



THE CASE FOR UNIVERSAL, AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE

Without universal access to affordable early education and child care, women's equality cannot be a reality.

IT OPENS UP OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN



In Alberta, women's employment lags behind men's, and women are twice as likely to work part-time compared to men. At home, they do twice the amount of unpaid work.

Lack of access to affordable, quality child care is a key barrier to women finding and keeping work.

A low-fee system accessible to all would open up opportunities, so women can build better futures for themselves and their children.

IT REDUCES POVERTY



4 in 10 lone mothers with underage children live in poverty, compared to 1 in 10 women in couple families.

Better access to affordable, quality child care would allow lone mothers who experience poverty to look for or return to work and take part in education and training.

IT BENEFITS CHILDREN



One in two children living with a lone parent experiences poverty, compared to 1 in 10 children who grow up with two parents. The majority of lone parents are women.

The lack of affordable, high-quality child care robs children of valuable learning environments and keeps their parents in poverty. Improving access to quality care leads to better and more equitable outcomes for kids.

IT BENEFITS OUR COMMUNITIES



When parents have access to affordable, quality child care, they can find and keep work, study, get training, and improve their family's economic situation.

Every dollar spent in early education has a \$2-\$7 return on investment over the long term.

An investment in child care is an investment in better outcomes for women, children, and whole communities.



THE STATE OF CHILD CARE IN ALBERTA

Right now, child care is hard to access and unaffordable for most. The \$25/day child care program has reduced barriers, but more investment is needed.

INEQUITABLE ACCESS FOR FAMILIES



In Alberta, there are only enough regulated child care spaces for 1 in 3 children younger than 5.

More than half of Calgary's children live in child care 'deserts' -- areas where there are three or more children competing for every available space.

HIGH COSTS

Monthly childcare fees are as much as rent or a mortgage payment. In Calgary, the average fee for a toddler is \$1,030.



Under the \$25/day program, cost for parents is down to \$540/month (low income families pay less).

UNSTABLE CARE ENVIRONMENTS

Early childhood educators and care staff -- predominantly women -- earn some of the lowest wages in the province.



When wages are decent, we see better quality environments and less turnover.

THE PROMISE OF \$25/DAY CHILD CARE

The Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centres pilot program significantly reduces barriers to high-quality child care:

With fees capped at \$25/day, the centres provide more affordable care. They are better equipped to support children with complex needs and offer care to infants.

They are also more likely to hire and retain better-trained staff. By providing better wages and supports for educators, the program creates stable learning environments for children.



QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

Early Learning and Child Care

IMPROVING ACCESS



Will you and your party commit to funding a significant expansion of child care spaces by providing public funding to not-for-profit providers?

IMPROVING AFFORDABILITY



Will you and your party commit to making child care more affordable by capping fees at \$25/day, and eliminating fees for low income families?

ENSURING QUALITY OF CARE ENVIRONMENTS



Will you and your party acknowledge the critical importance of decent wages and qualifications for early childhood educators by supporting a wage floor increase introduced under the \$25/day pilot program?

HOLISTIC APPROACH TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

How would you ensure that Alberta has an early education and child care system that has enough spaces for every child, low or no fees for parents, and stable, high-quality care environments in which children can thrive?

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