Ontario joins the Canada-wide child care plan. And we will work to make child care a vote-determining issue in the Ontario Election 2021.

- Carolyn

Selected policy responses and commentary

An emergency plan for Ontario child care
April 2, 2020

Statement from OCBCC President in response to
Ontario Education Minister Stephen Lecce
April 14, 2020

A Long-Term Plan for Ontario Child Care in
Response to the Covid-19 pandemic
April 24, 2020

From reopening to recovery: A child care plan for
Ontario
May 27, 2020

Op-ed: Stephen Lecce's letter to parents doubles
down on the Ford government's half-baked child
care plan, Toronto Star, June 15, 2020

Revisiting "From Reopening to Recovery"
August 18, 2020

Op-ed: Why we need universal child care in
Canada
Now, September 16, 2020

Ontario's plan to deregulate child care is a bad
movie that parents have seen - and rejected -
before, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives
October 14, 2020

OCBCC's pre-budget brief, October 2020
October 15, 2020

Ontario regulation proposal - fact sheet
October 21, 2020

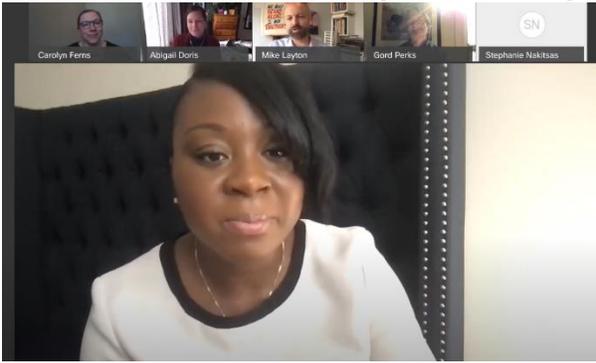
"An insult to educators, children and families":
Child care community views on the Ontario
government's proposed changes to *the Child Care
and Early Years Act*.
November 12, 2020

Open Letter Premier Ford: Protect and Respect
Early Childhood Education and Care
January 20, 2021



"Like everyone in these times, our educators deserve and need to be recognized for they work they are doing. And if the government were really interested in protecting parents, they would work to ensure that parents' child care programs have not permanently shuttered by the time families need to get back to working outside the home." - Sheila Olan-Maclean, statement to Ontario Education Minister Stephen Lecce.

Selected media coverage featuring the OCBCC



Toronto Parents for Child Care's Wendy LaRose speaks to a virtual press conference supporting Toronto City Council Motion on child care



OCBCC Policy Coordinator, Carolyn Ferns speaking on reigniting the economy through childcare alongside Kate Bezanson and Elizabeth Dhuey on TVO's The Agenda.



Toronto Community for Better Child Care's Amy O'Neil speaks with the Toronto Star about child care challenges for operators.

Ontario confirms 514 new COVID-19 cases, pushing total to nearly 9,000
CBC, April 16, 2020

Ontario confirms 564 new COVID-19 cases as provincial total tops 9,500
CBC, April 17, 2020

Ontario child-care centres can reopen on Friday, Ford government announces
CBC, June 9, 2020

All Ontario childcare centres can reopen on June 12
CP24, June 9, 2020

The 'nice ladies of child care' are furious at lack of lead time and financial support from the province on daycare reopening, Toronto Star, June 11, 2020

As daycares reopen, parents are facing impossible decisions to keep kids safe from COVID-19
National Post, June 12, 2020

Daycares remain closed; advocate for reopening support
Hailburton Echo, June 16, 2020

Coronavirus forces child-care centres to reduce capacity, leaving parents scrambling
Global News, June 25, 2020

The back-to-school COVID risk no one is talking about
Toronto.com, August 16, 2020

After-school programs an 'afterthought' in COVID-19 guidelines, advocates say
Global News, August 29, 2020

Just over 50 per cent of Ontario daycares have reopened as school nears
Iheartradio, September 1, 2020

Op-ed: Why we need universal child care in Canada
Now, September 16, 2020

Parents and advocates concerned over COVID-19 guidelines for childcare
CityNews, September 18, 2020



OCBCC President Sheila Olan-Maclean speaks to Peterborough media about the challenges of child care reopening.

“The Ford government is assuming ‘the nice ladies of child care’ will just go back to their programs, move some furniture around and make this work the way we always have. But what I am hearing from the sector is different from what I have ever heard before. They are just beside themselves. They say this is insulting. The government is expecting them to do something that is just impossible without proper support.” – Carolyn Ferns, Toronto Star, June 11, 2020.

What a national child-care program could mean for the GTA- home of high fees, low wages, and long wait lists

CBC, September 27, 2020

Changes to age groupings, child-to-caregiver ratios among proposed changes to child care sector

CTV News, October 9, 2020

Ontario’s plan to deregulate child care is a bad movie that parents have seen – and rejected – before

The Monitor, October 13, 2020

Province proposes sweeping child-care rule changes to create more spaces as sector in pandemic crisis

Ottawa Citizen, October 16, 2020

132 Ontario childcare centres closed since march

Iheartradio, November 4, 2020

What the Tories’ pandemic-era budget means for women

TVO, November 12, 2020

Closing childcare centres operated by the region being considered (update)

Kitchener Today, November 17, 2020

The Ford government needs to treat child care as the essential service that it is

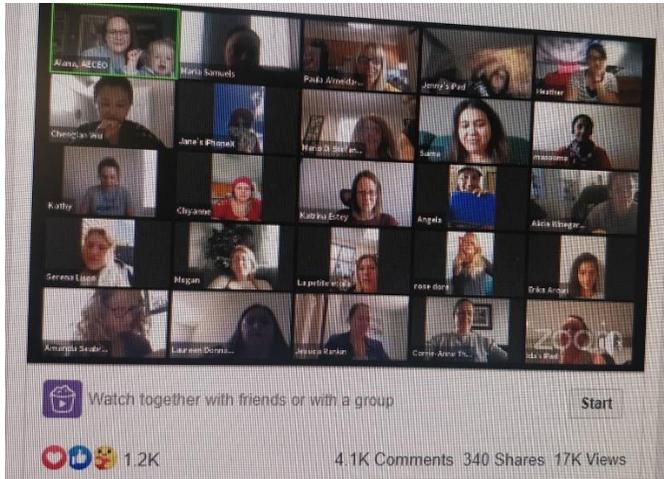
Toronto Star, January 31, 2021

Campaign highlights

3 Big Ideas Campaign - ongoing

The OCBC continued to work under the overarching campaign for a child care system based on 3 Big Ideas: affordable fees, decent work and enough public and non-profit spaces. This campaign informed the policy recommendations developed in 2020's *Reopening to Recovery* report.

A Safe Reopening



On June 12, the AECEO and OCBC hosted a virtual rally about a safe reopening. Thousands participated via Zoom and 17,000 people watched the rally on Facebook. People took part in local actions calling for a safe reopening, signed our online petition and sent messages to Premier Ford and Minister Lecce.

Rising Up for Child Care & CCEYA Regulation Proposals

In the Fall of 2020 we collaborated with the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario on the Rising Up for Child Care campaign that we had first started in January 2020 when we co-hosted a lecture by Kari Eide, a Norwegian educator and activist, who discussed the Barnehegeoprør (“kindergarten uprising”), a successful campaign to protect the country’s universal early-childhood-care and education system.

The campaign in the fall of 2020 focused on story sharing, especially stories by ECEs about their challenges finding decent work and pay in the child care sector. Many of the stories were attention-grabbing and heart wrenching. We used the Rising Up campaign to galvanize opposition to the Ontario government proposed changes to the CCEYA, including a week of action in November 2020. We will continue to develop the Rising Up campaign going into Ontario Election 2021.



"To be an ECE, I needed a college diploma which took me 2 years.
To be a forklift operator I needed to take a one week training course"

"As a forklift operator I make DOUBLE what I did as an ECE"

  **Rising UP for Child Care**



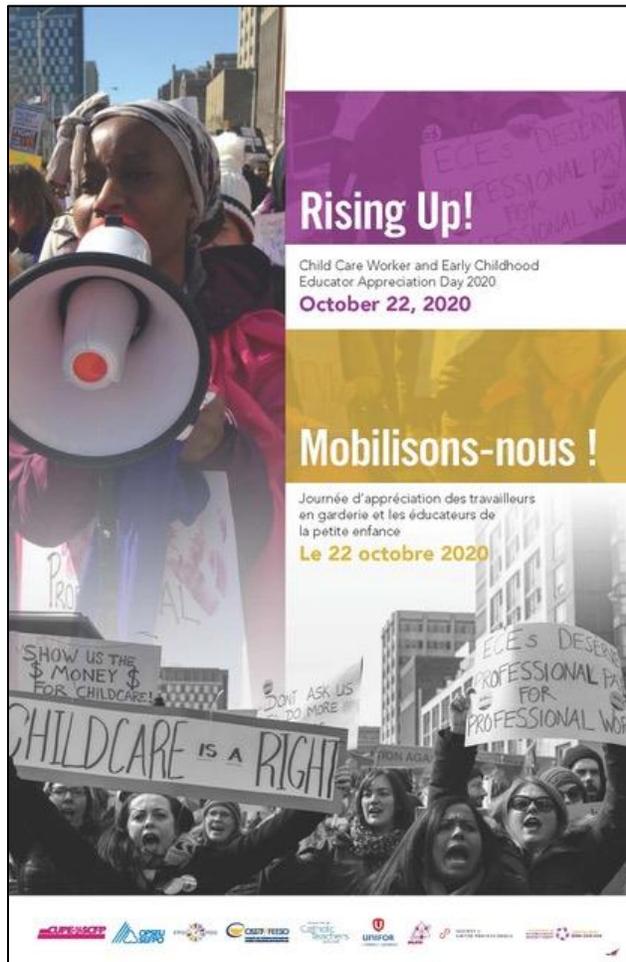
Countdown to STOP THE CHANGES

WEEK OF ACTION

Mon: **Email YOUR submission**
Tues: **Call your MPP!**
Weds: **Twitter Storm**
Thurs: **Share Your Submissions**
Friday: **Listen Up Lecce!**
Call out to Minister of Education

Collaborations



The OCBC held its 20th annual Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation Day on October 22th, 2020. Held in collaboration with Ontario’s labour unions, with special support from CUPE Ontario, Appreciation Day celebrates the early childhood workforce while highlighting their vital work and their need for good wages and working conditions.

The theme for 2020 was “Rising Up”. The poster featured an ECEs from the International Women’s Day March in Toronto.

In 2020, 38 municipalities proclaimed the day, and the City of Mississauga lit up their clock tower purple to honour educators.

While the pandemic impacted the numbers of buttons and posters orders, we still distributed thousands of materials across the province.



The OCBC continued to collaborate with the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario on their Decent Work project, along with the Institute for Change Leaders and Atkinson Centre. OCBC staff acted as facilitators at the Change Leader training sessions, and took part in Decent Work actions and community events, including the campaign for paid sick days led by the Decent Work & Health Network.



The OCBC would like to thank all our coalition partners who helped make our work possible this year.

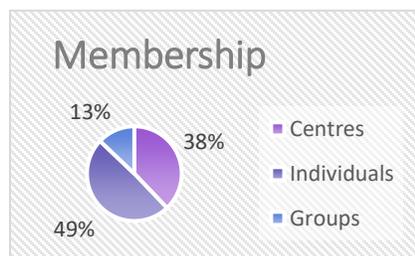


Membership and Administration Coordinator's Report

Kim Mantulak

The 2020/2021 year was yet another challenging one for the early learning and child care sector. Between threats of fundamental changes to the Early Years and Child Care Act and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the sector came together and displayed great strength and solidarity. Unfortunately, we heard from many members that even though they value the coalition and the work we do, they could not manage to pay the membership dues for their 2020 renewal because of ongoing financial uncertainty. In an effort to support our membership, we offered fee deferrals to December 2020. This caused a downturn in membership revenue, but I am happy to report that the extra time helped many members get through the fiscal challenges and they have since continued to pay their annual dues.

In the 2020/21 year we budgeted \$70,000 as our membership revenue goal given that the pandemic could create reduced membership revenue and we met that goal with revenue with \$71,680.95. We acknowledge that this was a decrease from the previous year in which we budgeted \$75,000 as our membership revenue goal and received \$75,746.40. We are pleased that we applied for and successfully received Federal government funding support through the TWS, CEWS and CERB programs, that effectively offset the decreased revenue this fiscal.



As of March 31, 2021, we have 512 members in good standing (194 centres, 66 local groups and provincial organizations, 252 individual members) with a decrease of 68 members from the previous fiscal year. We are confident that this number will rebound given the return of more stable funding and high profile work we are engaged in moving forward into the 2021-2022 fiscal. With the help of our partners at CSBT we have seen stability in the benefit plan size which is positive for our membership. We continued telephone outreach with our membership throughout the year in an effort

to stay connected, hear their concerns and challenges as well as to offer support. We shifted to virtual class talks and presentations, that were well received.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the organization recognized the health and safety needs of our staff by transitioning to a work from home office model. In January of 2021, the office space lease on College Street expired and the three organizations sharing the space opted not to renew the lease at this time. The work from home model has continued to support the ongoing health, safety and security of our staff as well as reducing overhead costs as we address the fiscal challenges COVID-19 has presented to the OCBCC. Our team continues to connect virtually and looks forward to a day that we can plan for in-person meetings and events.

Thank you to our members, Council members, Board members, Carolyn, AECEO staff, TCBC staff, CSBT staff, and other partners for the support this year to meet our goals and cultivate a community of caring. I am so very grateful to have the opportunity to work with you all to create a better future for children, families and workers in ELCC!

Key goals 2020/2021

Support our membership through the COVID-19 pandemic with one-on-one outreach and payment deferrals.

Continue streamlining of OCBCC administration for efficiency and transparency.

Key goals 2021/2022

- Recover and increase membership over the next year through one-on-one outreach and advocacy events.
- Focus administrative support on the work of projects and advocacy campaigns.

