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Child Care Watch

Your source for news about child care advocacy



Welcome to Our E-Newsletter!

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Provincial election: October 6th – We're voting for child care!

Ontarians are headed to the polls on October 6th – that's a week Today! - and each of us must do what we can to put child care on the agenda and ensure that the political parties are clear about their position on child care. Candidates in our communities must know that we will be voting for child care, and that we need to hear a strong commitment from each party for funding to create more affordable high quality spaces and ensure decent wages for ECEs.

Child care needs political leadership and funding to stabilize and protect our sector.



The Progressive Conservatives, the Ontario Liberal Party, and the Ontario New Democrats all support full-day kindergarten. None of the parties address the protection of child care spaces in schools. Only the NDP have promised funding that will help stabilize the child care sector, freeze parent fees, and minimize closures.

For more detailed information on the party platforms and child care, [click here](#).

To view the report card, [click here](#).

Let your incumbent MPP know that you support child care! Visit www.waitingforchildcare.ca to send an e-mail saying you support child care funding.

www.4outof5.ca

Earlier this spring OMSSA, the Ontario Municipal Social Service Association, the managers of municipal child care, released a [report](#) telling us that 200 rural, remote and northern child care programs centres are at immediate risk of closure. We decided to dig through records and find closures from the past 4 years, and start highlighting centres at risk right now.

The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care launched our election campaign with the release of our new website – www.4outof5.ca – to profile child care centres closures along with child care centres at risk of closure. The website calls attention to the fact that **4 out of 5 children already lack access to quality early learning and child care**. The two-sided site outlines the crisis and shortfalls of today's child care system in Ontario, as well as the rights of the child and a brighter vision for our province, including positive profiles of great centres.



Child care today: 4 out of 5 children in Ontario are left out of licensed child care

397 child care centres have closed since 2007: this is just the tip of the iceberg.

With the introduction of full-day kindergarten in Ontario 4 and 5 year old children will be leaving child care programs to go to full-day kindergarten. Without funding for this transition, child care centres predict the cost of child care will rise by 15 to 30%. When fewer families can afford licensed child care, child care centres will experience vacancies and be forced to close despite the high need in their communities.

The website will continue to monitor closures. The OCBCC also wants to post profiles of child care centres 'at risk'. Your centre could be 'at risk' because of rising fees, vacancies,

lack of subsidies, concerns about security of the space, etc. All of our centres are facing such struggles, and we need to come together to speak out. Please get in touch to work with us to create your profile. These profiles can be directly linked to a positive story outlining the value of your program within your community, the quality of jobs, and the impact the program has on kids' lives.

Together we will celebrate our successes and express our fears. To view these profiles, [click here](#).

Please get in touch to develop a profile of your centre - both the struggles you face in this current funding crisis, and the invaluable role your program plays in your community.

Protecting child care space in schools

45% of child care spaces are located in schools. Those child care centres are all at risk of closure without a provincial policy to protect the space of child care centres in schools.

Most at risk are the **22,000** new child care spaces that were created through the Best Start program. This program, implemented from 2003 to 2006, created new child care spaces in schools with newly renovated rooms. Across Ontario, child care centres are being asked to sign short term leases with school boards. There is no funding for child care centres to move. If they lose their space, Ontario will lose these 22,000 new child care spaces. On top of these Best Start spaces, there are another **96,124** child care spaces in schools at risk of closure. For more information, please [click here](#).



Child care is a right

Despite the reality that 4 out of 5 children in Ontario do not have access to licensed child care, the truth is that child care is a right.

This part of the website includes reports on the rights of the child and the economic benefits of investing in child care. [Click here](#) to see it.

Similar to the closure and 'at-risk' profiles, we want to celebrate the amazing programs around the province. Our programs are the heart of our communities. In addition to centre profiles we would love to share positive stories about accessing child care, working in child care, and the role of these programs. Are you a parent? How did finding quality child care affect your life? Are you and ECE or child care worker? What is the difference of working in a high quality centre? What makes you love your job?

Send an [e-mail](#) to Katie to share your story. Together, we can make a difference.

What should I do?

Stay informed! Follow us on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) to get up-to-the-moment information about child care in Ontario.

In addition to contributing to our website with personal stories, if you are a supervisor or on the board of a child care centre, please consider completing our Financial Impacts survey. If your centre has not completed the survey, please go to:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/financialpressuresurvey> (Notre sondage est aussi disponible [en français](#)).

Our Early Years Program Impact Kit can be downloaded for free and contains tools to help child care centres plan and move forward. It was designed to help child care centres that are facing financial trouble and/or the possibility of closure or merger in the near future. Fact sheets and check lists will help you assess the financial situation in which you find yourselves, begin discussions with the board as well as other community stakeholders who could be helpful to your centre moving forward. [Click here](#) to download the kit.

Bond Child and Family Development: A Tragic Loss

Earlier this spring we received the sad news that Bond Child and Family Development would be closing its doors at the end of this year.

A United Way member Agency since 1957, Bond has maintained a reputation for excellence in programming, offering a High/Scope curriculum to sixty-four children, thirty-two of whom attend in the morning and another thirty-two in the afternoon. United Way funding allowed them to provide transportation to and from school by mini bus, an on-site full time resource teacher and assistant, and full time family support worker/home visitor. They have a Snoezelen Room for children with autism, highly trained RECE's, a parent volunteer program, and we have a consistent criteria rating of 3.9.

The majority of families require subsidies. Newcomers, refugees and others living below the low income cut off are the main users of the program and until recently, a referral to Children's Services has allowed unemployed but needy families to access the system. The support families get from attending this program includes clothing, food and referrals. Children learn English and school readiness skills, while those with special needs get the

help they need early enough to make a difference.

Until September 2008, enrolment was consistently at one hundred percent.

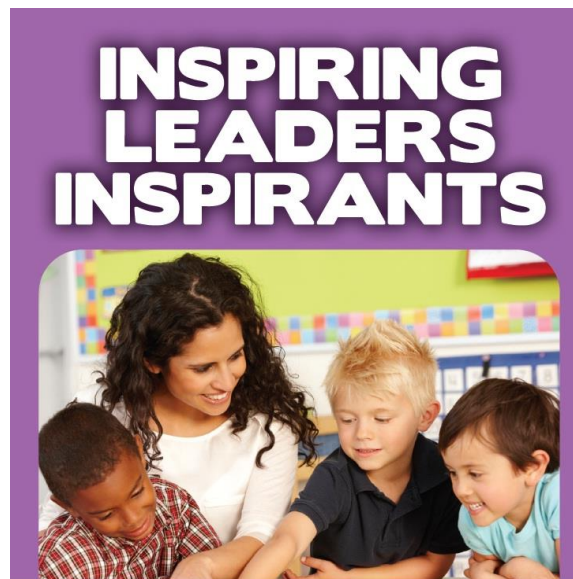
September 2008: 15 vacancies created by subsidized children leaving the program, and lack of subsidies to let new children take their place

September 2009: 25 vacancies created by attrition

In 2010, executive director Rosemary White came with us to Queen's Park for our pre-budget submission and said they now had a 39% vacancy rate. She warned that without funding, her program could face closure and knew they were not alone. There was no funding to admit new children.

Now, nearing the end of 2011 we face the loss of one of Toronto's most famous programs that has served our community for 73 years. It is a devastating loss, and one that could have been prevented. It is time for the province to step up and support our programs.

Child Care Worker and ECE Appreciation Day!



It's that time of year again! October 26th, 2011 is Child Care Worker and Early Childhood Educator Appreciation day!

This year will mark the 11th anniversary of our awareness day which recognizes the education, skills, commitment and dedication of Early Childhood Educators and Child Care Staff.

Child Care Faces Devastating Cuts in Toronto

Mayor Ford asked consulting firm KPMG, to recommend "cost-cutting options" as part of its "core service review" for Children's Services. This is what they came up with as options:

- Divest 57 municipal child care centres to the private sector (we know that this would mean the loss of these centres as no one can afford to expand in child care right now).
- Cut over 2,000 fee subsidies
- Cut quality inspections
- Cut Wage and Rent Grants
- Reduce per diem rates paid to child care for city subsidies.

Toronto cannot afford to lose these services. We know that access to affordable, quality child care a service essential to parents who live, work and contribute to Toronto's economic and social health.

Toronto families need a system of high quality, affordable child care for all families, more fee subsidies, with support from all levels of government.

Parent response – how Toronto families are fighting for their child care spaces

Toronto parents and community members have come out in the thousands to express their fears about what cuts like these would do to their city.

On Monday September 19th, over 360 Torontonians registered to depute in front of executive council. Many stayed past 4 in the morning in the marathon of deputations – overwhelmingly supporting public services. Many young mothers and fathers came to talk about the importance of child care and the burden the high costs put on their families. For more information about the marathon of deputations as well as proposed cuts, please [click here](#).

You can view many of the deputations here: <http://www.youtube.com/TheToronto300>



Pinky-swear for child care!

Parents and children bring snacks to councilors and to reconsider devastating service cuts.

Dozens of parents and their children arrived at city hall to bring snack to the councilors and set up an affordable child care in Rob Ford's office.

Contact Us!

The OCBCC is committed to bringing about an Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) system that is not-for-profit and publicly funded, universally accessible, and high quality.

We're on Facebook! www.facebook.com/OCBCC

Follow us on Twitter: [@ChildCareON](https://twitter.com/ChildCareON) or <http://twitter.com/ChildCareON>

[Click here](#) to Join the OCBCC

To visit the OCBCC web site, [click here](#).

Please consider joining the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care.

Student Memberships are \$30.00 / year.

Child Care Worker: \$37.50 / year

All Other Individuals: \$60.00 / year

Organizational Memberships start at \$100.

Join today! [Click here](#) for the membership form.

Looking for child care resources and publications? Go to www.childcaremanagement.ca

Looking for child care news? Go to www.childcareontario.org

Having trouble finding child care? Having trouble paying for child care? Go to www.waitingforchildcare.ca



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