

August 11th, 2020

Honourable Maryam Monsef
Minister for Women and Gender Equality

Dear Minister Monsef

Re: Accessible, Affordable Child Care

On behalf of the members of the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) I urge you without delay to advocate with the Government of Canada to establish a National Child Care program that will impact positively on accessibility and affordability.

For some years the NCWC has adopted policy and advocated for accessible and affordable child-care for Canadian families. Numerous studies, including a longitudinal study by Statistics Canada over a fifteen-year period (1994 to 2008) indicate that a child-care program based on access and affordability has a positive impact on women's workplace participation and child development. More recently a review of Quebec's child-care program introduced in 1997, conducted by Pierre Fortin, School of Economics, University of Quebec at Montreal, has reinforced this determination.

At no time in our history has this been more important. The establishment of a national child-care program is long overdue. Action is needed now.

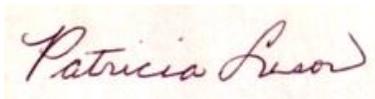
The prosperity of our country and the continued successful participation of women in the economy demands it. The negative impact of COVID-19 on gains made toward gender equality must be mitigated as we move forward through this pandemic and its aftermath. Affordable, accessible child-care is crucial for equality to continue to move forward.

The effects of quality child-care outcomes such as vocabulary, health, motor and social development, anxiety, and aggression as well as parental well being is said to depend on the quality and type of care children receive. Anecdotal information from primary school teachers suggests that children who attend a good quality child-care program are easily identified in the classroom by their skills, adaptability, and social development. Parents' confidence in the care their children receive is also a factor in the outcome.

It is evident that the benefits to women and children of quality child-care far outweigh the costs. Inappropriate decisions today have the potential of imposing a negative impact on the future and must be avoided. Studies already undertaken indicate that women/mothers have borne the brunt of the changes resulting from this widespread virus. Action to reduce this must be addressed before it is too late.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration of this most important issue for many Canadian families. We must be vigilant to ensure we do not have a generation of lost children.

Sincerely



Patricia Leson, President
National Council of Women of Canada

C: Honourable Wm. Morneau Minister of Finance
Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development
Andrew Scheer, Conservative Party of Canada
Jagmeet Singh, New Democratic Party
Yves-Francois Blanchet, Bloc Quebecois
Joanne Roberts, Green Party
Pamela Jeffrey, Prosperity Project