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Federal 2021 Budget – Affordable Quality Childcare

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There was some cause for celebration in the 2021 Federal Budget for funding child care.

Child care advocates say the federal budget marks an historic turning point for children and families and will bring about a better, fairer and faster economic recovery.

The federal budget laid-out a multi-year budget plan to make child care programs more accessible, affordable and inclusive. This includes a plan to help reduce parent fees to \$10 a day within five years. Bringing down parent fees by publicly funding the operation of regulated child care services is the best way to build a universal system that is good for the sector, for children and that is affordable for parents.

The budget includes a jump in federal funding to \$4.1 billion in 2021-22 and then up from there to \$9.2 billion annually by 2025-26. This amounts to a \$30 billion federal investment over 5 years. The budget also confirmed new investments for Indigenous child care and provide \$29.2 million over the next two years to improve physical accessibility to licensed child care centres.

But what has child care advocates especially happy is the promise to expand the system in the not-for-profit sector. This will mean better quality care for children and better wages and working conditions for the workforce and lower fees for parents.

This budget was backed-up with a promise to bring in federal child care legislation similar to the Canada Health Care Act this coming fall.

What's Next?

It is time to make the provinces/territories step up; to take the federal funding and build the kind of child care systems that will meet the diverse needs of families. This means part-time, over-night and non-standard hours of care. This means ensuring that children with special needs are included and can benefit from quality child care. This means ensuring that families – no matter where they live in this country, can find and afford the care they need so they can work or study.

CUPW will continue to fight along-side our child care allies to make this vision a reality. We will need to remain vigilant to ensure that our children receive quality care aimed at developmental support over profiteering and exploitation. In any event, this is a moment to celebrate. Thank you to all parents and everyone that fought for this day for generations.

In Solidarity,

Dave Bleakney

2nd National Vice-President