

Together in Caring



WHY WE NEED TO INVEST IN ONTARIO'S HOME CHILD CARE SECTOR

2023 Pre—Budget Consultation Submission



Child Care Providers
RESOURCE NETWORK

About the Child Care Providers Resource Network:

CCPRN is committed to and focused on the well-being and safety of all children.

We are a non-profit, charitable organization with a network reach of more than 4800 parents and caregivers across the province and beyond.


It is our mission to provide information, training, resources, and support to those providing child care in a home setting. Child care is the care of a child, regardless of who provides the care: parents, grandparents, friends or relatives, in-home nannies, and/or home child care providers—both licensed and unlicensed.

We know that when parents and caregivers have access to information and feel supported in their roles, they are better able to provide safe and nurturing environments for children to learn, play, and grow.



CCPRN INITIATIVES:

CCPRN has a 40 year history of supporting all who provide home child care, built by passionate and hardworking volunteers who are accomplished and have participated in many important initiatives in the child care community. One such volunteer is Andrea Gingras who was awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal for her significant and sustained commitment to caregiving, caregivers, children, and families.



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Initiatives with Impact!

Take a look at some of our past projects:

- Contribution to the **Early Years Study: Reversing the Real Brain Drain**, co-chaired by the Hon. Margaret McCain and Dr. Fraser Mustard, in connection with the Ontario Network of Home Child Care Provider Groups.
- Publication and national distribution of **"A Caregiver's Guide to Home Child Care"** in English and in French.
- **Caring for Young Children**: TV Ontario video series.
- **The National Family Training Program** – Levels I, II, & III – a comprehensive plan developed and presented by trained facilitators, created in partnership with the Canadian Child Care Federation.
- Participation on **Home Child Care Council and Ontario Network of Home Child Care Provider Groups**
- Participation in numerous presentations, conferences, reports, task forces, and advisory tables on child care.
- Participation on the **Home Child Care Task Force** and in development of **Home Child Care Training Ottawa**
- Working with the Canadian Paediatric Society to contribute/review their publication **"Well Beings: A Guide to Health in Child Care"** (3rd Edition).
- Met with many government Ministers and MPPs. **Presented at Queen's Park** and worked with partners to successfully amend the CCEYA.
- Participation in Family Support Network, Parent Educator Network, Best Start Planning Table, and Ottawa Citywide Services Planning, with fellow early years colleagues & other community professionals.
- Participation in the provincial **Early Years Advisory Group** and **CCEYA 5 Year Review**.
- **Child Care Connection**: For parents to learn about child care options and to exchange information with potential caregivers.
- Peer mentoring, professional development, and business support for home child care providers.
- **The Warmline**—telephone support for anyone with child care related questions or needing support.

All while running our own home child care businesses and maintaining CCPRN core services and resources!

CARING for the Caregiver is Caring for the Child

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CCPRN has always looked to the Ministry of Education for child care best practices. We continue to incorporate and refer to provincial pedagogy throughout our work. Referencing frameworks such as ELECT, and *How Does Learning Happen?*, along with the work of recognized early childhood leaders, ensures that we remain current within the field.

The information, training, resources, and support that we offer on early childhood development and care is available to all parents, caregivers, and community members.



We are the **only** organization of our kind, uniquely positioned to serve the majority of Ontario families excluded from the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Plan.

We believe that parents are competent and capable of making child care choices best suited to meet their family's needs.

Home child care providers are one of the most influential people in a child's early life—helping to shape the developing brain and laying a strong foundation for future learning and growth. A quality home child care environment features a caregiver who is committed to the well-being and safety of the children in their care. CCPRN empowers and supports caregivers to be their best—to learn and grow, to reflect, and to be successful in their business.



Did You Know?

75%



**OF ONTARIO CHILDREN
0-12 YEARS OLD**

**are in the care of a
parent, relative,
independent home
child care provider, or
in-home nanny**



**THAT'S NEARLY
1.5 MILLION CHILDREN**

Child population aged 0-12: 1,987,967

CARING for the Caregiver is Caring for the Child

With less than 25% of Ontario children accessing licensed child care, the new Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care plan excludes more than 75% of Ontario children and families:

- Those choosing independent (unlicensed) home child care or an in-home nanny.
- Those choosing informal care arrangements with a friend or relative.
- Those choosing to stay home with their own young children.

We believe that CCPRN's role is essential—now, more than ever. Together, and with financial support from the province, we can continue to support all parents, grandparents, and home child care providers.

Why fund home child care?

Why fund CCPRN?

6 key reasons:



WHY FUND HOME CHILD CARE?

1

ONTARIO PARENTS CONTINUE TO CHOOSE HOME CHILD CARE AS THEIR PREFERRED CHOICE FOR CHILD CARE.

2

INVESTING IN HOME CHILD CARE IS AN INVESTMENT IN ONTARIO'S FUTURE. LOW-RATIO, HOME-LIKE ENVIRONMENTS FOCUSED ON CONNECTION AND RELATIONSHIP CONTRIBUTE TO A HEALTHY AND RESILIENT FUTURE WORKFORCE.

3

HOME CHILD CARE PROVIDERS ARE ENTREPRENEURS WHO PAY TAXES AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE ECONOMY. SUPPORTING PROVIDERS WITH INFORMATION AND RESOURCES WILL ENSURE THAT THEY HAVE WHAT THEY NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL.

WHY FUND CCPRN?

4

WE ARE THE ONLY ORGANIZATION SUPPORTING ALL WHO PROVIDE HOME-BASED CARE: PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, FRIENDS & RELATIVES, IN-HOME NANNIES, AND HOME CHILD CARE PROVIDERS—BOTH LICENSED AND UNLICENSED.

5

CCPRN HAS THE EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE TO DELIVER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FOCUSED ON SAFETY AND QUALITY CARE.

6

SUPPORTING CCPRN FULFILLS PROVINCIAL OBJECTIVES AND THE GOVERNMENT'S MOST IMPORTANT MANDATE—KEEPING ONTARIO CHILDREN SAFE.

Why fund home child care?

Why fund CCPRN?

Reasons:



- It is a critical time for child care in Ontario. Parents continue to choose and use home child care (licensed and unlicensed) and/or choose to stay at home during the early years. Parents need to know that their children and choices are valued by the government. Support for child care needs to be inclusive.
- There is an ongoing need for unlicensed home child care providers in Ontario. Therefore, there is also an ongoing need for training, education, and support. CCPRN was created more than 40 years ago to provide these services and to fill a void that still exists today. Providers affiliated with the licensed sector also require services and support.

- Many small licensed home child care agencies are not able to provide direct training and resources. CCPRN is able to partner with these agencies to meet the needs of their contracted providers. Ongoing support and opportunities for professional development contribute to greater workforce retention in the field.
- Caregivers and parents are better able to provide safe and nurturing environments for children when they have access to information and feel supported in their roles. All parents and caregivers deserve access to information and support—including those who are not part of the licensed sector and those who are from vulnerable communities.



- Both Premier Ford and Minister Lecce have repeatedly committed to respecting “all families in their choice for child care” and supporting “all families in how they raise their children”. Child care choices in Ontario are as diverse as the families themselves. Policies and funding must be inclusive and respectful of all choices.
- The CARE tax credit provides financial support for families, yet in no way addresses or supports home child care providers and parents providing care. For more than 40 years, CCPRN has provided support specifically targeted to this sector. Access to relevant information and dedicated ongoing professional development is essential to the provision of quality child care.



The government's own reports identify the need for resources and support across all child care sectors:

- *"Ontario is committed to ensuring children and families have access to a range of healthy, affordable, inclusive, safe, and high-quality early years and child care programs with flexible options that meet parents' needs." (MOE Strategic Plan 2021-22)*
- *"Support and choice for children and families. Child care services and supports should be convenient, and parents and communities should have a range of quality care options." (Modernizing Child Care in Ontario)*
- *"Commitment to quality programs for all children. Program quality must be a priority across service settings." (Modernizing Child Care in Ontario)*
- *"Unregulated/informal providers should have access to information and resources to promote program quality." (Modernizing Child Care in Ontario)*
- *"Home child care providers can often work in silos and face challenges accessing professional development opportunities". (Strengthening early years and child care in Ontario, 2020)*



"When children are strongly connected to their caregivers, they feel safe and have the confidence to play, explore, and learn about the world around them. Enabling children to develop a sense of belonging as part of a group is also a key contributor to their lifelong well-being. A sense of belonging is supported when each child's unique spirit, individuality, and presence are valued."

How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, page 24

The government has also committed to the following action items:



- *“Consult on the concept and elements of a provincial publicly-accessible registry for unlicensed child care providers in Ontario. This would support quality and health and safety in unlicensed child care settings.” (Strengthening early years and child care in Ontario, 2020 report)*
- *“Develop and publish resources to support quality in unlicensed child care settings. This will further bolster quality in those settings and will help foster better experiences for children.” (Strengthening early years and child care in Ontario, 2020 report)*

“If we who are responsible for children can give a sense of belonging, a sense of significance; if we can hold onto the heart and make it safe, if we can give them a sense of being known...this creates the womb for maturation.”

–Gordon Neufeld



Why fund home child care?

Why fund CCPRN?

4 key results:



Why fund home child care?

Why fund CCPRN?

Results:

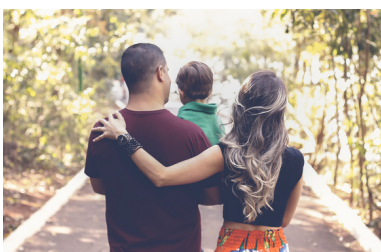


- Not enough spaces exist to fill current demand. Ontario's FAO reports that by 2026, there will not be enough spaces in the licensed sector to meet the needs of all Ontario families. Constructing, opening, and staffing larger centres often takes years and costs the province millions of dollars.
- Home child care provides a long-term career option for Early Childhood Educators as well as a diverse group of people dedicated to supporting and enriching the lives of young children.
- Women, and mothers of young children in particular, continue to experience disproportionate economic barriers in accessing the workforce. With good job prospects and an increased demand for child care spaces, now is the time to recruit, educate, and support the Ontario home child care sector.
- Support and access to resources is imperative to the quality and success of any business. Provincial support combined with guidance from CCPRN, will provide ongoing support and resources for existing home child care providers while facilitating the opening of additional community-based home child care businesses.

- Recruiting, training, and supporting home child care providers to open and run community-based small businesses supports working parents in all industries.
- CCPRN enables caregivers to further develop and expand their skills and knowledge, while supporting them in their capacity as educators making a profound difference in the lives of children and families.
- Community based home child care allows families to choose a provider with: 1) similar values; 2) a shared language; 3) a shared culture. These shared commonalities facilitate a sense of belonging and connection. In addition, home child care meets the needs of families requiring flexible care hours beyond the traditional 9-5 model. Home child care offers continuity of care with one primary caregiver—a feature which is not available in larger centres. Inclusion and recognition of all forms of home child care means families requiring financial assistance would have access to the type of child care and neighbourhood of their choice.
- Support for home child care and the entrepreneurs who dedicate their careers to this field (predominantly women, many of whom are new to Canada), supports the provincial goals of equity, diversity, and inclusion in child care. Outreach and support to caregivers from vulnerable sectors can benefit communities by improving access to care.



- Support for small independent businesses is essential. “If you’ve spent time in almost any town in Ontario — you know that small businesses are the lifeblood of their communities,” said Ford. Entrepreneurship is valued by the Conservative government. We appreciate the promise of “More support for small businesses.” under the Ontario PC Party “Get It Done” commitment for Premier Ford’s 2022 campaign. The most inexpensive way to support the business of home child care (and by extension the thousands of parents choosing this type of care) is to support CCPRN.
- Supporting CCPRN fulfills the province's own objectives and the government’s most important mandate—keeping Ontario children safe. Our services contribute to the prevention of serious incidents and fatalities in child care.
- Core funding of approximately \$450,000/year would enable us to provide and expand upon training, resources, and support, focused on quality child care. Ontario’s pedagogy for The Early Years is based on *How Does Learning Happen?*. The underlying premise is that in order for children to grow and flourish, their sense of belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression are both nurtured and respected. Home child care provides early learning environments which nurture and support each child’s growth and development.



Summary:

Provincial funding and Ministry guidance paired with our expertise, community trust, and network reach would provide the ideal elements for a successful partnership. We believe that this is the next step towards our shared goal of supporting the quality, health, and safety of all children. We know that when parents and caregivers have access to information and feel supported in their roles, they are better able to provide safe and nurturing environments for children to learn, play, and grow.





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