
■ THE STATE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE IN 2009

Over the last three decades, participation in an early childhood education and care program has become the norm for older preschool-aged children in Canada. Early childhood education and care, or ECEC, refers primarily to kindergarten and regulated child care programs. National data show that nearly 80% of preschool-age children with employed or studying mothers are regularly in some form of non-parental child care or early childhood program with almost 50% in an organized ECEC program, although data that indicate whether these meet parents' needs for "care", and whether they are high quality enough to be defined as "early childhood education", are not available (Cleveland, Forer, Hyatt, Japel and Krashinsky, 2008). Between the 1980s and 2009, the proportion of children aged six months to five years who were in some form of extra-parental child care increased significantly, while more child care-using families shifted to child care centres and relative care (Statistics Canada, 2005). At the same time, kindergarten programs developed across Canada to cover virtually all five year olds and some four years, although kindergarten is usually a part-time program, ordinarily covering two and a half hours a day. Of the more than 70% of children with both parents or a single parent in the paid labour force, many or most were presumed to be in family child care provided by an unregulated family child care provider, an in-home caregiver or a relative for at least part of their parents' working hours.

The range and quality of early childhood education and care services and access to them vary enormously by region and circumstances. Organized ECEC services across Canada are in short supply or, like public kindergarten, not sensitive to the labour force needs of parents and are available for only a minority of preschool-aged children. Regulated child care is often too costly for ordinary families or not sufficiently high quality to be considered "developmental". Young school-aged children may be alone after school or attend recreation or other community programs that are not intended to provide "care". Overall, no region of Canada provides a system of well-designed, integrated and adequately funded early childhood education and care services to meet the needs of a majority of families and children.

One of the most salient pieces of information about Canada's early childhood education and care situation is that, although participation in the paid labour force has become the norm for mothers of young children, and the evidence about the benefits of quality early childhood programs for young children has accumulated, the situation has failed to progress significantly. International comparative studies such as the OECD's Thematic Review of Early Childhood Education and Care¹ and UNICEF's 2008 report card on provision of early childhood education and care indicate that while — as the OECD has described it — "Policy makers have recognized that equitable access to quality early childhood education and care can strengthen the foundations of lifelong learning for all children and support the broad educational and social needs of families" (OECD, 2001, p.7), Canada has fallen farther and farther behind most other affluent countries, ranking — according to UNICEF's 10 benchmarks — at the very bottom (UNICEF, 2008).

HOW EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IS ORGANIZED IN CANADA

Each of Canada's 14 jurisdictions — 10 provinces, three territories and the federal government — has a number of programs for care and early childhood education as well as for meeting other objectives such as supporting parents and ameliorating the effects of poverty.

Each province and territory has a program of regulated child care that includes centre-based full-day child care, regulated family child care, school-aged child care and, usually, nursery or preschools. The provincial/territorial child care programs provide legislated requirements for operation of services and a variety of funding arrangements, usually under a social or community services ministry.

Provincial/territorial governments also have responsibility for public kindergartens that primarily operate part-time — usually 2.5 hours a day — for five year olds under ministries of education.

Generally, kindergarten programs for five year olds (or fours in Ontario) are a public responsibility while “care” and early childhood education for children younger than age five is a private family responsibility. In addition to these provincial/territorial programs, a variety of care and education programs — for example, Aboriginal Head Start and Military Family Resource Programs — operate under the aegis of the federal government.

ECEC (or early learning and child care) in Canada consists of regulated child care and kindergarten, supplemented by family resource programs that are primarily intended to support parents and by an assortment of cash payments, complemented by maternity and parental leave.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ECEC

That Canada has a federal system is key to the definition of responsibilities for the country’s ECEC. The division of powers between federal and provincial governments was originally defined in the Constitution Act of 1867 and has evolved over the years. The 1990s and 2000s have been periods of devolution of roles and responsibilities for social programs, primarily from the federal to the provincial level. The Social Union Framework Agreement (SUFA) of 1999 shaped Canada’s social policy² for some years although its status is unclear at this time.

A new role that developed in the 2000s for the federal government is that of financing some ECEC costs. For the first time, the federal government began to transfer earmarked funds to the provinces and territories to spend on regulated child care in 2003³. These specifically earmarked funds flow through several intergovernmental agreements (see Federal ECEC section). Earmarked federal transfers reached as high as \$950 million annually for a short period in the mid-2000s and totaled \$600 million in 2007/08.

Thus, with few exceptions, ECEC services — child care, nursery schools, kindergarten — are, like health, social services, and elementary, secondary and post-secondary education — under the jurisdiction of provinces and territories. Each of Canada’s 10 provinces and three territories has developed a program of regulated child care and — in most cases — a separate public kindergarten program.

Canadian municipalities do not have powers assigned by constitutional arrangements but are subordinate to the provinces, which delegate powers, including taxing powers, to them. Outside Ontario, where they play several important roles in child care (funding, operation of services [about 10% of regulated child care services are municipally operated] and policy-setting), local governments generally have no function in regulated child care, although the City of Vancouver has adopted a key planning role. Local school boards (or school divisions) are also subordinate to provincial governments; these usually have primary responsibility for operation of elementary schools, including kindergarten, and may host child care programs as landlords as well.

Parent-users, non-governmental organizations and other community-based actors are a key part of Canadian ECEC. At the service delivery level, the bulk of the supply of regulated child care is initiated and maintained by parent and/or voluntary boards of directors; these child care programs comprise most of the nonprofit child care sector, which represents 75% of the total supply. Otherwise parents generally have little specific role in regulated child care, although the bulk of child care services and private arrangements are paid for by parent fees; a national study in 1998 found that an average of 49.2% of revenue for full-day child care centres came from parent fees.

In most parts of Canada, advocacy, professional and service groups, researchers and, to some extent, organized parent groups where they exist, make up what is often called “the child care community”. These groups are important providers of services like professional development and in-service training. In addition, advocacy for more and better child care —

and now ECEC — has been a visible feature of the Canadian ECEC landscape for decades. Alliances with other groups with an interest in ECEC — for example, the labour movement, anti-poverty activists, feminists and other sectors — have long been a fundamental element of Canadian advocacy for child care. At the present time, professional, service and advocacy groups are considerably weakened as the federal funds that have traditionally supported their activities have been withdrawn.

SERVICE OVERVIEW

Most of Canada's ECEC programs are under provincial jurisdiction. Generally, regulated child care includes centres, usually (except in Quebec, Saskatchewan and the Yukon) nursery schools, preschools or part-day centre-based programs and regulated family child care under the same legislation. Almost all jurisdictions now require at least some of the staff working in child care with children to have some training in early childhood education; however, Canadian requirements for early childhood training are generally acknowledged to be less than adequate (UNICEF, 2008).

All jurisdictions subsidize at least some of the costs of regulated child care for low-income, usually employed, parents. However, in some cases, limitations on the number of these subsidies exclude many eligible parents; in other cases, the subsidy provided does not cover the whole fee; sometimes there is a significant gap between the subsidy rate and the parent fee. As well, in most provinces/territories, the income level that determines eligibility is too low to cover modest and middle income families (Beach and Friendly, 2005)⁴. In much of Canada, middle class or modest income families do not qualify for a fee subsidy and cannot afford regulated child care.

Some provinces also provide funds to support the overall operation of child care services; this may be in the form of wage grants to raise staff wages. Overall, though, except in Quebec, child care is primarily a fee-paying service with many families not able to access services due to costs. Only Quebec has set out designated substantial public funding.

All the provinces and territories provide public kindergarten. In most cases kindergarten is part of the public education system⁵ and in most jurisdictions, it is treated as an entitlement with no fees. All provinces/territories provide kindergarten for five year olds; in Ontario, four year old kindergarten is available universally too. Most kindergarten is part-day or part-time with three provinces offering full-day kindergarten (for the length of a school day). Attendance at kindergarten is compulsory in two jurisdictions; however, almost all age-eligible children attend public kindergartens when they are offered. Three provinces and the territories maintain more than one publicly funded school system (public and Catholic). All offer kindergarten in both official languages where population warrants. Some jurisdictions, such as Nunavut provide kindergarten in regional First Nations or Inuit languages.

Generally, there is little connection between kindergarten programs and regulated child care services at either the policy or service delivery level. In some provinces, Ontario, for example, many child care centres are located in schools. Except in Quebec, where school-aged child care (including for four and five year olds who attend kindergarten) is under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, and Saskatchewan, where child care has been transferred to the Ministry of Education, child care services are usually not the responsibility of the education system but are operated by community-based boards of directors, other nonprofit institutions or organizations, or by for-profit operators. School-based child care usually serves children up to age 12, with varying entry age for school-age programs; in Quebec, for example, four and five year olds in kindergarten are in school-age programs under the Ministry of Education outside of regular school hours while other provinces usually consider school-age child care to begin at Grade 1. Other age groups, including infants and toddlers, may also be served in school locations. In 2007/08 initiatives in a number of provinces — most notably Ontario — have begun to blend or integrate child care and kindergarten policy-wise, as well as programmatically and administratively⁶.

Provincial/territorial ECEC programs are covered in more detail in the individual section for each jurisdiction, in the Big Picture and Long View tables and in the *Trends and analysis* documents published to accompany this publication. ECEC services for Aboriginal communities, those under federal aegis and those for minority francophone populations are described in subsequent sections.

TWO HISTORIES: EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CHILD CARE

The history of early childhood education and child care in Canada stretches back to the mid-19th century. In the first half of the 1800s, infant schools were developed in several provinces to offer care and instruction to poor children. Following these — motivated by the idea that children benefit from formal education and then influenced by contemporary thinking about the importance of education in early childhood — the first private kindergartens began to appear and, in cities and larger towns, were commonplace by the end of the 1870s.

The kindergarten movement soon grew beyond its first middle and upper class clientele as private kindergartens spread across Canada. These included "free kindergartens" run by missionary and charitable groups which were used as a tool for social reform and as a way of assimilating immigrant children (Prochner, 2000). Following on the heels of the first public kindergartens in the United States, the Toronto Board of Education opened the first Canadian public kindergarten in 1883. Influenced by the work of European educational specialists like Pestalozzi and Froebel, the Ontario kindergartens were recognized officially in 1885 and funded by the province two years later (Mathien, 2001). By 1900, there were kindergartens intended for three to five year olds and full day in many towns and villages across Ontario.

Some of the early kindergartens were apparently used — in part, at least — as "care" programs and, as Toronto's public school kindergartens were becoming more widespread, some were opened to look after children while their mothers were employed. Even before this, however, a few services were developed to take care of young children in Montreal, Toronto and, by 1920, in Halifax, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Vancouver and other cities. Throughout this period, these early childhood services — some of which accommodated infants — were developed and run by churches and women's charitable groups.

While there was organized child care in several of Canada's provinces early in the 1900s, there was little government involvement until World War II when a 1942 Order-in-Council established the Dominion-Provincial-War-time Agreement, the first federal intervention in organized child care. It offered 50% cost sharing to assist provinces to provide care for children whose mothers were working in essential war industries. Only Ontario and Quebec participated in this agreement. After the war, the federal government withdrew its support and all six of the Quebec child care centres, and many of Ontario's, closed.

Following World War II, the federal government's role in child care was mostly indirect and limited. Nevertheless, its second foray into the area in 1966 had an important impact on the way child care has developed since that time. The Canada Assistance Plan (CAP), the national welfare program, was introduced in 1966 to ameliorate or prevent poverty. Through the child care provisions of CAP, the Government of Canada entered into cost sharing agreements with the provinces for welfare services including child care. For the purpose of 50/50 cost sharing, CAP treated child care like other welfare services and established federal conditions. These stipulated that federal funds were available to pay only for services for needy, or potentially needy, families, and that to be eligible for funding as a welfare service, child care had to be regulated and public or not-for-profit⁷. The design of CAP meant that federal funds were used almost exclusively for fee subsidies for families who were income- or means-tested to determine eligibility⁸.

As social services are a provincial responsibility in Canada, the provinces were not compelled to participate. However, although it took a decade for them all to begin to use CAP's child care provisions, eventually all the provinces cost-shared their eligible child care costs through CAP. Thus, CAP began to spur the development of child care services throughout Canada and to shape their evolution throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Its residual approach to funding meant that regulated child care emerged as a welfare rather than a universal or educational service.

But as mothers with young children entered the paid labour force in growing numbers, middle class families also began to use child care centres that usually served both subsidized and fee paying families. Although there were always difficulties with the limited funding arrangements, the supply of regulated child care services grew dramatically throughout Canada as most of the provinces developed and refined service delivery, regulation and funding in the 1970s and 1980s.

In 1971, parental out-of-pocket child care expenses were allowed as a tax deduction for eligible families under *The Income Tax Act*, and maternity benefits for eligible new mothers were included under *The Unemployment Insurance Act*.

In 1970, the Royal Commission on the Status of Women called for a National Day-Care Act, the first national recognition of child care as part of the growing acknowledgement of women's equality. The provinces — beginning with Quebec in 1979 — began to provide funds other than fee subsidies to child care centres to reduce operating costs or to improve wages. Community demand for child care services — especially from a vibrant feminist movement exemplified by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women — swelled throughout the 1980s.

At the same time, separated conceptually, administratively and programmatically from “care”, public kindergarten was established in almost every province and territory to provide early childhood education, becoming an entitlement in most jurisdictions so that by the mid 1980s, most Canadian five year olds (and in Ontario, four year olds) were enrolled in public, mostly half-day kindergarten programs.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IN THE 1990s

Between 1984 and 1995, there were three significant attempts to develop a national approach to child care as successive federal governments announced a national strategy. Each of these — the Task Force on Child Care set up by the Trudeau government (1984), the Special Committee on Child Care of the Mulroney government (1986), and the initiative based on Jean Chretien's 1993 Red Book election commitment — recognized the primacy of the provinces in social or educational services such as child care. However, none of these efforts was successful in producing a pan-Canadian strategy or approach to early childhood education and care.

In the mid-1990s, Canada's political arrangements, which had historically featured tensions between federal and provincial roles, tilted toward provincial primacy. This shift had a strong impact on the future of early childhood education and child care. The Canada Assistance Plan was abolished in 1996 (and never re-established) and all federal dollars for provincial health, education and welfare programs were subsumed in a block fund, the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST)⁹. Social policy experts feared that, without conditions like those that had been part of the CAP agreement, provincial spending of the substantially reduced federal dollars in the CHST would become less accountable both to the federal government and to the public.

A debate about what was termed “social policy renewal” arose in a climate of anxiety about Quebec separation and the fiscal deficit. This was formalized in February 1999 as the federal government and the nine provinces comprising “the rest of Canada” outside Quebec signed the Social Union Framework Agreement (SUFA). These features of politics vis-à-vis Canadian federalism continued to play key roles in the development of a national early learning and child care program after 2000. While there was interest in young children and in “child development” as manifested in the National Children's Agenda (1997) and the Early Childhood Development Agreement (2000) which carried new federal funds for provincial children's programs, early childhood education and child care per se was off national policy agendas throughout this period and, indeed, lost ground in some provinces such as Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia (Friendly, Beach and Turiano, 2002).

In 2001, the federal government increased the parental leave portion of the Employment Insurance benefit to 35 weeks, making a total benefit covering 50 weeks combined maternity/parental leave available to eligible new parents. In response, all provinces/territories eventually amended their employment legislation to allow for an extended parental leave to match or exceed the federal benefit period.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE IN THE 2000s

Child care remained off the national policy agenda and while it remained off most (not all) provincial/territorial agendas, Quebec took a giant step forward. With a process that began in 1997, Quebec started to bring in a publicly-funded universal ECEC program. The evolution included moving from reliance on parent fee subsidies (like other provinces) to a public funding model; introduction of full- day kindergarten for all five year olds; expansion of spaces — supported by capital funding — to provide much greater availability through community-based centres de la petite enfance (CPEs) that include centre-based and family day care; a \$5-a-day parent fee for all families regardless of income; and a commitment to improved maternity/parental leave (Tougas, 2002). The process continued into the 2000s, although it shifted gears somewhat when a Quebec election brought in a new government.

Canada-wide, it was not until 2003 that another intergovernmental agreement — the Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care — was put in place by Federal Human Resources Minister Jane Stewart and provincial/territorial social services ministers. The ministers' communiqué said that, "This early learning and child care framework represents another important step in the development of early childhood development programs and services" (Government of Canada, 2003), while Minister Stewart called the Agreement "the beginning of a very solid national day-care program for Canadians" (Lawton, 2003).

But it was the next step towards a national early learning and child care program that was historic as it was the first time that a national child care program had been promised since Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservative government considered it in 1986. This commitment came in the 2004 election campaign when the federal Liberals promised to develop a national early learning and child care system based on four principles — Quality, Universality, Accessibility and Developmental [programming] (QUAD). The campaign platform promised \$5 billion new dollars over five years to begin to build the system. Most of this money was to be transferred to provinces/territories using the CST formula; \$100 million was to be used for "accountability and data" and \$100 million for early learning and child care for First Nations communities (on-reserve).

After the Liberals won the 2004 election, they began negotiations with provinces to secure agreement to participate. The federal government's conditions were: a) provinces were to produce Action Plans before a five-year funding agreement was finalized; b) federal funds would be used only for regulated early childhood education and care programs; c) provinces would publicly report on the use of funds. By December 2005, nine provinces had signed bilateral agreements-in-principle with the Government of Canada on early learning and child care and two — Ontario and Manitoba — had published provincial action plans. These two, along with Quebec, which did not sign an agreement-in-principle or publish an Action Plan, moved on to negotiate full five-year funding agreements with the federal government.

These agreements marked the first time that a Canadian government had followed through with an election commitment to improve child care across Canada. While there was some variation in the provinces' directions as described in the agreements-in-principle, in signing them, the provinces committed to developing detailed Action Plans based on the four QUAD principles. In addition, all agreements included provincial commitment to collaborative infrastructural work in such areas as a national quality framework and data systems.

NEW DIRECTIONS

In January 2006 a minority Conservative government was elected. The new government announced that the processes set in motion by the bilateral agreements would be terminated; that all jurisdictions — the three provinces with five-year funding agreements¹⁰ (Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba), the seven provinces that had not yet released their Action Plans, and the three territories — would get one year's worth of federal funding; it would end March 31, 2007.

The new federal government promised an individual cash payment to parents — the Choice in Child Care Allowance, later renamed the "Universal Child Care Benefit" — an annual payment of \$1,200 to all parents with children under age 6, taxed in the hands of the lower-income spouse. In addition, the Conservatives said that they would initiate a Community Childcare Investment Program, later renamed the Spaces Initiative (capital funding to set up child care) to "help employers and communities create child care spaces in the workplace or through cooperative or community associations by establishing a tax credit for capital costs of \$10,000 per space; funding of \$250 million a year was identified for this initiative and — in the 2007 federal budget — was subsequently included as a transfer payment to provinces in the Canada Social Transfer.

The Universal Child Care Benefit cheques began to flow to parents in July 2006. An advisory committee was established to advise the Minister on the Child Care Spaces Initiative and consultations were held across Canada on this initiative. The advisory committee released a report and recommendations (Ministerial Advisory Committee on the Government of Canada's Child Care Spaces Initiative, 2007); \$250 million in transfer payments were announced in the 2007 federal budget.

After the January 2006 election and the cancellation of the national early learning and child care program, the focus of ECEC policy shifted to the provinces and territories.

While growth in regulated child care continued, between April 2006 and April 2007 there was limited growth in the number of regulated child care spaces in most provinces/territories, with expansion in Quebec slowing sharply. The increase — 26,661 spaces — was the smallest in several years; between 2007 and 2008, the increase was 29,271 spaces. In comparison, supply grew by 65,337 (an average of 32,668 in each year) between 2004 and 2006, and by 152,493 between 2001 and 2004 (an average of 50,831 a year in each of those three years) (Childcare Resource and Research Unit, 2008). The increase in spaces between March 2007 and March 2008 was again quite small — an additional 29,271 spaces.

In May 2006, an NDP-sponsored private member's bill, Bill C-303 was introduced. The "Act to establish criteria and conditions in respect of funding for early learning and child care programs in order to ensure the quality, accessibility, universality and accountability of those programs, and to appoint a council to advise the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development on matters relating to early learning and child care" was supported by the New Democrats, the Liberals and the Bloc Québécois and — although ruled a "money bill"¹¹, made its way through committee hearings to Third Reading¹², when the government was prorogued in November, 2008. The NDP Critic for child care, Olivia Chow, reintroduced the bill in April 2009.

In 2008, UNICEF published the first international study to rank the quality, access, financing and policy of ECEC programs using measurable benchmarks pegged to the average level of OECD achievement. Canada's provision of early childhood education and care ranked at the very bottom of 25 developed countries, tied with Ireland, as Canada achieved only one of ten minimum standards (UNICEF, 2008).

While Canada has a long way to go to reach the coverage, funding, policy, and infrastructure levels of other countries, there have been some promising, modest provincial initiatives since 2006. Several provinces have attempted to strengthen the ECEC workforce by helping to support training and education of staff; some have introduced recruitment and retention initiatives and some have increased levels of operating funding for regulated programs. Some small capital grants have been made, largely to enable centres to repair and refurbish facilities; while not necessarily increasing the supply of child care, they have improved physical environments for children. In a few instances, incentives to increase the supply of spaces have been initiated. In some provinces, notably Ontario, ministries of education have begun to take an increased interest in early childhood education and have begun discussion with social/community services ministries on issues related to curriculum, expanded full-day programming or full-day kindergarten and school delivery of other early childhood initiatives.

Notes

- 1 For an online collection of all the OECD Thematic Review of ECEC reports see CRRU's online Issue File: <http://www.childcarecanada.org/res/issues/oecdthematicreviewcanadareports.html>
- 2 See CRRU's Issue File, *The Social Union Framework Agreement: Issues in Canadian policymaking* at: <http://www.childcarecanada.org/res/issues/sufa.html>
- 3 With the exception of funds briefly available during World War II.
- 4 See also individual provincial/territorial sections in this publication.
- 5 See Table 8. Selected characteristics of kindergarten programs by province/territory - 2008
- 6 See provincial/territorial sections in this publication.
- 7 CAP's other route allowed child care costs in for-profit services to be cost shared for eligible means-tested families as an "item of assistance".
- 8 It should be noted that the Canada Assistance Plan was ended by the federal government in 1996 and was not replaced by another national welfare program.
- 9 In 2004, the CHST was divided into the CHT (health) and the CST (social).
- 10 The three five year agreements (Manitoba, Quebec and Ontario) contained a pro forma "escape" clause that specifies that either partner to the agreement may cancel it with one year's notice.
- 11 Federal legislation with financial implications requires support of the governing party to receive Royal Assent.
- 12 Bill C-303 is available online at: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/LEGISInfo/index.asp?Language=E&query=5101&Session=15&List=toc>

References

- Beach, J. and Friendly, M. (2005). *Quality by Design working documents: Child care fee subsidies in Canada*. Available online at: http://www.childcarequality.ca/wdocs/QbD_FeeSubsidies_Canada.pdf.
- Childcare Resource and Research Unit. (2008). *Child care space statistics 2007*. Toronto: Author. Available online at: <http://www.child-carecanada.org/pubs/other/spaces/ccspacestatistics07.pdf>
- Cleveland, G., Forer, B., Hyatt, D., Japel, C., and Krashinsky, M. (2008) New evidence about child care in Canada: Use patterns, affordability and quality. *Choices*, 14(2). Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy.
- Friendly, M., Beach, J. and Turiano, M. (2002). *Early childhood education and care in Canada 2001*. Toronto: Childcare Resource and Research Unit.
- Government of Canada. (2003). *Federal/provincial/territorial agreement on early learning and child care*. Available online at http://www.socialunion.gc.ca/elcc_e.htm.
- Lawton, V. (2003). Ottawa, provinces sign day-care deal: 50,000 new spots over five years, \$900M program 'essential first step'. *Toronto Star*. March 13. Available online at: http://action.web.ca/home/crru/rsrscs_crru_full.shtml?x=33627
- Mathien, J. (2001). *Children, families and institutions in the late 19th and early 20th century Ontario*. Masters thesis. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (University of Toronto).
- Ministerial Advisory Committee on the Government of Canada's Child Care Spaces Initiative. (2007). *Child care spaces recommendations: Supporting Canadian children and families: Addressing the gap between the supply and demand for high quality child care*. Ottawa: Government of Canada. Available online at: http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/publications_resources/social_policy/mac_report/child_care_spaces_strategy.pdf
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2001). *Starting Strong: Early childhood education and care*. Paris: Author.
- Prochner, L. (2000). A history of early education and child care in Canada, 1820-1966. In Prochner, L. and Howe, N. (Eds). *Early childhood education and care in Canada*: 11-65. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Statistics Canada. (2005). Child care: 1996-2001. *The Daily*. Ottawa: Author. Available online at <http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/050207/d050207b.htm>
- Tougas, J. (2002). *Reforming Quebec's early childhood education and care: The first five years*. Toronto: Childcare Resource and Research Unit. Available online at: <http://www.childcarecanada.org/pubs/op17/op17ENG.pdf>
- UNICEF. (2008). *The child care transition, Innocenti Report Card 8, 2008*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

