

Thursday, April 17, 2025

**Early child development funders across Canada call on all federal parties to support an affordable, universal, high-quality, publicly funded child care system**

On behalf of the [Early Child Development Funders Working Group](#), a group of foundations working to improve early learning and child care (ELCC), we express our gratitude for the unanimous support of [Bill C-35](#)<sup>1</sup> and the recent extension of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) agreements. This commitment, embraced by all political parties, was a welcome first step toward providing critical support for families, promoting equity, and investing in Canada today and for the future.

**We now urge all federal parties to recommit to a Canada-wide system of ELCC with ongoing and increased investments to support non-profit and public delivery and a well-qualified, well-compensated early childhood workforce to strengthen system building.**

The importance of continued investments in ELCC during this time of economic instability cannot be overstated. Canadian families need to be able to rely on affordable, accessible, universal and high-quality and accessible child care.

**Affordability: Canadians need affordable early learning and childcare**

\$10 a day childcare delivers much-needed financial relief to families in these erratic economic times. Thanks to the CWELCC investment, [approximately 900,000 families](#) nationwide now have access to more affordable child care, easing household budgets and promoting greater equity.

**Accessibility: Canadians need childcare spaces**

While child care is now less expensive, families still struggle to secure a spot. The severe shortage of qualified Early Childhood Educators is a crisis driven by persistently low wages, limited access to benefits, and challenging working conditions. This shortfall undermines the foundation of our developing childcare system. The Canada-wide ELCC investments have resulted in the creation of over 100,000 new child care spaces, but more needs to be done to ensure that all families have equitable access to high-quality, inclusive child care.

**Continued Early Learning and Child Care System Building: Backed by Evidence**

The initial round of CWELCC agreements has shown the value of governments working together to advance early learning and child care provision. Early learning and child care system building must continue to be informed by the [extensive Canadian and international research](#) on how governments can best organize, finance, and support the delivery of high-quality ELCC. Public investments in non-profit and publicly delivered child care must remain at the heart of system-building work, given the demonstrated advantages of non-profit service delivery in providing families with equitable access to high-quality, affordable child care.

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<sup>1</sup>*An Act respecting early learning and child care in Canada*

### **Economic Impact: \$32 Billion in Additional GDP**

CWELCC has made significant contributions to Canada's economy. In 2024, approximately [\\$32 billion in additional GDP](#) was generated through direct ELCC production, spin-off job creation, and increased female labourforce participation. This economic impact underscores the vital role that a robust child care system plays in driving national prosperity, especially in our current economic climate.

### **As we approach federal election day, we recommend the following actions:**

1. **Stay committed to an ELCC system:** We urge all federal parties to recommit to a Canada-wide system of ELCC.
2. **Maintain Affordability:** Preserve the financial relief provided to families by the current publicly funded childcare system.
3. **Invest in Non-profit and Public Infrastructure:** Commit to expanding non-profit and public childcare facilities to support effective planning and equitable service development.
4. **Address Workforce Shortages:** Take decisive steps to improve working conditions and resolve the shortage of qualified ECEs to ensure every child receives a quality early learning experience.

As foundations deeply invested in supporting children and families in Canada, we look forward to working with all of you as we continue to ensure a robust Canada-wide ELCC system.

#### [Atkinson Foundation](#)

Colette Murphy, CEO



#### [Jimmy Pratt Foundation](#)

Kim Dreddy, Executive Director



#### [Lawson Foundation](#)

Cathy Taylor, President & CEO



#### [Margaret and Wallace McCain Family Foundation Inc.](#)

Jane Bertrand, Program Director



#### [The Muttart Foundation](#)

Christopher Smith, Associate Executive Director



#### [Waltons Trust](#)

Christy Moorhead, Executive Director

