



1-188 Bunting Road
St. Catharines, ON L2M 3Y1
1.800.567.7075
admin@adco-o.on.ca

PROVINCIAL POLICY REFORMS COULD HELP PROTECT FAMILIES FROM FUNDING CHANGES

For Immediate Release

ONTARIO—March 4, 2020— Recent media reports about child care funding changes are causing some parents unnecessary stress, say Ontario’s independent licensed child care owner/operators.

“There’s lots of talk about provincial funding cuts, but in fact, the province isn’t spending any less on child care in 2019/2020 than it did before,” says Andrea Hannen, Executive Director of the Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario (ADCO), the industry association for Ontario’s independent licensed child care programs, both commercial and not-for-profit. “The only difference is that the Ford government has committed to providing some of the funding directly to parents through the CARE tax credit, rather than simply handing it all over to municipal bureaucrats.”

A key federal child care funding agreement with the province also ends this spring. Some public sector unions see federal funding as a means of advancing their agenda of universal, government-run child care. “While it’s important to families that all levels of government prioritize making child care more affordable and easier to find, there are a lot of different ways those goals can be accomplished,” says Hannen. “Delivering funding directly to families gives them greater flexibility and choice, and allows taxpayer dollars to go much further.”

“Looking at urban areas like Peel or Toronto, and even more rural ones like Nipissing, we see large municipal bureaucracies devoted to ‘managing’ provincial child care dollars. There is a tremendous cost to this. What a lot of parents don’t realize is how their municipality spends the provincial dollars it gets has just as much impact as the actual amount it gets” says Hannen.

Parents are often surprised to learn that the Ministry of Education sets almost no province-wide standards for how municipalities use or account for the child care monies they receive. When a municipality diverts money away from fee subsidies, imposes reporting redundancies on licensed child care centres or lets licensed spaces sit vacant, families pay the price. The lack of provincial oversight also means that when funding levels change, municipalities have the option of helping themselves before helping families.

“Our hope is that the Education Minister will continue to support parents. Provincial policy reforms are urgently needed to help underperforming municipalities do better, eliminate red tape for child care centres, and reduce the number of hoops families need to jump through to get the financial supports they need.”

ADCO is the industry association for Ontario’s independent licensed child care centres. Independent licensed child care centres are those that are not run by public sector entities such as municipalities or school boards, or by large multi-service agencies such as YMCAs. While independent licensed child care centres may be run as businesses, not-for-profits or co-ops, their core business is licensed child care. Independent licensed child care centres account for more than a third of Ontario’s licensed child care spaces. Many are run as small businesses, owned and operated by women.

-30-

For further information, please contact:
Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario (ADCO)
admin@adco-o.on.ca or 1-800-567-7075