



**Letter to The Honourable Jane Stewart, Minister of Human Resources Development
CCAAC, 10 Dec 02**

The Honourable Jane Stewart
Minister of Human Resources Development
Place du Portage, Phase IV, 14th Floor, 140 Promenade du Portage
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0J9

Dear Minister Stewart:

The Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada (CCAAC) is a national organization dedicated to ensuring that quality, publicly-funded child care services are available and accessible for every child and family in Canada. We are an incorporated, non-profit, bilingual association that promotes quality child care as an issue of entitlement for women and children. Today, our membership is located in every province and territory in Canada and includes parents, service providers, labour, women's groups, and others committed to social justice.

Members of our Board of Directors are encouraged at the intent, and supportive of the principles and directions outlined in the recently released report of the National Liberal Caucus Social Policy Committee - "A National Child Care* Strategy: Getting the Architecture Right Now." We view the recent report as a clear demonstration that members of your government are prepared to take action on child care.

The practical options outlined in the report indicate that it is possible to address and resolve intergovernmental barriers that for too long have been used as a rationale for inaction. And, while creating an envelope of funding through the ECDA may be an effective way to begin the process of developing a comprehensive child care system, as the system develops, it will be necessary to extend the architecture to include before and after school child care for children from ages 7 -12.

For a child care system to be effective, it must be adequately resourced. If the federal government is truly making quality child care a priority then the funding must be in place to make this system a reality. The suggested 4 year federal financial commitments outlined in the caucus committee report are a minimum 'starting place'. As well, it is essential that any new federal funding be clearly dedicated to the development of child care services as outlined in the report and that these funds be used to supplement rather than replace existing provincial and territorial expenditures on child care.

The political will that is being demonstrated by the federal government is encouraging, and, as we know, where there is a will there is a way. We, at CCAAC, will continue to support actions and initiatives that move toward a comprehensive system of child care that benefits all Canadian children and their families.

We would be pleased to meet with you or your staff if we can help in any way as you move ahead with this exciting initiative. Please contact our Ottawa staff person, Maryann Bird, CCAAC Executive Director at 594-3196 to make the necessary arrangements. We can also be reached at ccaac@istar.ca.

Sincerely,

Christine McLean
Chairperson, CCAAC

cc: The Right Honourable Prime Minister Jean Chretien
The Honourable John Manley, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance