

ACE Calls on Federal and Provincial Ministers to Have an Honest Conversation About the Future of Childcare in Canada

With program needing \$60 billion annually, association calls for practical reforms that put families first

CALGARY, ALBERTA, CANADA, January 26, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As federal and provincial ministers convene in Ottawa this week to discuss the future of the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) agreement, the Association of Canadian Early Learning Programs (ACE) is urging all parties to embrace a new approach, grounded in transparency about the program's challenges and a genuine commitment to finding solutions that work.

"We have a new federal government and a new opportunity," said Krystal Churcher, Board Chair of ACE. "The previous government made promises that did not match reality. We believe this new administration can choose a different path, one that starts with being honest with Canadians about where we are and where we can realistically go."

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ACE's True Cost of Childcare report reveals the scale of the challenge. The program requires approximately \$60 billion annually to achieve its stated objectives. Federal funding of \$30 billion over five years represents a significant gap, one that is projected to widen as more families seek access to affordable care.



Meanwhile, provinces have struggled to meet targets for creating new childcare spaces. Where progress has been made, it has often come from for-profit and independent operators, the very

providers many jurisdictions have sought to exclude from funding.

"We are not looking to criticize," said Churcher. "We are looking to contribute. The families and children we serve deserve a childcare system that is sustainable and that works in practice, not just on paper."

ACE is encouraging ministers to explore practical reforms, including income-tested approaches that prioritize families with the greatest need, and funding frameworks that recognize all licensed childcare providers as partners in building a stronger system.

"Let's set aside the ideology and focus on what actually helps families," Churcher added. "We are ready to come to the table. We hope our leaders are too."

About ACE: The Association of Canadian Early Learning Programs (ACE) is a united coalition of licensed childcare providers representing home-based programs, non-profits, and private centres across Canada. ACE advocates for childcare policies that are sustainable for providers, accessible to all families, and respectful of the professionals delivering care every day. For more information, [visit www.acenational.ca](http://www.acenational.ca).

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