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**Budget 2009 confirms federal government satisfied with Canada's  
last-place international ranking on child care**

Today's budget makes it perfectly clear that the federal government is happy with its last place ranking on the international child care scale. While Federal Budget 2009 specifically earmarks millions of dollars to make our internationally renowned banking system even stronger, it contains nothing to address the internationally recognized crisis in child care services across the country.

"The 2009 federal budget ignores the child care needs of Canadians trying to hold onto jobs and retrain" says Jody Dallaire, Chairperson and New Brunswick Director of the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada. "When you have lost your job and can no longer afford child care to study or look for work, how is a tax cut going to help you? From the United Nations to the OECD, Canada has been repeatedly chastised for its failed child care policies and their impact on women's equality and healthy child development. And now, it's more of the same."

In 2004, the OECD ranked Canada last among developed countries in terms of access to early learning and child care spaces, and last in terms of public investment. The OECD noted that Canadian families pay among the highest child care fees in the world. More recently, Canada tied for last place in the December 2008 UNICEF report card on child care and other family support programs, achieving only one out of ten performance benchmarks.

"Federal budget 2009 does nothing to promote quality, affordable child care services that would help children and families weather the economic crisis" states Dallaire. "And, without child care women cannot fully participate in Canadian society. We call on the Opposition parties to hold this federal government accountable for meeting Canadian families' child care needs."

Most countries understand that child care services are critical to a healthy economy. Our future relies on our federal government understanding it too."

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