



**Manitoba Child Care
Association**

**Manitoba Pre-Budget 2019 Submission
Manitoba Child Care Association
October 25, 2018**

Manitoba Child Care Association
2nd Floor, 2350 McPhillips St.
Winnipeg, MB R2V 4J6
www.mccahouse.org
Twitter: @MCCAHOUSE

The Manitoba Child Care Association (MCCA) is a voluntary professional association, not for profit, registered charity working since 1974 to promote quality child care as a service and as a profession. We are the largest provincial child care association in Canada, and entirely self-funded through membership dues and professional development events. Our 4000 members include those who provide care and education in licensed homes and child care centres, and they keep us informed of needs, priorities, and challenges providing care, early learning, and family support in their community.

MCCA's Vision - To promote and support an exceptional learning and child care system by fueling our members to be proud and excited to belong to a progressive, respected profession.

MCCA's Mission - To advocate for a quality system of child care, to advance early learning and child care education as a profession, and provide services to our members.

High quality, licensed child care:

- has a positive impact on children's development
- is a fundamental need for many Manitoban families, providing them with choices and allowing them to go to school or work
- supports poverty reduction
- assists in the establishment of newcomers and
- contributes to a strong economy in this province

Manitoba has a long standing reputation across Canada as a leader in early learning and child care.

Its foundation has been built on:

- regulatory standards that protect the health, safety, well-being of children
- recognition that the quality of care and early learning relies on the qualifications and experience of the caregivers and educators
- the limit on parent fees, which combined with primarily not for profit service delivery and government operating grants, keeps parent fees in Manitoba the second lowest in Canada

However, licensed not for profit child care programs have received no increase to their operating revenue since 2016, although all other operating expenses continue to escalate. The last increase to

their operating grants was in 2016 and the last increase to parent fees was in 2013. In general, the cost of parent fees in this province have only increased by \$2.00 in 18 years.

This solid reputation could be jeopardized if programs continue to experience current financial pressures. Centres are being forced to offset their deficits by finding other sources of revenue such as fundraising or by having to decrease the services being offered to children and families.

Research supports that quality early learning and child care is best provided by consistent, responsive and skilled educators. And yet, child care salaries remain barely a living wage for many educators whose salaries are as far as 25% below market. The challenge to attract and retain qualified staff is a severe reality for many programs. So, although, we commend this government for the creation of 1400 new and newly-funded licensed child care spaces this year, without an adequate workforce, we worry about future growth.

In February of this year, the Government of Manitoba signed the Canada-Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Agreement which will invest nearly \$47 million into the sector from 2017-2020; the initiatives that have already been implemented are welcomed & appreciated. As we move into the 2nd year of this agreement, some of our recommendations for investment of future federal funds include:

- ensure parent fees remain affordable by indexing subsidy levels
- establish the Minister's Advisory Committee
- ensure licensed child care facilities have the resources they need to provide full accessibility for children with additional support needs

In conclusion, we understand and respect that this government has the fiscal responsibility of addressing a deficit in this province; however, all children and families in Manitoba deserve a quality, not-for-profit, affordable, accessible system - please make early learning and child care a priority in the 2019 provincial budget.