



ONTARIO GOVERNMENT PUBLIC TOWN HALL MEETINGS: EARLY YEARS AND CHILD CARE POLICY FRAMEWORK AND EXPANSION

BACKGROUNDER FOR PARENTS, RECES, CHILD CARE WORKERS, AND SUPPORTERS

In September the Ontario government announced a commitment to expand child care for 0-4 years olds in Ontario by 100,000 spaces – doubling existing spaces over 5 years. As part of the process, the Ministry of Education is holding public town hall meetings in selected communities around Ontario (see reverse for schedule). These are public sessions where you can have your say. *You do not need to be an expert on child care policy.* This is the place to share your experience and call for a quality early learning and child care system that all families can afford and trust.

KEY MESSAGES ON CHILD CARE

Access: Access to child care relies not only on enough spaces, but convenient location, affordable fees, good quality programs and a system that is simple to navigate.

Quality: A well-trained, well-compensated workforce is the *key to quality child care*. Without decent work the sector will continue to struggle with recruitment and retention of qualified professionals.

Studies also show that there is a quality advantage for public/non-profit child care vs. commercial provision. The most responsible use of public dollars is to expand child care in the *public and non-profit sectors*.

Making the connections: All aspects of a child care system are interconnected. You can't have access without affordability. You can't have good quality without supporting the workforce. System development needs a vision and long term goals.

WHAT SHOULD PARENTS SAY?

- Share your child care challenges: the waitlists, the cost, the stress.
- Share the impact on your career; how hard it is to balance work and family responsibilities in the absence of a child care system.
- Remember: Finding safe, affordable child care shouldn't be a matter of luck. All children deserve access to quality care that won't break the family bank.

WHAT SHOULD RECES, STAFF AND EMPLOYERS SAY?

- Share the education, training, and continuous professional learning that go into becoming a Registered Early Childhood Educator. Talk about the vast differences in pay across the sector.
- Directors: explain the catch-22 of trying to pay staff decently and keep parent fees affordable.
- Remember: The child care workforce is the key to quality programs. We need professional pay and decent work.

LEARN MORE

- For more resources visit the OCBC's website: childcareontario.org
- Ontario's online consultation and discussion paper: ontario.ca/morechildcare

BY THE NUMBERS

- **\$1,000+** child care fees/ month. Ontario has the highest fees in the country.
- **75%** A study for the City of Toronto found that licensed child care was unaffordable for 75% of families.
- **18%** of child care spaces are subsidized (median across Ont. municipalities).
- **24%** of RECEs make less than \$15/hour. Another 45% make less than \$20/hr. 67% of other program staff make less than \$15/hr.

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PUBLIC TOWNHALL MEETINGS

City	Location	Date	Time
Toronto	Ralph Thornton Centre, 765 Queen St. East, Toronto, ON M4M 1H3	Dec 7 th	7pm to 9pm
Milton	Milton Sports Center: Banquet Room, 605 Santa Maria Blvd, Milton, ON, L9T 6J5	Dec 12 th	7pm to 9pm
Peterborough	Evinrude Centre: Banquet Facility, 911 Monaghan Rd, Peterborough, ON, K9J 5K5	Dec 13 th	7pm to 9pm
Scarborough	Boys and Girls Club of East Scarborough 100 Galloway Road, Scarborough, ON M1E 1W7	Dec 14 th	7:00 – 9:00pm
Kitchener	Victoria Hills Community Centre, 10 Chopin Dr., Kitchener, ON N2M 2G2	Dec 15 th	7pm to 9pm
Ottawa	Shaw Centre, 55 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, Ontario, K1N 9J2	Jan 16 th	7pm to 9pm
Kingston	St. Lawrence College- Davies Hall, 100 Portsmouth Ave., Kingston, Ontario, K7L 5A6	Jan 17 th	7pm to 9pm
London	Centennial Hall, 550 Wellington St., London, Ontario, N6A 3P9	Jan 23 rd	7pm to 9pm

More dates may be added. Check www.ontario.ca/morechildcare for updates.