

**DEPUTATION TO THE BUDGET COMMITTEE  
CITY OF TORONTO  
December 8, 2011**

**My name is Margaret McGovern. I am here on behalf of the Toronto Caucus of The Canadian Federation of University Women; a federation of ten thousand women from across Canada, a thousand of whom live in Toronto. For many years we have supported Early Childhood Education and Care and indeed in 2006 we passed a resolution to request all levels of government to work together to create a quality, universally accessible, not-for-profit and comprehensive early learning and child care program.**

**We are concerned that the city has closed and is allowing three more Day Care Centres to close with the 2012 budget when there is such a dire need for this resource. Many other speakers have addressed the importance of high quality child care. We also know that almost 20,000 Toronto children are waiting for subsidized care.**

**Parents want good, safe care for their children. However we the larger community should also want good care for their children.**

**Investing in our children is investing in the future of our city as well as our families.**

**In 2004, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and**

Development stated that Canada's system was chronically under-funded. As recently as May of this year, the OECD further stated that single mothers in Canada are particularly vulnerable; their child care costs are among the highest among the OECD countries. As you probably know, the OECD represents the countries with whom we aspire to be associated.

Toronto benefits if both parents are working. They both pay income tax and participate in other aspects of Toronto life. Single mothers have an opportunity to go to school or become wage-earners. They leave the social system and do not need benefits, therefore reducing the city's costs.

There are two references I would like to recommend to those responsible for making the decisions to cut childcare in Toronto. Gordon Cleveland , Michael Krashinsky and their colleagues at the University of Toronto have for a number of years examined child care, including the economic aspects. They have recently published their findings, entitled "New Evidence about Child Care in Canada."

I would also recommend to you an article by R. Fairholm, in Child Care Resources Sector Council, "Literature Review of Socioeconomic Effects and Net Benefits." 2009. The conclusion there is that the

social benefits of investing in early education and high quality child care is a wise use of taxpayer dollars. She quotes a recent Canadian Study on the cost-benefit of public investment in quality childcare shows a return of \$2.54 for every dollar invested.

We have a good city. We would like to believe that we have a compassionate city where we all work together to help our families by investing in our future by investing in their children.

I know you want to know how to pay for these services. I would be pleased to suggest some ways if you wish, but these would be my personal opinions, not the Federation's.

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## FACT SHEET

**A CFUW INITIATIVE FOR INVESTMENT IN EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE**

“We need to place a real priority on our children...Our future will depend on our ability to manage the complex interplay of the emerging new economy, changing social and physical environments and the impact of change on individuals, particularly young children in their most vulnerable, early years.”<sup>1</sup>

“There is now considerable evidence that high-quality child care is good for children. Further, there is mounting economic evidence that, for well-designed programs, the benefits of this high-quality care can be significantly greater than the costs. This evidence lends support to the notion that early education is an investment in the development of children, and that the public or social benefits from this investment make it a wise use of taxpayer dollars.”<sup>2</sup>

Similar concern for children and early learning and child care is found in the following:

- In 1989 the House of Commons unanimously resolved to seek to achieve the goal of eliminating poverty among Canadian children by the year 2000. However, into the second decade of the new millennium poverty persists in spite of the fact that we live in one of the wealthiest countries in the world.
- In October 2004, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] described Canada’s early learning and childcare system as a chronically under funded patchwork of programs with no overarching goals. The report also stated that Canada was last in terms of access to early learning and childcare spaces — and last in terms of public investment.<sup>3</sup> Then in May 2011 the OECD further noted “Finding affordable and good childcare is a challenge for parents across Canada. Roughly 40% of children under the age of 6 are enrolled in formal care programs lagging behind the international economic organization’s standards. Single parents are particularly vulnerable. Their childcare costs are among the highest in the OECD”.<sup>4</sup>
- In 2006 the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) passed the following resolution on Early Childhood Education and Care. RESOLVED, That the Canadian Federation of University Women reaffirm its existing policy and urge the Government of Canada to give priority to the creation of a quality, universally accessible and comprehensive early learning and child care program which emphasizes the development of the whole child. Funding for this initiative should involve all levels of government through cost-sharing mechanisms, as in other human services such as health, education and social programs.

The program mentioned in this resolution has never been implemented. We think the time has come to make it a reality for all who want it. The evidence speaks for itself as we know that:

- early learning is important for children’s development and for preparing them for life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.<sup>5</sup>
- most mothers now work outside the home [almost 65% of women with infants and toddlers which jumps to 79% for women with children between the ages of 6 to 15].<sup>6</sup>
- women are needed in the work force as most families require two earners to achieve an average standard of living.<sup>7</sup>
- approximately 80% of preschool children with employed or studying mothers use non-parental childcare regularly.<sup>8</sup>

- at least three-quarters of Canadians support a national child care program and consider the lack of affordable child care to be a serious problem.<sup>9</sup>
- access to early learning and childcare services is a key tool in reducing child poverty and its life diminishing impacts.<sup>10</sup>
- the social benefits of investing in early education and high-quality child care make it a wise use of taxpayer dollars. A recent Canadian study on the cost-benefit of public investment in quality childcare shows a return of \$2.54 for every dollar invested.<sup>11</sup>

Thus the changes in work and family now mean that parental care and non-parental childcare are both necessary. We need to put the structure in place to achieve this for Canadian families.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Robin Williams quoted in Council for Early Child Development news release for *Early Years Study 2: Putting Science Into Action 2007*. It is available online at <http://www.councilecd.ca/cecd/home.nsf/pages/eys2mediarelease!opendocument%26language=english.html>  
*Early Years Study 2: Putting Science Into Action 2007*, a follow-up report to the 1999 Mustard/McCain *Early Years Study* is available online at [http://www.councilecd.ca/files/downloads/Early\\_Years.pdf](http://www.councilecd.ca/files/downloads/Early_Years.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> G. Cleveland, B. Forer, D. Hyatt, C. Japel & M. Krashinsky, *New Evidence about Child Care in Canada: Use Patterns, Affordability and Quality*, IRPP Choices, October 2008. This is available online at <http://www.irpp.org/choices/archive/vol14no12.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Monica Townson, *Women's Poverty and the Recession*, 2009, available online at [http://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National\\_Office\\_Pubs/2009/Womens\\_Poverty\\_in\\_the\\_Recession.pdf](http://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National_Office_Pubs/2009/Womens_Poverty_in_the_Recession.pdf).

Early Childhood Education and Care Policy Canada Country Note (OECD Directorate for Education) available online at <http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/cs/sp/sdc/socpol/publications/reports/2004-002619/Country.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Renata D'Aliesio, *Globe and Mail*, May 24, 2011, available online at <http://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/11/05/canadians-cant-complain-better-life-index>

<sup>5</sup> Hon. M. N. McCain & J. F. Mustard, *Early Years Study: Reversing the Real Brain Drain*, 1999. This is available online at [http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/documents/topics/earlychildhood/early\\_years\\_study-1999.doc](http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/documents/topics/earlychildhood/early_years_study-1999.doc)

<sup>6</sup> YWCA Canada, *Educated, Employed and Equal: The Economic Prosperity Case for National Child Care*, 2011. This is available online at <http://ywcacanada.ca/data/publications/00000047.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> K. Scott, Vanier Institute of the Family, in "Debate: Canada needs a national child-care policy", *National Post*, February 11, 2011

<sup>8</sup> G. Cleveland, B. Forer, D. Hyatt, C. Japel & M. Krashinsky, *New Evidence about Child Care in Canada: Use Patterns, Affordability and Quality*, IRPP Choices, October 2008. . This is available online at <http://www.irpp.org/choices/archive/vol14no12.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, *Rethink, Rebuild, Renew: 10 Solutions for the Federal Budget*, 2011. The summary is available online at [http://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2011/03/AFB2011\\_Ten\\_Solutions.pdf](http://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2011/03/AFB2011_Ten_Solutions.pdf). The full report is available online at [http://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2011/03/Alternative\\_Federal\\_Budget\\_2011\\_Budget\\_in\\_Brief.pdf](http://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2011/03/Alternative_Federal_Budget_2011_Budget_in_Brief.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Campaign 2000, *Reduced Poverty = Better Health for All*, 2010 Report Card on Child and Family Poverty. This is available online at <http://www.campaign2000.ca/reportCards/national/2010EnglishC2000NationalReportCard.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> R. Fairholm, Child Care Human Resources Sector Council, *Literature Review of Socioeconomic Effects and Net Benefits*, 2009. This is available online at <http://www.cscs-cssge.ca/uploads/WFS%20LitReview%20-%20Socio%20-%20FINAL.pdf>