



January 12, 2016

Re: Shared Framework on Early Childhood Education and Child Care

We are writing to all levels of government across Canada in anticipation of the upcoming federal/provincial/territorial/Indigenous meeting about early childhood education and child care. As researchers, educators, service providers and advocates with keen interest and long-time commitment to this issue, we are most enthusiastic about the process you are beginning and are eager to engage in constructive collaboration with governments.

With colleagues from across Canada, we have been working to develop a common position with regard to the National Early Learning and Child Care Framework promised by the federal Liberal Party of Canada and confirmed in the Prime Minister's ministerial mandate letters. We anticipate that the Shared Framework we have developed (attached) can facilitate a collaborative intergovernmental and community process and serve as a basis for a program that will grow, over time, to meet the needs of families and children in all regions.

We began our collaborative work in the lead up to ChildCare2020, the 2014 national policy conference that brought together more than 600 child care policy experts, early childhood educators, parents, representatives of Indigenous communities, government officials, economists, child development specialists, child poverty advocates and others. The conference adopted a "[shared vision](#)" for early childhood education and child care. Since the federal election, representatives from the diversity of sectors at the conference have come together to develop the Shared Framework document to serve as the basis of discussion with governments and Indigenous leaders. Our "vision" and Shared Framework are evidence-based, drawing on multi-disciplinary research, policy analysis and best practices in policy and service provision.

We appreciate that the new federal government's election commitment to convene a federal/provincial meeting is to begin developing a National Framework, not to completing it "within 100 days". It is a challenging task to develop a solid plan for a new social program that can help meet the needs of families and children in the short and medium-term, stimulate the economy, contribute to the reduction of child and family poverty, promote women's equality and eventually grow to become a mature program. However, notwithstanding the complex nature of social policy-making in the Canadian federation, it is a task worth doing well.

As the 1988 Report of the Task Force on Child Care (initiated by then-Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau to spearhead creation of a national child care programme) concluded: “We are convinced that the government that initiates and perfects these systems will be rewarded in the short run by the accolades of the people and, in the long run, by the favourable judgment of history” (March 8, 1988).

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has made it clear that federally-led initiatives will be developed collaboratively between all levels of government and representatives of Canada’s Indigenous Peoples with stakeholder participation. Thus, we look forward to future dialogue and collaboration with you throughout the development of the promised National Early Learning and Child Care Framework.

Yours truly,

Morna Ballantyne
Board Member,
Child Care Advocacy
Association of Canada

Martha Friendly,
Executive Director,
Childcare Resource and
Research Unit

Don Giesbrecht,
CEO,
Canadian Child Care
Federation

Anita Khanna,
National Coordinator,
Campaign 2000

Contact: Lyndsay Macdonald, coordinator@ccaac.ca, 647-920-5230