



Early Childhood Education and Care

There is a significant shortage of affordable childcare in Canada; there are only enough regulated spaces for **just over 20%** of young children, despite the fact that more than 70% of Canadian mothers are in the workforce. With few exceptions, Canada continues to rely largely on the market – individuals, non-profit organizations, and for-profit businesses – to plan and operate services, and parents to pay for them.

Though the funding commitment in this year's budget of \$7 billion over 10 years is a positive step, it does not address the need for high quality, affordable childcare. Once the funding is distributed across the provinces and territories over a decade, it still will not come close to meeting the international benchmark of spending for childcare, which is **1% of GDP**. This continues to leave Canada at the bottom of the list of OECD countries for childcare funding.

Suggested policy initiatives:

- ✓ **Develop a high quality, universal, publicly funded and managed program of early childhood education and care (ECEC)** available everywhere in Canada.
- ✓ **Provide spaces for all children**, respecting the diverse needs of families and children, and increase the current number of regulated spaces.
- ✓ **Ensure the program is affordable.**
- ✓ **Ensure childcare programs are high-quality and led by qualified professionals.**
- ✓ **Deliver public funding directly to ECEC systems and services**, instead of payments to individual parents. This guarantees that funding will be sustained, predictable, and dedicated to high quality childcare.
- ✓ **Index the Canada Child Benefit (CCB) to inflation immediately** (not starting in 2020).
- ✓ **Ensure that the CCB reaches children of recent immigrants all Indigenous children** (not just those whose families have fully completed tax forms).