

AUSTERITY and its **ALTERNATIVES**



Childcare in Canada

Crawling out of Austerity

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Canada's Childcare 'System'

- Mostly on market-driven
- Provinces, territories and First Nations have legislative control
- Centre-based and home-based services
- Most rely heavily on parent fees as the main source of revenue
- Almost entirely female workforce
- Well documented crisis- IMF report 2017, OECD



Time Out: 2017 child care fee report (Macdonald & Friendly)



- The Greater Toronto Area and Metro Vancouver have the highest fees
- The lowest fees are consistently in the cities of Quebec, Winnipeg and Charlottetown
- Child care fees have risen faster than inflation in 71% of the cities since 2016 and in 82% of cities since 2014.
- Most of the cities surveyed reported that at least 70% of child care centres maintained waiting lists, although wait list fees are on the decline.





Time Out's Lessons

- Child care is unaffordable
- Doesn't matter where you are in the country in terms of rural/urban
- When fees are set by the government and remain more affordable



How We Got Here

- 40+ years on the agenda with no follow through
- Harper's Era of neoconservative neoliberal austerity
- Policy- UCCB and Child care spaces initiative
- Ideological realm over evidence, policy





Changing Tide?

Liberal Government 2015-2018

- Canada child tax benefit
- 2016 and 2017 budgets: \$7.5 billion invested over eleven fiscal periods, distributed out as an average annual allocation of just under \$540 million in the first five years.
- *Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework* in July 2017





It's Not Enough!

- 2018 "gender equality" budget...

Alternative Federal Budget 2018 (Ballantyne, Friendly & Anderson)



CCPA
CANADIAN CENTRE
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de POLITIQUES ALTERNATIVES



ALTERNATIVE
FEDERAL BUDGET
2018

CHILD
CARE

SITUATION

- Recent federal child care initiatives, although positive, will not reduce fees for most parents.
- Most comparable countries spend at least 1% of GDP on child care; Canada spends 0.3%.
- Child care fees for parents are prohibitively high and increasing, sometimes faster than inflation.

DESTINATION

- Over 10 years, through conditional federal transfers to the provinces, ensure affordable child care for all parents.
- Increase federal child care funding by \$1 billion annually until the 1% benchmark is met.
- Ensure that funding goes directly to public and not-for-profit providers to reduce fees, not to fee/tax subsidies.

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Universal Childcare

- Publicly-funded systems that entitle (but do not force) access for all without discrimination based on income or other criteria. Effective universal systems also work to eliminate a range of social, ability-based, cultural, geographic, and other barriers to equitable access and participation. (CCAAC, 2004)



AFB Actions

- **Action:** Commit \$1 billion in the 2018-19 fiscal year to be transferred to provinces/territories/Indigenous communities- grow by \$1 billion per year until total spending on ELCC reaches the minimum established international benchmark of 1% of GDP.
- **Action:** Ensure the funding for the implementation the Indigenous-led framework agreement on early learning and child care
- **Action:** Develop a plan within the next 12 months to strengthen the federal-provincial-territorial approach to maternity/parental leave
- **Action:** Make federal ELCC transfer payments (outside of those set aside for Indigenous services) conditional on provinces/territories
 - Public plans | Public management | Public funding | Public reporting



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