

December 18, 2008

Dear Colleagues,

The Minister of Finance has invited Canadians to share their views and priorities for the 2009 federal budget, scheduled for release on January 27 2009. *"The Government is open to innovative new ideas that would help shape the plan for economic recovery in the 2009 budget," said Minister Flaherty.*

Unlike in most developed countries, publicly funded child care services* would indeed be an innovative idea in Canada!

Let government know that quality, affordable child care services are key to Canada's economic recovery. Between now and January 9 2009 complete the federal government's [online consultation form](#). You will see that child care is key to several of the proposed economic stimulus priorities. Working within the required structure, **here are suggested responses for your consideration** (hint – the guidelines allow a maximum of 50 words in each area):

Priority Idea #1

Child care services provide an immediate economic stimulus by promoting labour force retention and expansion in the short term (more parents able to work, more caregivers employed) and human capital in the long term (more parents access training, more children with the healthy start that leads to productive adulthood).

Priority Idea #2

Expedite Infrastructure spending through federal transfers to provinces to invest in publicly-owned child care facilities and their operating costs. Child care infrastructure spending has maximum local impact as the child care sector is labour intensive and early childhood educators usually live, work and buy in their communities.

"Beyond the question of short-term stimulus, what steps should the government take to ensure that the Canadian economy remains internationally competitive and continues to attract investment and creates jobs?"

In addition to providing immediate economic stimulus, public investments in quality, affordable, community-owned child care services also leave a social capital legacy that will support families, the labour force and a competitive Canadian economy well into the future.

*It is important to use the term *child care services* rather than just child care. The federal government provides money to parents through the Universal *Child Care* Benefit, which may help with some child rearing costs but does not ensure families have access to quality, affordable child care services.