

## **An Open Letter to Ministers and FPT Staff responsible for Early Childhood Development, Learning and Care (ECDLC) Services**

I am writing to update you on the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada's *Child Care Policy: Making the Connections* Project. While we have had the pleasure of sharing and discussing the project work with many of you and your communities over the last two years, we also know that governments, ministers and staff have changed over this time period. As we near the completion of our project it is therefore timely to:

1. Remind you of the project tools and resources that we have developed to support you in your work in and with communities to improve access to quality, affordable and inclusive early learning and child care (ELCC) services
2. Share our approach to the project report, which will be issued prior to the project's October 31 2007 completion date
3. Confirm the public reports available to communities in your province or territory, specifically in relation to the Federal/Provincial/Territorial (FPT) agreements related to ECDLC services.

In March 2005 we first wrote to you about *Making the Connections*.<sup>i</sup> We noted that an objective of this project is to provide tools and resources that will support capacity building and child care planning within governments and across communities. Building on information sharing and experience, research and evidence, and government's commitments to child care services as evidenced in FPT agreements, we have made the following project resources broadly available (<http://www.childcareadvocacy.ca/mtc/index.html>):

1. [Child Care Planning Checklist](#) – highlights key elements of a plan for improving access to quality, affordable, inclusive child care services in provinces and territories.
2. [Child Care System Implementation Model](#) – describes how a focused public investment strategy can ensure that incremental public investments measurably advance the key system indicators for quality, affordability and accessibility (the latter through expansion and inclusion).

We acknowledge that this project was implemented within a climate of increasing federal transfers for regulated child care services, and have tried to be sensitive to the impacts of subsequently reduced federal transfers on provincial and territorial plans.

Nonetheless, federal transfers for and provincial/territorial commitments to improving access to quality, affordable, regulated child care services as outlined in the 2003 Multilateral Framework on ELCC remain in place, as do the broader commitments outlined in the 2000 Early Childhood Development Agreement. Given the ongoing commitment of federal transfers for child care (details available at <http://www.fin.gc.ca/FEDPROV/fsce.html>),

and the service needs identified by communities across the country, we hope that these project tools assist you in the continuing development and implementation of your child care plans.

The final deliverable under our project relates specifically to annual reporting under the FPT agreements. We have been working to improve the understanding of, and community/government dialogue regarding, the implications of child care policy and investments. To that end, we have helped to share information with communities about federal transfers to provinces and territories related to ECDLC. We have also developed the following chart to assist communities and governments in tracking investments over time in early childhood development generally and specifically in improving access to affordable, quality early learning and child care programs and services:

**Summary of Annual Reporting on Early Childhood Development, Learning & Care (ECDLC) Activities**

	Total Baseline Funding Yr 0 00/01	← Annual Investment Increase (Decrease) →					Total Year 5 Funding 05/06	Total Change over Baseline
		Year 1 01/02	Year 2 02/03	Year 3 03/04	Year 4 04/05	Year 5 05/06		
ECD - Early learning & Child Care Services								
ECD – Income Supports to Families								
ECD – all other programs & services								
<b>Total investment – all ECDLC Programs</b>								
Less: Total Federal transfers								
<b>Provincial Contribution to ECDLC Programs or (Federal Transfers not yet invested in ECDLC)*</b>								

\* Increased investment in ECDLC first draws down the available federal transfers, followed by increased provincial investments. Where federal transfers are greater than the increased investment in ECDLC programs, assume that unspent transfers will be invested in future years (unless otherwise indicated in the public reports).

This summarized chart is consistent with the reporting objectives and principles described in the FPT agreements and shared reporting framework at the same time as it:

1. Facilitates a common understanding of investment tracking
2. Builds on the reporting elements common to several existing FPT reports
3. Allows for individual FPT public reports to more fully describe their programs and services and indicators of availability, affordability and quality that reflect their priority areas for investment.

Our project report will include:

1. A completed chart for each jurisdiction, to the extent possible utilizing publicly available information contained in reporting to date under FPT agreements. (FPT directors responsible for child care services, please see attached list and contact the undersigned by August 24 2007 with any updates or questions.)
2. Observations on public reporting, as well as recommendations for enhanced public reporting in the future – recognizing that “governments will strive to improve the quality of reporting over time” (2003 Multilateral Framework on ELCC).

It is important to note that we are particularly focused on (regulated) early learning and child care services in this project, rather than the wide range of other ECD programs and services delivered in provinces and territories. However, given the integration of the federal transfers and PT investments in ECDLC, we must include all of the ECD-related investments in our summary analysis.

The Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada’s membership reaches more than 4 million Canadians, including parents, caregivers, researchers and students as well as women’s, anti-poverty, labour, social justice, disability and rural organizations. For twenty five years, we have worked with community members in provinces and territories across Canada to improve access to quality, affordable child care services – the very goals committed to by FPT governments in the 2003 Multilateral Framework on ELCC. This FPT agreement notes that “governments will ensure effective mechanisms for Canadians to participate in developing early learning and child care priorities and reviewing outcomes”, and we hope that the tools, resources and public reporting observations and recommendations provided through this project are helpful in that regard. We will of course share a draft of the project report with FPT governments prior to its release, and welcome you to contact the undersigned with any questions by email ([info@ccaac.ca](mailto:info@ccaac.ca)) or by phone (613.594.3196 ext 233).

Sincerely,



Lynell Anderson, B. Comm, CGA  
Project Director

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<sup>i</sup> The Making the Connections project is funded by the federal government’s Social Development Partnerships Program.