

# Child Care Advocacy Association Of Canada

## Annual Report: 2003

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# Child Care Advocacy Association Of Canada 2002-2003

## **Board of Directors**

Chairperson: Christine McLean (Newfoundland & Labrador)

Secretary: Sue Delanoy (Saskatchewan)

Treasurer: Margie Vigneault (Nova Scotia)

Council of Child Care Advocates  
Chairperson: Rita Chudnovsky (British Columbia)

Communications  
Chairperson: Debra Mayer (Manitoba)

Personnel  
Chairperson: Corine Ferguson (Alberta)

**Board Members:** Cheryl Degras- Ontario  
Caroline Johnson- Northwest Territory  
Jasbir Randhawa- Yukon Territory

**Parent Voices Steering  
Committee:** Mary-Anne Bedard, Chairperson

## **Council of Child Care Advocates Sectoral Representatives**

Anti-Poverty (Campaign 2000)	Laurel Rothman
Labour (CLC, CUPW, CUPE)	Jamie Kass
	Margot Young
NOIVMWC	Anu Bose
Rural Child Care	Carol Gott
Research (CCRRU)	Martha Friendly
Students (CFS)	James Pratt

## Chairperson's Report

Time flies and this is certainly true as I reflect back on this very quick first year of my tenure as chairperson of CCAAC. The role of chairperson means that I have had the opportunity to work closely with our hard working executive committee, our very hard working executive director and very dedicated and committed board members. It continually amazes me that everyone is able to work so intently in a volunteer capacity and at the same time manage their paid work, their families and their other commitments. Each one of our board members has a passion for improving the child care situation in this country and this passion is evident during our action packed meetings and throughout the year. The energy, the humour and the cooperative spirit that all of our directors and members bring to our association has made this past year an exciting and pleasurable one. I have learned that to be a child care advocate is to be an eternal optimist and the energy of our association has been a continual source of renewal for myself and for advocates across the country.

We have all heard the famous Chinese curse - "May you live in interesting times." This year has certainly had its share of interesting times! Within our association, after a period of discussion, uncertainty and clarification, we received the good news that our new project, *Making the Links/Seeing and Solving the Child Care Crisis*, was funded by Women's Program, National Office of Status of Women Canada. This project will build our capacity to make links and form even more partnerships throughout the country as we discuss recommendations on how to build a pan-canadian child care system. A discussion paper is being written on behalf of CCAAC which will outline specific recommendations on how this can be done and then will be used as a tool to spark discussion and build advocacy from coast to coast to coast. We are very excited about the potential of this project and will keep our membership informed through our bulletin and through the website. And speaking of websites - the continual evolution of our website has become a source of pride for CCAAC. We would like to thank our webmistress, Avi Goldberg, for the very fine work she has done over the past year as she drags us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century with her technological expertise. Please encourage everyone you meet to check out our website for up-to-the minute developments on the child care situation throughout the country.

Interesting times" can also describe this year on the child care scene. We have definitely seen developments in the child care community across the country, both progressive and otherwise. In the fall, a paper from the Liberal caucus outlining the Architecture for a National Child Care program as well as the inclusion of child care in the Speech from the Throne in the winter of this year was enough to give even hard core advocates some optimism regarding the long dreamed for national child care strategy. This optimism was tempered somewhat by the allocation of only \$900 million over five years in the federal budget specifically for child care.

After an initial feeling of despair, we do generally acknowledge a positive progression towards the development of a pan-canadian child care system on a federal, provincial and territorial level, begun with the recent signing of the Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care. Individual provinces, notably British Columbia and Ontario, however, have taken some major steps backwards in the funding and provision of quality child care. We must continue our work in these and other jurisdictions to assist in the fight for universal, affordable, high quality child care supported with public funds.

Over the past year we have become, I think, a stronger organisation. Our Parent Voice project has added an important dimension to our ability to do our work. Our strong Parent Network has been a source of inspiration to all of us. Many thanks and congratulations must be given to Dianne Goldberg, consultant, and Mary-Anne Bédard, chair of the Parent Voices steering committee, as well as to all of the parent representatives from across the country for the dedication, energy and enthusiasm they have shown over the past year for the Parent Voices Project.

Our Council of Advocates has also strengthened our association, specifically in our ability to set solid directions by assisting our Board in the formation of advocacy strategies, campaigns and projects. Rita Chudnovsky, Council Chair, has worked diligently over the past year with the Council. Her insight, her organisational skill and her ability to interpret child care policy in such a comprehensive and coherent manner has been an invaluable asset to the Council, to the Board and to CCAAC. Rita has completed her term on the Board and she will be greatly missed. However, we are confident that she will always be just a phone call or an email away.

Over the next year there is a clear challenge ahead for all of us at CCAAC. We must continue to actively advocate for what we believe in and we must build our capacity to support the advocacy efforts of all of our partners and sister advocates around the country. We are excited about the possibilities that lie before us. Our intention is to build on the momentum of the past year by ensuring that our federal and provincial/territorial leaders continue with the work that has been started with the Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care. Although these are positive first steps, much more needs to be done. Strong accountability mechanisms must be in place to ensure that federal money flows directly to regulated child care. More money is needed to develop an adequate system and the political will of the provinces and territories needs to commit to transforming the current patchwork of child care services into a coherent framework from which a pan-canadian system can be built. Our work is cut out for us. As I said earlier, to be a child care advocate is to be an eternal optimist, but to misquote Helen Keller, "Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement." Here's to a new year of exciting achievements!

***Christine McLean***  
***Chairperson, Board of Directors***

## *Parent Voices: Making the Case for Child Care*

It's been an exciting and busy year working in partnership with parents, CCAAC members and provincial/territorial advocacy and social justice organizations from coast to coast to coast. We have encouraged and supported many parents to add their voices and make the case for an affordable quality child care system that is publicly funded and accessible to all.

With funding from the Social Development Partnerships Program of Human Resources Development Canada, Parent Voices has provided a range of opportunities this past year for connecting and linking parents with other parents and child care advocates. The common focus continues to be local, provincial/ territorial and pan-Canadian child care public education and advocacy.

We have continued with the important work of building a pan-Canadian parent community by:

- sharing information and news about child care issues, advocacy tools and strategies;
- encouraging and supporting parent involvement in local, provincial/territorial and pan-Canadian advocacy activities and campaigns and
- ensuring that parents' perspectives are an active part of the Child Care Advocacy Association, Council of Child Care Advocates and the child care advocacy movement.

The Parent Voices Network and community is primarily a virtual network and community. All parents, and other advocates who connect with parents, are welcome to add their names to our Parent Voices e-mail list. This e-mail list is one of our key communication tools – our vehicle for staying connected and widely sharing news, public education materials and advocacy information.

We now have an active group of parent representatives to the Network who have taken on added volunteer responsibilities and are committed to working collaboratively with other child care advocates from all walks of life. Thank you Clare Bessell from Newfoundland and Labrador, Jody Dallaire from New Brunswick; Sheri Hincks from Ontario, Lynn Skotnitsky from Manitoba and Ontario, Donna Riddell from Manitoba; and Sharon Gregson from BC. Throughout the past year, Mary-Anne Bedard shared her advocacy passion, commitment, and expertise as the chair of the Parent Voices Steering Committee and liaison to the CCAAC board of Directors. Thank you Mary-Anne.

And the momentum keeps on building. Our life line for staying connected, linking individuals and groups, and coordinating our advocacy efforts is the internet -- our web site. The website at [www.parentvoices.ca](http://www.parentvoices.ca) allows us a range of opportunities for:

- engaging parents and other community members in public education around child care issues (“Resources” - “Articles, Briefs, Letters, Speeches”; Bulletins; Media coverage and releases; the Parent Voices “Resource Kit”)
- presenting parent stories as a vehicle for highlighting key child care issues from a parents perspective (“Parents Add Their Voices”, “Articles”, “Letters”);
- coordinating our efforts (numerous “pan-Canadian and regional Child Care Advocacy Activities”, media coverage of activities and campaigns);
- enabling greater parent participation by ensuring access to the information at any hour of the day/night to suit parents with very busy lives (24 hour a day access, weekly web site updates to ensure timely sharing of information, and opportunities for parents to submit news items/ideas for posting);
- connecting parents with others, individuals and organizations, to enhance our collective capacity to learn from each other and to work on issues together (“Links”, information about Parent Reps in regions, “Advocacy Tools”); and
- celebrating our achievements and staying united and strong with other child care advocates as we face old and new challenges (providing ongoing mentoring and peer support).

We are all committed to continuing the project work - to building on our successes and to tackling the challenges – all with renewed energy. Canada’s families and children need and deserve an affordable, high quality child care system.

***Dianne Goldberg***  
***Project Consultant***

## *Nominations Report: June 2003*

CCAAC holds nominations in alternate years. Last year, we conducted nominations in the provinces and territories where representatives held Executive positions. This year we sought nominations in the following provinces- Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario.

The following nominees were acclaimed:

Lynell Anderson  
Debra Mayer  
Cheryl DeGras

and myself Corine Ferguson from Alberta.

This year Jasbir Randhawa represented the Yukon. Kismet Lowrie recently took her place- we want to thank Jasbir for her ongoing work on behalf of CCAAC and welcome Kismet to our Board.

Please welcome our new Board of Directors!

## **Executive Director's Report**

It has been a pleasure to work with such a committed and cohesive Board of Directors and Council this year. No matter the challenges and demands facing our Association, we could always count on the dedication and determination of our representatives to support our goals and our work.

This year saw the continued development of the Council of Child Care Advocates. Together we understand its role as the generator of advocacy discussions and strategies and its relationship with our Board of Directors. Now we must continue to build and strengthen various sectoral representation. In this way, CCAAC will benefit from broader support and extend our messages to a wider number of constituencies. The vision of our earlier work through Moving Forward Together has been realized. Despite limited resources, it is encouraging to see that the Association has been able to consistently follow Council recommendations and plans.

It is with sadness and some dismay but mostly with enormous appreciation that we say good-bye to Rita Chudnovsky, the founding chairperson of our Council. Rita has provided determined leadership over eight years to CCAAC and been an invaluable source of support to me personally. Thank you, Rita!

Our work has continued to be enhanced and enriched by participation in a number of partnerships with the following organisations:

- Child Care Human Resources Round Table
- Canadian Child Care Federation - co-sponsoring a poll "Perceptions of Quality Child Care".
- Campaign 2000 Community Indicators Project.
- Rural Voices Steering Committee.

As well, we participated when time and resources permitted in meetings of the National Children's Alliance and, more locally, with Ottawa child care advocates. Efforts to strengthen our work with women's organisations and labour groups have taken on an added emphasis in recent months. And we have all learned from the perspectives of parents as they have made a significant contribution to our advocacy efforts through Parent Voices.

Within our Association, we have worked with various formal and informal committees. In particular, I would like to note the essential work of Corine Ferguson, leading the Personnel Committee with great sensitivity through a year of change and funding uncertainty. Debra Mayer led our Communications Committee co-ordinating the work to support our membership database, the Bulletin and our improving website. Systems in the office have been refined which will give us the confidence now to begin a long awaited and much needed membership drive! Many thanks to Connie Brigham for her help in this regard. We have enjoyed the opportunity to share offices with the Round Table - making our working environment a more dynamic and interesting place.

As always, it is a privilege to work with and for such a remarkable group of people dedicated to a common vision.

***Maryann Bird***  
***Executive Director***

# CCAAC Board of Directors Meeting

Sunday June 22, 2003  
9.30 am- 3.30 pm  
323 Chapel Street  
Ottawa, Ontario

1. Welcome and review of the Agenda
2. Review minutes
3. Executive Director's Report
4. Financial Report
5. Personnel Report
6. Council Report
7. Parent Voices Report
8. Communications Report
9. Future Directions
10. Other?