



## ***The Conservatives and Child Care: A Shell Game / Les Conservateurs et les services de garde: le jeu des gobelets***

*CCAAC Ottawa 6 Jan 06*

The Conservative announcements on child care are like the old shell game played by carnies. Parents who are conned into thinking there is a prize under the shell – a promised child care space – will soon see there is nothing when they lift the shell. Switch them around, call it child care, and still nothing. The latest re-announcement of the Conservative tax incentive for child care spaces won't work.

Pledging \$250 million to create child care spaces through tax breaks to businesses is an old idea that Mike Harris tried in Ontario. No business took up the offer and not one space was created. Tax incentives will not create a child care program. It's the same patchwork approach that has left so many parents scrambling to make child care arrangements without access to regulated child care services.

Harper has ignored the fact that the provinces and territories are the ones that actually deliver child care. Harper has already declared that existing child care agreements with the provinces will be torn up so the considerable ongoing costs and responsibility for maintaining these new services will be offloaded to parents and the provinces. The progress on developing new spaces will stop.

The Conservative plan actually takes control of child care out of the communities and parents' hands and puts it in the hands of corporations – who care about profits, not parents or children. It's the Conservatives who actually want to create institutional care.

Without substantial and increased federal public investment in early learning and child care, there is no way to create quality affordable services all families can use.