

AACE Congratulates Premier Smith on Opting Out of Canadian Dental Care Plan & Urges Action on Federal Childcare Plan

CALGARY, AB, CANADA, June 26, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Association of Alberta Childcare Entrepreneurs (AACE) commends Premier Danielle Smith and the Government of Alberta for their decision to opt out of the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP). The Association urges Premier Smith to similarly consider opting out of the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) plan for all the same reasons articulated in her recent correspondence with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.



In her letter to Prime Minister Trudeau regarding the dental care plan, Premier Smith underscored that the federal initiative infringes on provincial jurisdiction and should have been developed in collaboration with provinces and territories.

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Krystal Churcher, Chair

“The same concerns apply to the childcare industry,” stated Krystal Churcher, AACE Chair. “The federal government announced \$10/day childcare, then went to the provinces and negotiated vague agreements. They are now dictating terms in behind-closed-doors, one-sided discussions, which is unacceptable.”

While the broad framework of the CWELCC agreements between the provinces and the federal government is a matter of public record, the detailed terms and conditions

dictated by the federal government are causing significant challenges in Alberta and across Canada's childcare sector. These backroom decisions undermine provincial jurisdiction and the operational realities faced by childcare providers.

AACE calls on Premier Smith to issue an ultimatum to Prime Minister Trudeau: either provide

envelope funding that respects provincial jurisdiction over childcare, akin to the funding model in Quebec, or give notice that Alberta will opt out of the CWELCC agreement.

"The CWELCC Agreement is financially devastating Alberta's childcare industry," added Churcher. "Not only is the funding from Ottawa one-third of what is needed to create a sustainable, high-quality childcare system, but the federal government's push towards a one-size-fits-all public, non-profit sector does not align with Alberta's childcare landscape and does not respect Alberta's jurisdiction over childcare."

Similar to the issues with the dental care program, the CWELCC program introduces excessive paperwork, decreased choice and bureaucratic hurdles. With limited funding, only a third of Canadian parents are able to access affordable childcare, leaving many on waitlists with no hope of ever accessing grant funding. Alberta's upcoming cost control framework and its core and enhanced services scheme will mean that most families will ultimately end up paying a lot more than the promised \$10/day for childcare.

"Everything said by the Premier and the Canadian Dental Association about the dental plan applies equally to childcare," Churcher emphasized. "Once the cost control framework is in place here, almost no one will pay \$10/day for childcare. This broken promise will fall on Alberta's childcare operators to explain to families." Churcher concluded, "We urge Premier Smith to stand up for Alberta's childcare operators—primarily women and new Canadians—just as she did for Alberta's dentists, and ultimately for all Albertans."

Alberta's childcare industry has consistently voiced opposition to the CWELCC agreement. Despite the majority of operators signing contracts to participate in the affordable childcare program, they did so under duress. Funding for wage top-ups and other subsidies was tied to these contracts, often with little notice and scant information, leading to unforeseen and detrimental consequences.

If the affordability grant program does not become financially sustainable, many childcare operators will be forced to exit the program or the industry altogether. AACE remains committed to advocating for a funding model that ensures sustainability, quality, and choice for Alberta's families.

For more information, visit AACE's website.

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