

Annual Report 2005—2006

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

What a roller coaster this past year has been for CCAAC and child care! It began with excitement, when after 30 years of advocacy Canada finally started its forward movement toward a pan-Canadian child care system.

I was witness to the first signature of a bilateral early learning and child care agreement in Manitoba, which was followed by agreement after agreement for all remaining provinces. We saw the roll out of promises and programs by provincial governments, and a transfer of \$5 billion over five years for building and operating a child care system in Canada.

While the bilateral agreements were a hopeful start, \$5 billion over five years could only be considered a small downpayment on a comprehensive early learning and child care system. Furthermore, to construct and sustain a system that is high quality, affordable, inclusive and accountable, federal-provincial agreements need to be multilateral, with accountability measures and restrictions on who has access to the funds.

Nevertheless, the bilateral agreements marked the beginning of a federal-provincial working relationship that could make a pan-Canadian child care system a reality. Through further public pressure, monitoring of the agreements, and lobbying for federal legislation with accountability requirements for spending, we were optimistic that our message would have an impact and the government would take the necessary steps to build a child care system to meet the needs of all Canadian children and parents.

Before November 2005, the prospect and eventual reality of federal-provincial child care agreements drove much of our policy development work. However, the sands then shifted and the upcoming federal election transformed the political landscape, putting the emerging child care system in jeopardy. In January 2006, the newly elected Conservative government cancelled the agreements effective March 2007, replacing them with a \$1200 per child under 6 taxable allowance scheme and undefined plans to create 125,000 new child care spaces across the country.

The cancellation of the agreements meant that the hard-won gains from years of work by advocates and child care supporters, and months of federal-provincial negotiations, were simply thrown away. The taxable allowance can't begin to replace what the provinces lost. The federal funding promised in the agreements was to expand early learning and child care options for over 100,000 families; improve access, particularly for low income and rural families and for children with special needs; and enhance intervention services for children at risk. Ontario lost 11,000 of its anticipated new spaces. Saskatchewan lost 1,470 spaces. Manitoba had to put its plans for 3,000 new spaces on hold. The plans of other provinces have been similarly stalled, cancelled, or rolled back. It was especially hard to understand why this government singled out Aboriginal children for a \$25-million cut to First Nations child care.

This turn of events has been heart-wrenching and discouraging. At the same time, it's impossible not to be encouraged by the incredible size and strength of the child care movement in Canada today. During this past year, the public profile of child care

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Who We Are

Board of Directors

Co-Chairs

Jamie Kass
Sectoral

Debra Mayer
Geographic

Provincial Representatives

Kismet Lowrie
Yukon Child Care Association

Susan Elson
Alberta Child Care Network

Jody Dallaire
New Brunswick Child Care Coalition

Susan Harney
Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC

Debra Mayer
*Child Care Coalition of Manitoba,
MCCA, MGEU*

Margo Kirk
Non-Profit Directors Association

Sue Delanoy
*Saskatoon Communities for Children,
Saskatchewan Early Learning
Child Care Coalition*

Kira Heineck
Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care

Clare Bessell
*Newfoundland and Labrador Child Care
Coalition*

Council of Advocates

Sectoral Representatives

Laurel Rothman - *Anti-poverty
Campaign 2000*

Jenny Robinson - *Women
YWCA Canada*

Margot Young - *Labour
Canadian Union of Public Employees*

Jamie Kass - *Labour
Canadian Labour Congress,
Canadian Union of Postal Workers*

Martha Friendly - *Research
Childcare Resource & Research Unit*

Anu Bose - *Immigrant &
visible minority women
National Organization of Immigrant
& Visible Minority Women of Canada*

Anna MacQuarrie - *Disability
Canadian Association for Community Living*

Angela Regnier - *Students
Canadian Federation of Students*

Carol Gott - *Rural child care*

CCAAC Staff

Monica Lysack
Executive Director

Lynell Anderson
Project Director

Tammy Findlay
Researcher

Amanda Mayer
*Financial and Administrative
Coordinator*

Connie Brigham
Membership Coordinator

Consultants

Bozica Costigliola
Communications Consultant

Kerry McCuaig
Research Consultant

Jocelyne Tougas
Translator

Anne-Marie Mesa
Translator

CCAAC members

Our membership base is made up of individuals, families, and child care centres, as well as regional and pan-Canadian organizations from all across the country. Our organizational members include:

- Child care centres
- Labour unions
- Pan-Canadian and provincial child care organizations
- Social policy research networks
- Voluntary sector organizations
- Colleges and universities
- Municipalities and government organizations
- Aboriginal and First Nations groups
- Social service agencies serving women and children

Overwhelming National Outreach

Our longest standing and most committed organizational members represent well over four million individuals, and our membership is growing daily. Poll results suggest that CCAAC speaks for the majority of Canadians. An Environics poll released in June 2006 found that 76% of Canadians support a national, affordable child care strategy like the one initiated by the previous federal government.

New Joint Membership Program

CCAAC has a successful joint membership program with The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC. This year, the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care launched its joint membership program, building on the strengths of our pan-Canadian/regional partnerships. This partnership is an example of the strengthening of national/provincial coordinated mobilization capacity.

Products and Services Provided to Members

This past year, our web site and email broadcasts continued to function together as our primary medium of communication and service delivery to members. Our email broadcasts provided links to child care information posted on our web site (www.ccaac.ca), including:

- Updates, action alerts, and resources (for example, sample letters and fact sheets)
- Timely updates on federal/provincial child care policy changes
- CCAAC publications
- Links to new scholarly publications, upcoming conferences, reports and speeches

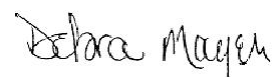
We have also sent our members information packages in the mail, including CCAAC bulletins, campaign resources, and board of directors nomination forms and documents. We encourage members to participate in our board of directors elections. All membership services have been offered in English and French.

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has risen to a new level. The issues and values around child care have become the centre of ongoing discussion and debate. Since the signing of the agreements, child care has headlined media reports across the country, become the central issue of party platforms, and the subject of open letters, petitions, vigils and rallies (*see message from the Council of Advocates*). The child care movement today has a depth and breadth that heartens me and makes me proud. We are recognized as a force to be reckoned with by the media, politicians and bureaucrats, and by all Canadians committed to social justice.

This is my final year on the board of CCAAC, and the end of my term as chairperson. I have been privileged to represent Manitoba at CCAAC since 1999. I would like to thank Manitoba's advocacy community, including the Manitoba Child Care Association, the Child Care Coalition of Manitoba, Community Living - MB, Manitoba Government Employees Union, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Manitoba Federation of Labour and the many grassroots supporters in Manitoba and across Canada. The CCAAC board members, past and present, are my sisters and femtors. A special thank you to **Jamie Kass**, my Co-Chair of the Council of Advocates, whose presence in the Ottawa area has meant she carried much of the volunteer load on her very strong shoulders. I would also like to acknowledge our wonderful office staff, especially **Monica Lysack**, our Executive Director.

To you, our members, thank you for your ongoing advocacy for Canada's children. Let's keep pressing until children's needs are fully met!



Debra Mayer
CCAAC Board Chair

MESSAGE FROM THE COUNCIL OF ADVOCATES

It's been a year of constant, intense campaigning as advocates responded to major political shifts—from a flawed, but hopeful, federal initiative for a pan-Canadian child care system, to the new government reneging on the early learning and child care agreements.

When the agreements were being negotiated, we lobbied the politicians tirelessly for inclusion of the critical and still elusive building blocks of adequate funding, strong accountability, child care legislation and expansion limited to the non-profit sector. Child care coalitions pressed their provincial governments to consult broadly with citizens so that action plans would meet the needs of all parents and children. During this time, child care headlined newspaper, television, and radio reports. By December 2005, all provinces had signed agreements. Missing, however, were agreements with the territories, who could not accept the federal government's inadequate funding formula.

Federal Election 2006 - Campaign Child Care

On the heels of the last agreement came the federal election, and with it the Conservative announcement that if they won, they would tear up the agreements, effectively ending what could have become Canada's newest social program. Although they billed their taxable family allowance as a child care plan, it was anything but. Advocates were very concerned that voters would

I'm voting for a
quality
child care program



Accessible Non-Profit High quality

Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada / L'Association canadienne pour la promotion des services de garde à l'échelle

not understand the implications of the Conservative position on the emerging child care system.

As soon as the writs were dropped, advocates sprang into action. During the earlier stages of the election we worked with the parties to try to influence their platforms. We produced a voter's guide to child care, fact sheets, links and information on party positions—all readily available on the CCAAC web site. We did extensive media work and participated in broadly-based coalition events that included child care as a priority issue. Labour, women's, disability, anti-poverty, social justice and student organizations integrated child care into their election campaigns and linked to the CCAAC web site. Provincial child care coalitions encouraged parents and child care workers to attend candidate debates, and send letters to their candidates. Child care became a defining election issue, and even though the Conservatives won a minority government, the overwhelming majority of voters rejected their child care scheme.

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What is the Council of Advocates?

The CCAAC's Council of Advocates is a major coalition representing many of Canada's organizational champions: the Canadian Labour Congress, CUPE, Campaign 2000, the Canadian Federation of Students, the Canadian Association for Community Living, Parent Voices, Rural Voices, YWCA Canada, researchers, and many others. The child care coalition has become multi-sectoral and pan-Canadian in scope, as new provincial child care coalitions spring up across the country.

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Post-Election Mobilizing

The night Prime Minister Stephen Harper was sworn in, he gave notice that he would be cancelling the agreements. Advocates immediately redirected their focus and swung into mobilizing mode. We organized rallies and held demonstrations in each province (see *Grassroots Advocacy in Action* for more details). We strengthened our ties with longstanding partners and broadened our reach, and found a tremendous groundswell of grassroots support across the country to save the agreements.

CODE BLUE for child care

This popular tide led to the Code Blue for Child Care campaign, established in February 2006 to work until the next federal election to protect the progress we've made on child care. The campaign brought together Canadians from all walks of life; national, provincial/territorial child care organizations; and labour, women's and social justice groups.

While the CCAAC and the Council of Advocates was critical to providing a home and a structure for Code Blue, an unprecedented number of organizations and individuals across the country joined the campaign. Code Blue received financial or organizational support from several unions, social justice coalitions and provincial child care organizations. Municipalities, community counties, school boards and large employers passed resolutions supporting a child care program. Provincial and territorial child care coalitions took the lead mobilizing in their regions through petitions, rallies, town hall meetings, and media events. Just six weeks after its launch, Code Blue's open letter to Prime Minister Harper had already reached over 25,000 signatures, growing to 55,000 shortly thereafter.

So many people to thank

An unprecedented number of individuals and organizations have put in tremendous hours of work this past year, including participating in endless conference calls, e-mail exchanges and strategy discussions night and day. In the face of a huge setback for child care, our movement has displayed passion, resilience and skill, and is growing every day!

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Grassroots Advocacy in Action

In 2005-06, child care advocates across the country mobilized to promote a national, high quality child care system. The events brought together parents, grandparents, child care staff, other child care activists, children, and local, provincial and federal politicians.



Vigil at Prime Minister's residence, February 2006 (photo: Canadian Union of Public Employees)



International Women's Day rallies across Canada focus on child care (photo: Canadian Union of Public Employees)

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I am grateful to so many people for their tireless commitment—there are far too many to name individually. I would, however, like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of **Nancy Campbell**, who has taken on the task of keeping our campaign organized, coordinated and energized.

This is my farewell message, and while I will no longer be officially on the Council of Advocates, I'll continue to be on the front lines with all of you for child care. I would like to thank the CCAAC Board of Directors for their 100 per cent-plus commitment to child care and for supporting me in my role on the Council of Advocates. Thanks also to **Debra Mayer**, my energetic co-chair, and CCAAC Executive Director **Monica Lysack**, who

has been going full speed ahead, moving CCAAC forward throughout this period of turmoil. While it's hard to leave the Council of Advocates at this critical time, I am confident that our movement is stronger than ever. We have incredible staying power, and I know that no matter how long it takes, we won't rest until Canada's families and children have access to the high quality, affordable, universal, inclusive and non-profit child care system they so well deserve.



Jamie Kass
Co-Chair, CCAAC Council of Advocates



Saskatoon rallies for child care funding



Supporting a quality system in Winnipeg



Toronto march draws 3,500 (two photos on top: Canadian Union of Public Employees / photo below: Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care)

CCAAC Projects

Building Women’s Equality in Child Care Policy

Supporting women’s participation in the child care policy dialogue at all levels of government is the main goal of this project. We’ve been very active in this area, prior to and after the cancellation of the federal/provincial agreements on early learning and child care:

- When women were left out of child care consultations in the provinces and territories, CCAAC wrote to provincial premiers and mobilized community members.
- We provided analysis and commentary of the impact on women of child care election proposals and new policies, and widely distributed this information.
- We’ve engaged grassroots women concerned with rural, remote, and northern child care to research and distribute information on issues affecting rural women.
- We’ve developed links with the Quebec Child Care Coalition (La Coalition québécoise des services de garde et des services aux familles) and the Aboriginal community.

The work of this project contributes to shaping federal child care policy that is sensitive to women's economic, social and political concerns. We would like to thank **Bozica Costigliola** for her communications support in the project. We also want to acknowledge and thank the **Government of Canada Status of Women** for making this project possible.



Minding Our P's and Q's: Pedagogy, Policy and Quality

This project aims to help lay the groundwork for a pan-Canadian educational framework for children’s early learning and development. A key component is promoting dialogue on curriculum issues. The project is well underway. Main activities include:

- conducting and publicizing research on curriculum issues related to policy-making.
- organizing public consultations to identify and implement common values and early childhood education goals.

We would like to thank the **Government of Canada Social Development Partnerships Program** for funding this research.



Child Care Policy: Making the Connections

Through this project, CCAAC has continued to support child care organizations and the broader community to determine how federal transfers related to child care are being spent, and to work with communities and governments to promote effective child care policies and investments in the future.

Now available is a set of tools developed by project director **Lynell Anderson** and researcher **Tammy Findlay** that received positive feedback at the CCAAC’s National Working Forum in March. The forum brought together key sectoral and regional representatives from across Canada to assess the state of child care policy at the federal, provincial and territorial levels, and develop strategies for the future.

Monitoring tool kit

The project’s **action plan checklist** is designed to help gauge a government’s commitment to building a community-based child care system. The checklist compares specific provincial or territorial policy and funding choices with those most likely to result in quality, affordable, accessible child care. This tool was used by the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care as the framework for its progress report on the provincial government’s Best Start Action Plan.

The project’s **child care system implementation tool** shows how incremental progress towards a quality, universal child care system can be achieved.

For more information about the project, available tools and public reports, visit the *Making the Connections* web page at

<http://www.childcareadvocacy.ca/mtc/en/index.html>.

We thank the **Government of Canada Social Development Partnerships Program** for its support of this project.



Lynne Wannan Cross-Country Speaking Tour: Canada Gets Lessons from Down Under

In September 2005, the CCAAC and child care advocates were proud to launch a cross-country speaking tour featuring Lynne Wannan, Chair of Australia's National Association of Community Based Children's Services. Wannan spoke to parents, child care workers, child care advocates, labour advocates, and government policy representatives about the Australian child care experience. She talked about the climate that led to the growth of the commercial child care sector in Australia, and the negative impact of corporate child care chains on parent choice, quality, existing independent private and non-profit service providers, and the human resource issues in the sector at large. Wannan delivered talks and acted as a guest at panels, child care conferences, labour conferences and special meetings in Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, Halifax, St. John's, and Fredericton. We extend a huge amount of gratitude to **Lynne Wannan** and tour organizer and past CCAAC Chair, **Mab Olo-man**, for investing so much of their time and energy during this tour, and to the many organizations who donated funds to support this initiative.



National Press Club in Ottawa, October 20, 2005

In August 2005,
the CCAAC office moved!
We are now located in downtown
Ottawa.

Our new mailing address:
151 Slater Street, Suite 714
Ottawa, ON K1P 5H3
phone: (613) 594-3196
fax: (613) 594-9375

*You can now call us toll free at
877-261-1342!*

Welcome Amanda Mayer!

In September 2005,
we welcomed Amanda Mayer to the
CCAAC team as our new Financial and
Administrative Coordinator.

Amanda came to us from the Centre of
Excellence for Early Childhood
Development.