KEEP THE CHILD CARE PROMISE.

23 January, 2026

Dear Federal, Provincial and Territorial Forum of Ministers Most Responsible for Early Learning and Child Care,

The federal, provincial and territorial investments in licensed child care since the inception of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care system in 2021 have generated significant economic activity, giving rise to major returns including an important increase in women's labour force participation.

Parents have described the program as "life-changing": the supply of licensed programs has grown, and lower parent fees have made life more affordable for many, amidst ongoing inflation. Most provinces and territories have made initial investments in compensation for the female-dominated child care workforce to encourage recruitment and retention.

However, much remains to be done to ensure the ambitious program meets the social and economic objectives.

To continue and build on the admirable and measurable progress achieved to date, it is crucial that at your upcoming ministerial meetings your governments each commit to expanding and strengthening the $10aDay child care system so that in time all young children have the opportunity to benefit from high quality, inclusive programs.

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Child Care Now

We ask that you agree to strengthen the program using the best available evidence by:

- Increasing public funding to meet the real cost of operating high-quality programs and to expand the availability of licensed child care under the $10aDay child care system;
- Building a primarily non-profit and public system of child care so that public investments advance high quality, equitable services, not profit-making;
- Achieving a maximum parent fee of $10aDay with further fee reductions for low income families;
- Investing in the early learning and child care workforce to attract and retain qualified educators;
- Developing and implementing concrete, proactive child care expansion plans with emphasis on making access more equitable;
- Publicly and promptly sharing the text of your child care agreements, associated action plans and results.

Importantly, we call on you to fully fund and support implementation of the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Frameworks.

We applaud you for your early leadership with respect to early learning and child care and we call on you to remain committed to fully implementing the $10aDay child care program.

As other countries have learned, developing a universal child care system is a complex project that requires governments and community to collaborate guided by evidence. For Canada, doing this right will make it a transformative, generational project that will enhance individual and collective economic security across Canada, providing essential social infrastructure for all other nation-building projects.

Sincerely,

Morna Ballantyne, Executive Director
Child Care Now

Erin Cullen, Founder
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Dr. Teale N. Phelps Bondaroff, Chair and co-founder
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Building Blocks for Child Care

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Leila Sarangi, Chair, National Director
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Taya Whitehead, Chair
Canadian Child Care Federation

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Jamie Beagan, Executive Director
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Siobhán Vipond, Executive Vice-President
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Jackie Neapole, Executive Director
Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women

Coleen Jones, 2nd National Vice President
Canadian Union of Postal Workers

Mark Hancock – National President and Candace Rennick – National Secretary-Treasurer
Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)

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Canadian Women's Chamber of Commerce

Mitzie Hunter, President and CEO
Canadian Women’s Foundation

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Julie Savard-Shaw, Executive Director
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