

# CHILD CARE CHALLENGE



NEWSLETTER OF THE ONTARIO COALITION FOR BETTER CHILD CARE



PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER ...

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The **Child Care Challenge** is the quarterly newsletter of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care.

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## CHILD CARE REFORM: NO TIME TO WASTE

**L**ast February the Ministry of Community and Social Services released its public consultation paper **Child Care Reform in Ontario: Setting the Stage**. Over the next several months child care was debated in public hearings, local meetings, round table discussions and the media.

With the conclusion of the hearings in June the child care reform process has entered a new stage. A report summarising the hearings will be available in the fall. Cabinet submissions will follow, leading to the introduction of legislation in early 1993.

However, there is no guarantee this timetable will be met. Fiscal and other pressures could combine to put child care reform on hold or weaken its implementation. The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care has over the summer continued its lobbying efforts, meeting with Cabinet Ministers and writing municipal representatives.

We are asking you to do the same. Whether it's a quick phone call, a brief letter from the staff and parents of your child care program, or a meeting with your MPP, the government needs to hear we are waiting for real child care reform. Coalition staff can assist with information, sample letters, lobby kits, names and phone numbers, and other support material.

Child care reform is no longer in the headlines. But for parents struggling with higher fees, staff who lost their jobs through program closures, and the children sitting on waiting lists, the need for child care reform is genuine. Pick up a pen or pick up the phone, and tell Queens Park the time for real child care reform is now.

## PROBLEMS STALL BRINGING *jobs*ONTARIO SPACES ON LINE

**T**he province will announce the "brokers" for its multi-million dollar, three year jobsOntario Training Fund this September. The brokers, a mix of municipalities, community colleges, social service agencies and in a few cases, chambers of commerce and labour organizations, have been charged with matching Ontarians who are on social benefits or about to exhaust their unemployment insurance payments, with employers.

Employers receive a \$5,000 grant to help train each jobsOntario recruit they hire, plus an additional \$5,000 for general training purposes.

Some supports are available to job seekers including a very limited transportation and clothing allowances.

Of particular interest to the child care community are the 20,000 subsidized child care spaces intended to make the program more accessible to women.

The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care remains opposed to the targeting of subsidies. Rather than condemn the initiative however, it agreed to monitor the program based on the assurances it received. Those commitments included adding the new spaces permanently to the service within the next three years, and that the expansion -- an increase of 30 per cent -- would be used to inform child care reform.

To avoid the difficulties inherent in municipal discretion over child care, the Coalition had urged the province to find a new means to administer the subsidies. It also insisted that the province pay for the entire cost of the subsidies, i.e. no municipal share, and that the actual cost of care be covered.

We won one, lost one and the third is still under consideration. There is no municipal cost sharing, municipalities **will** administer the subsidies and whether or not actual costs will be met is still under debate.

None of the new subsidies have made it into the service yet and the problems are already showing. Municipalities are charging an 11 per cent administration fee (6 per cent is allowed for cost-shared subsidies). Clients must meet all the municipal criteria including income ceilings and household composition. Local surcharges to subsidized parents also apply. The Coalition has strenuously expressed its concerns that these restrictions on child care will prevent many women from taking part in the jobs program.

The jobsOntario subsidies are to go only to the licensed, non-profit sector and here too municipalities are being less than cooperative. In some regions municipalities have refused to sign purchase of service agreements with non-profit programs thereby creating a scenario where clients would be forced to take their subsidy to a commercial program. In other areas municipalities are refusing to direct clients to centre-based programs with vacancies, and are instead developing new home day care programs to receive clients. (Incorporating 20,000 new spaces will require future expansion in both centre

## LOCAL LINES

### South East Grey

Good news from South East Grey Community Outreach! On July 1 they received their Approved Corporation status. SEGCO programs were in jeopardy when the municipality cancelled its purchase of service agreement in the last round of budget setting, giving SEGCO until June 30 to reach an agreement for approved corporation status with the province. Not only will SEGCO remain in operation, but they have increased their subsidy spaces, and are planning to start a licensed private home day care program. There are also plans to reorganize the resource centre programs to do more outreach in the smaller rural communities.

SEGCO has received a great deal of support from their local area office. Executive Director Carol Gott says the fact that they will be able to make maximum use of their approved corporation status has a great deal to do with the ongoing support and hard work from staff at the area office.



And keep an eye on **Chate-laine** magazine for more SEGCO news. The Community Action section will be featuring a story on SEGCO in an upcoming issue.

**Ottawa**

Ottawa infant-toddler programs are in trouble, with funding inadequate to cover the staffing costs of meeting ratios. Day Nurseries Act (DNA) licensing calls for three staff for ten infants, and that these ratios can never be reduced. As the rooms are typically open from 7:30 a.m to 5:30 p.m. and staff take a one hour lunch and two fifteen-minute breaks, centres can only meet the ratios approximately twenty per cent of the time.

The only way to meet the regulations is to hire additional staff. However some municipalities, Ottawa-Carleton among them, have not recognised these additional costs in the budget guidelines for purchase of service agencies. The centres therefore are caught in the squeeze.

The regional council has refused to provide the extra fund-

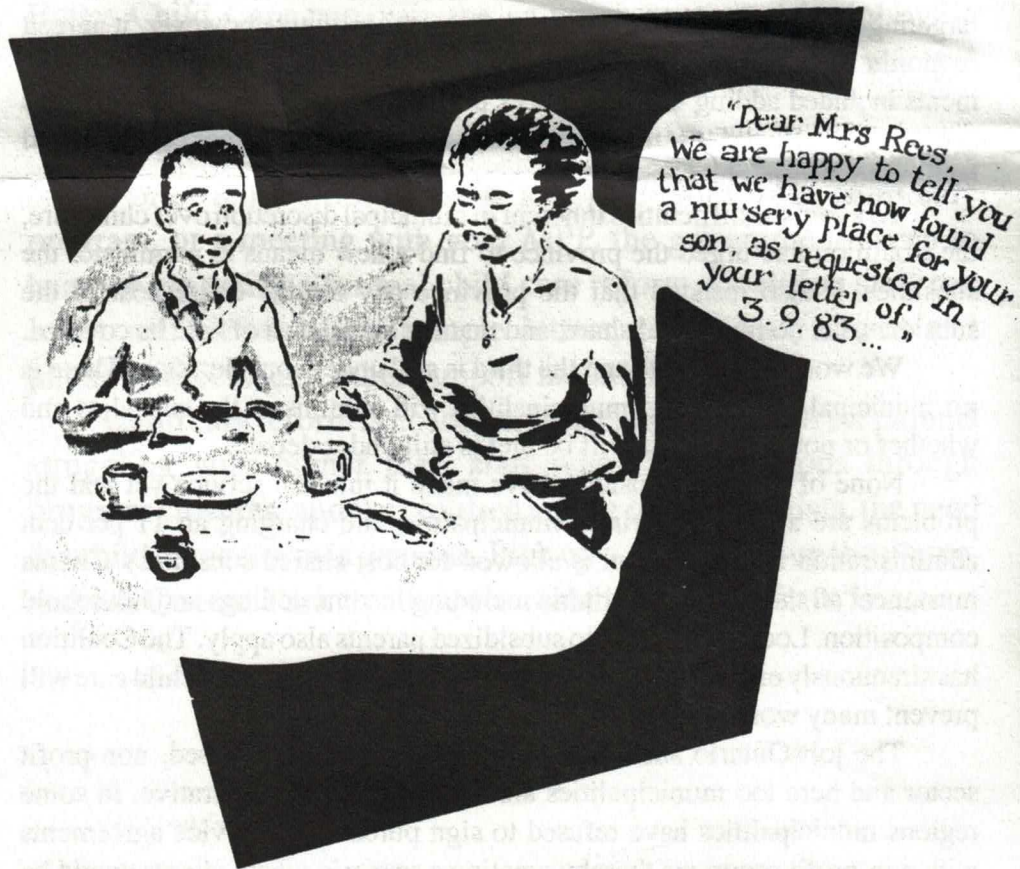
and home based care, but phase one was intended ease the financial pressure on programs by filling existing vacancies).

But worse however is the news that the brokers are set to go, with clients ready to start work and needing child care, while the province and municipalities still continue to wrangle over procedures.

Granted it is still early days, and with community involvement, the child care component of the jobsOntario Training Fund may still work.

The OCBCCC is meeting regularly with officials from all the concerned ministries. You can help by informing our office of any difficulties that you encounter either as a client, provider or broker. Knowing where the system isn't working is a step towards fixing it.

In the meantime if you are an eligible parent looking to take part in a jobsOntario training program, contact your local broker (see the insert for the contact phone number in your area). If you are a non-profit program with available spaces contact your local broker and your children services department.



## TIGHT CRITERIA ATTACHED TO EMERGENCY FUND

**A**nnounced at the same time as the conversion announcement was a \$10.8-million "emergency" fund to assist non-profit programs in financial difficulty. Although guidelines for accessing the fund are not yet printed, the Coalition has been informed by Minister Boyd's office that the process replicates the conversion process.

As with conversion, a program must fit the criteria established by the Child Care Management Framework. Eligible programs must be in a position to become financially viable, serve an established need in the community and fit into local planning goals.

Ministry spokespersons say they want to avoid bailing out programs which will run into financial problems again either because of poor management, or because the community can not support the number of child care spaces in its area.

The OCBCC supports accountability of public funds, including ministry efforts to ensure these funds are not lost due to poor business practices. However few programs are in difficulty because of incompetence. Most deficits are the result of municipalities refusing to pay the actual costs of child care. Vacancies, due to the recession or because programs are forced to set prohibitive fees, have also contributed.

These are structural problems over which programs have no control. Addressing the problem in both the immediate and the short term, is the responsibility of both levels of government. The province needs to bring its newly announced jobs Ontario subsidies on line in an efficient manner, and to set the price of those subsidies at a level which covers the actual cost of providing care. Municipalities who have elected to administer the subsidies should be required to pass on those funds to the programs and put in place an accessible process which will match eligible families with non-profit child care providers. Filling existing vacancies at actual cost would go a long way to alleviate problems for most programs.

However this in itself will not fix child care. The irony of 15,000 families waiting for care, while 5,000 spaces remain vacant; of staff accepting wage cuts to keep their programs afloat, while subsidized parents are forced to pay huge surcharges and full-fee parents increased fees, speaks to a crisis.

An "emergency" fund is one the OCBCC greets with mixed views. Bail outs do not provide child care, pay staff wages or ease pressure on fees. Bailing out an existing program, rather than starting a whole new one to replace it, is a legitimate use of public funds. However unless the bail outs run concurrently with a fundamental reform of child care, reform which significantly addresses these on-going structural problems, the need for bail outs will never end.

ing necessary to meet the ratios, and programs are struggling to make ends meet. Advocates are lobbying regional council as well as the province.

The Ottawa-Carleton regional council has provided a one per-cent increase for the regional portion of staff salaries. It is also the only region to indicate to the province a willingness to cost-share an additional 1000 new child care spaces. At present there are no expansion dollars available for the province to take up the region's offer.

### Peterborough

The child care community in Peterborough welcomes the establishment of two new programs opening in James Strath Public School and St. Peter's High School. This brings to a total of five the number of schools with child care centres in the Peterborough area. Currently both North Shore Public School and St. Patrick's Elementary School have child care centres, with St. Catharines School and its centre due to open in the fall of 1994.

Strath-McLean Child Care Centre supervisor Tina O'Rourke says demand for before-and-after school programs is so strong she has started a waiting list. All spaces are full in Strath-McLean except for a few nursery school spots.

The non-profit organization behind Strath-McLean was formed one and a half years ago by parents and other concerned members of the community. Strath-

## CHILD CARE CONVERSION GUIDELINES RELEASED

McLean is their first centre, and is licensed for 31 spaces.

St Peter's Child Care Centre is operated by Kawartha Child Care Services and is scheduled to open in November of this year. The largest centre to date in the area, it is licensed for 57 children aged 6 weeks to 6 years.

### North West

The North Western Ontario Regional Day Care Committee recently presented to the Aboriginal Child Care Commission of the Native Council of Canada. One of a series of hearings being held across Ontario the process highlighted the barriers faced by the off-reserve Native community in accessing child care programs to meet their needs.

The lack of culturally sensitive programs was a common



**F**or-profit child care operators looking to convert to non-profit may now take advantage of the government's conversion package. Details of the \$63.2-million fund, originally announced at the OCBCC Conference last December by Community and Social Services Minister Marion Boyd, were released July 30.

The guidelines follow months of intense discussions with government representatives, ministry staff and representatives from the profit and non-profit sector.

Conversion from profit to non-profit involves the change of ownership, management and funding criteria of a child care program. In the original plan the province had allocated \$16-million to buy the toys and equipment of for-profit operators looking to convert.

At a ceiling of \$1,000 per space it was estimated the money would convert half the 29,000 spaces in the for-profit sector over a five year period. At the insistence of the commercial representatives on the committee, the plan was modified to provide for independent evaluators to assess the value of the program and its equipment. The operator will be offered the evaluator's amount. As many spaces will be converted as the fund allows.

The conversion process (table next page) is far from simple. Owners wishing to convert must fit into the government's Child Care Management Framework (see page 8). The Management Framework looks at need and equity throughout the province. Eligible programs must be financially viable, serve an established need in the community and fit into local planning goals. In other words a commercial operation in an area already served by non-profit programs would probably not qualify for conversion.

Owners who make it through the "inquiry" stage must still find a non-profit board prepared to take over their services. The new board -- either the board of an existing program looking to expand, or a new group ready to takeover the commercial program -- must then win MCSS approval for a detailed business plan which establishes its ongoing viability.

On a positive note, once approval has been given, funding is available for renovations, new toys and equipment to meet Day Nurseries Act requirements. The new board is also eligible for money to cover legal fees involved in the cost of incorporation, board development and bridge financing to cover the first two months of operations. This is the only child care initiative that allocates funding for board development. This precedent is one the OCBCC will press to become a feature of all child care programs. The balance of the \$63.2-million fund pays for these initiatives and improves staff wages through the full Direct Operating Grant (DOG) and Wage/Provider Enhancement Grant.

Programs looking to convert should immediately register in writing with their Area Office. Offices are not yet prepared to begin processing applications,

but operators will want to ensure that their names are in the queue. Registering early is also important because offices are being directed to assist in finding "matches" between non-profit boards and operators looking to convert.

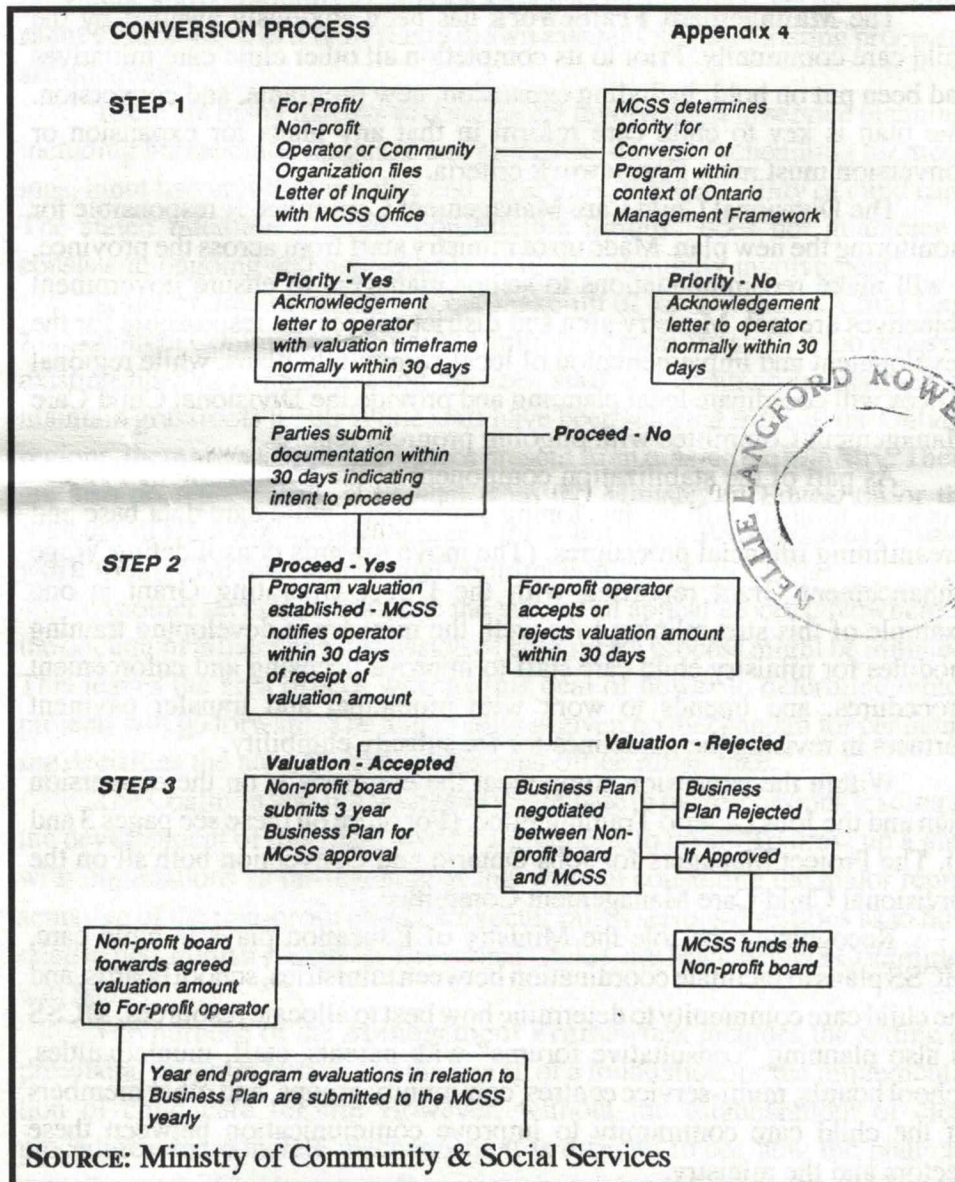
Non-provincial government participation on the committee included individual commercial operators, the commercial lobby groups -- the Association of Day Care Operators and United Voices, plus municipal representatives and provincial organizations including the OCBCC, the Association for Early Childhood Education and the Home Child Care Association.

theme, as well as a lack of Native ECE graduates. The jurisdictional debate as to what level(s) of government are responsible for the off-reserve Native population places additional barriers to obtaining child care.

In Thunder Bay the Native community is one-sixth of the population. Yet a group of child care advocates who want to start a Native child care centre have been trying unsuccessfully for five years to obtain capital funding. While MCSS has made available \$2 million to establish child care programs on reserves, there are no such funds earmarked for the off-reserve Native community.

**Metro Toronto**

Metro Toronto's response to the child care reform initiative has child care activists concerned. The draft, due to go before Metro Council in early September, essentially supports the status quo in child care. It wants Metro to be responsible for local planning, management, and in addition the licensing and monitoring of child care programs within Metro. The response paper is critical of base funding, charging that "base funding moves the focus away from



the children being served towards the service provider" and that this is "...inconsistent with the basic goal of child care as a developmental service to children". The document calls for Metro to maintain its current funding role and to delay any substantial reforms pending the outcome of disentanglement.

In a letter sent to all Metro Councillors on August 11, the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care asked Council to recall the recent budget debates when over 700 subsidised spaces were cut, per diems increased by as much as 200% and five school-age programs closed. Metro's financial situation will be even worse next year, with a projected shortfall of \$18 million. A further 1,300 spaces could be cut.

The Coalition is asking council to re-consider its position. Child care reform should be fast-tracked, not held up while disentanglement is decided. And provincial dollars for base funding would ease the financial burden on Metro, and provide stability for existing programs, while laying a solid foundation for future expansion.



## BETTER DECISIONS OR MORE BUREAUCRACY ?

**O**n July 30 1992 the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) released the new **Child Care Management Framework**, intended to provide guidelines for the development and management of child care services. Taking into account fiscal restraint as well as the child care reform initiative, it attempts to set directions for stabilising existing child care services while providing a structure for decisions on future expansion.

The **Management Framework** has been anxiously awaited by the child care community. Prior to its completion all other child care initiatives had been put on hold, including expansion, new programs, and conversion. The plan is key to child care reform in that any plans for expansion or conversion must meet **Framework** criteria.

The Divisional Child Care Management Committee is responsible for monitoring the new plan. Made up of ministry staff from across the province, it will make recommendations to senior managers to ensure government objectives are met. Ministry area and district offices are responsible for the development and implementation of local community plans, while regional offices will coordinate local planning and provide the Divisional Child Care Management Committee with ongoing progress reports.

As part of the stabilization component of the **Management Framework** the ministry will be developing a provincial child care data base and streamlining financial procedures. (The move towards consolidating Wage Enhancement Grant reporting with the Direct Operating Grant is one example of this streamlining.) As well, the ministry is developing training modules for ministry child care staff to improve licensing and enforcement procedures, and intends to work with municipal and transfer payment partners in revising the guidelines for fee subsidy eligibility.

Within the expansion component the emphasis is on the conversion plan and the Jobs Ontario Training Fund. (For more on these see pages 3 and 6). The Project Managers for Jobs Ontario and Conversion both sit on the Divisional Child Care Management Committee.

Recognising the role the Ministry of Education plays in child care, MCSS plans to facilitate coordination between ministries, school boards, and the child care community to determine how best to allocate resources. MCSS is also planning "consultative forums" with parents, staff, municipalities, school boards, multi-service centres, community groups, and other members of the child care community to improve communication between these sectors and the ministry.

Reading the Ontario Child Care Management Framework generates many questions. While the principles laid out are laudable, the document is vague as to how they will be achieved. There is little concrete information as to how components will be enacted and administered. Phrases such as



“stabilisation activities” are left undefined, while the use of non-words like “operationalised” does little to inspire confidence.

The document refers in several places to community input without clarifying what, if anything, will ensure access at the local level. Will mechanisms be put in place to enable programs, child care staff, and parents to participate in an ongoing, concrete way? This is difficult in cases where existing lines of communication are not functioning, or where there is no real history of consultation and involvement between the area or district office and the community it serves. The level of ministry involvement with parents, providers, and community groups varies across the province, yet the **Management Framework** as it is currently drawn assumes that the existing processes are adequate.

There are many barriers to community involvement in service planning, including bureaucratic language and processes, daytime scheduling for meetings, input becoming a formality and, as always, the availability of child care. The stated intention to hold “consultative forums” does not guarantee a consistent, ongoing and high-quality level of community involvement.

A major area of concern is the make-up of the Divisional Child Care Management Committee. Composed entirely of ministry staff, it too relies on existing lines of communication between staff and community members to maintain grassroots input. While staff have been selected from all the Ontario regions, there are no child care voices present from outside the ministry. There are also no representatives present from the Ministry of Education or the Ministry of Housing, despite the stated intention of the **Management Framework** to improve inter-ministerial coordination.

Another serious omission is the lack of an appeal process. Nowhere in the document is there any discussion of how such a process might be initiated. This leaves the area offices with a great deal of power to determine which projects will go forward. The community is given no mechanism for challenging decisions the area, district, or regional office might take.

The Coalition was not invited to participate in the discussions leading to the development of this plan, despite its requests to do so. To draw up a plan with implications as far-reaching as this without consulting the major representative of the non-profit child care sector raises serious questions as to how open to non-ministry input the Divisional Child Care Management Committee will be.

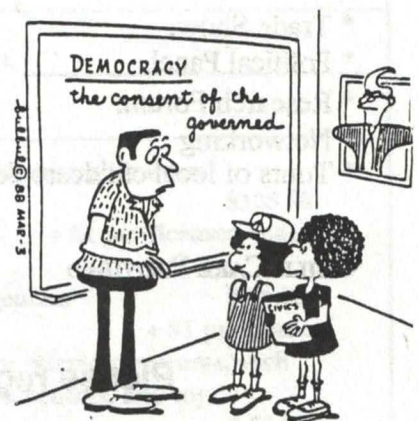
The purpose of the **Management Framework** includes the setting of provincial program targets and the laying of a foundation for the implementation of child care reform. However, without the establishment of clear procedures and concrete mechanisms it is difficult to see how the plan can actually work. Child care in Ontario is in crisis, and advocates across the province will be anxiously waiting to see what -if any - relief the **Ontario Child Care Management Framework** will provide.

**London/St. Thomas**

Tina Porter of St. Thomas is making her fall project that of re-activating the Child Care Network in the London/St. Thomas area. Anyone interested in child care issues in the area can contact Tina at (519)631-8510 ext. 2712.

In other London news, Jeannie Angus-Perkins took on the non-profit/commercial child care issue on a phone-in program televised on the local cable network. She debated Ian Gibb, the owner of a local chain of commercial centres, ABC Child Care Centres. The viewer consensus is that Jeannie did an excellent job on behalf of non-profit child care.

And speaking of non-profit child care, Forest Avenue Day Nursery, a commercial centre located in St. Thomas, is converting to non-profit. Congratulations Forest Avenue!



WE'VE WITHDRAWN OUR CONSENT TIL THE GOVERNMENT SPENDS AS MUCH ON KIDS AS IT SPENDS ON THE MILITARY!

**Don't Forget to Register!!**

## **A CHILD CARE AGENDA FOR THE 90'S**

**Putting the Pieces Together**

NATIONAL CHILD CARE CONFERENCE AND LOBBY

OCTOBER 15 - 19

RADISSON HOTEL, OTTAWA

### **CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS**

**Speakers Include:**

***Tony Clarke***, Action Canada Network

***Judy Darcy***, Canadian Union of Public Employees

***Michael Rachlis***, MD., Health Policy Consultant

***Judy Rebick***, National Action Committee on the Status of Women

***Nancy Riche***, Canadian Labour Congress

***Monique Simard***, Feminist Radio Host, Quebec.

***Conrad Saulis***, Native Council of Canada.

**and much much more**

- \* Trade Show,
- \* Political Panel,
- \* Research Forum,
- \* Networking
- \* Tours of local childcare centres,

Banquet and Entertainment, featuring:

Singer/songwriter -**Ian Tamblyn**

**The Toasted Westerns**

Day care skit performed by **Passionate Balance**

**Howard Clifford** - "On the Road for Quality Child Care"

lots of fun and music

**CHILD CARE PROVIDED**

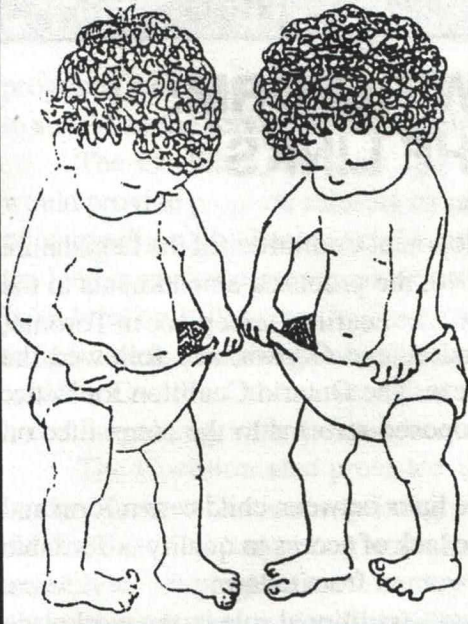
**Please register now - rates increase by \$25.00 on October 1st**

For more information contact:

Eileen Condon, Conference Coordinator

Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care

Tel: (416) 538-0628 Fax: (416) 538-6737



"So that's why your salary is more than mine."

September 30, 1992  
 Hotel Inter-Continental  
 Portman Room, 2nd Floor  
 220 Bloor St. W.  
 St. George Subway

## PAY EQUITY & CHILD CARE

### "GETTING READY"

*Featuring:*

Kerry McCuaig, Equal Pay Coalition  
 Jamie Kass, CUPE 2204

*Closing Remarks:*

Councillor Betty Disero

Chairperson, Daycare Grants  
 Committee

## THE CHILD CARE NETWORK

IT'S MORE THAN JUST INSURANCE

Jane Bertrand, President  
 Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care

## FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Diana Fong, Treasurer  
 Metro Toronto Coalition for  
 Better Child Care

*Closing Remarks: Jane Mercer  
 Direction 2000*

Contact : Zeenat Janmohamed, Metro Coalition for Better  
 Child Care at (416) 538-7630 for more information.

# Join the Coalition today

I/We agree with the principles of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care and wish to join.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Prov \_\_\_\_\_ Postal \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: (w) \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Students/Unwaged	\$ 15.00
Child Care Workers	\$ 25.00
Individuals	\$ 40.00
Groups:	\$ 45.00
i.e. union locals, local child care coalitions etc.	

<b>Provincial Organizations:</b>	
Up to 50 members	\$ 50.00
51 to 200	75.00
201 to 1,000	150.00
1001 to 5,000	400.00
More than 5,000	500.00

<b>The Child Care Network Membership Fees:</b>	
Child Care Centres	\$125.00
	+ \$1 per licensed space

Private Home Daycare Agencies	\$ 75.00
	+ \$1 per home

Other unlicensed child care related programs, such as resource centres, drop-in centres, and toy lending libraries	\$ 50.00
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Subscriber	\$ 60.00
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## ACRONYMS DICTIONARY

All the acronyms you wanted to know about but were afraid to ask...

**ADCO** - Association of Day Care Operators, Ontario: representing commercial child care operators.

**AECEO** - Association for Early Childhood Education of Ontario

**AFN** - Assembly of First Nations

**AMO** - Association of Municipalities of Ontario

**BCNI** - Business Council on National Issues: conservative think-tank representing business interests.

**CDCAA** - Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association

**COMSOC** - Ministry of Community and Social Services (No longer used. See MCSS.)

**CPAG** - Child Poverty Action Group

**DOG** - Direct Operating Grant

**ECE** - Early Childhood Education: certificate or degree program

**CUPE** - Canadian Union of Public Employees

## LABOUR LAW REFORM: MAKING THE LINKS

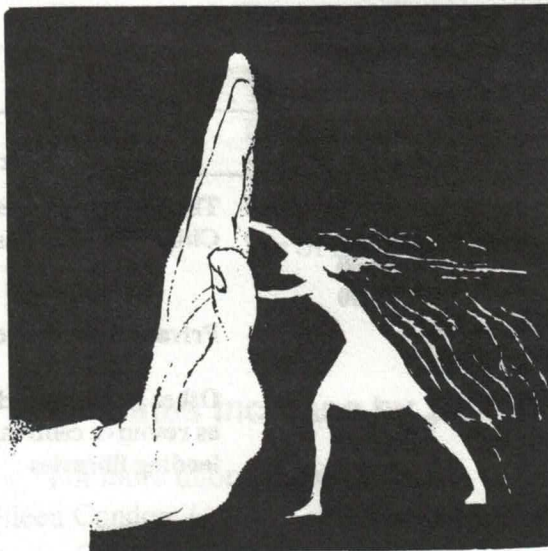
**O**n August 4 the Resources Development Committee of the Legislature opened public hearings on Bill 40, the proposed amendments to the **Ontario Labour Relations Act**. The hearings took place in Toronto, Thunder Bay, Sudbury, Kingston, London, and Ottawa, and followed the introduction of legislation earlier this year. The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care presented a brief on the proposed reforms to the committee on August 10, 1992.

The Coalition brief highlighted the links between child care reform and reform of the Labour Relations Act. The lack of access to quality, affordable child care is a key factor in preventing women from entering the workforce. Current labour law, coupled with women's traditional role in the workplace and a lack of social supports, including child care, have combined to deny women the right to bargain collectively.

This is particularly true in the case of child care workers. Predominantly women, child care workers face legislative and other impediments to organizing. Unions are not free to organize only the child care programs operated by a multi-service agency. All programs operated by an umbrella agency must be organized simultaneously. Attempts to organize regulated home day care have met with litigation, as agencies argue that providers are independent operators. This despite the fact that providers' wages and working conditions are almost entirely determined by the agency which contracts their services.

The major barrier to organizing child care workers, the Coalition told the committee, is the organization and funding of the service. Most programs are small independent operations which employ less than 20 people. These programs are funded through a combination of provincial government grants,

parent fees and (in some cases) municipally cost-shared subsidies. The only income over which programs exercise any control is fees. Therefore any attempt to improve staff wages and benefits must come from increased parent fees. Yet a centre whose fees are higher than others in the area will find it difficult to keep clients. Programs strive to keep fees, and consequently staff wages, down in order to remain viable. It is little wonder



programs resist employees' attempts to organize. Child care workers are left to subsidize the service through their low wages.

The Coalition maintains that the organization of child care workers would provide program stability by taking wages and working conditions out of competition. But because child care workplaces are so small, regulation of the labour market can only occur in the entire sector or at the regional level. In its brief on Bill 40 the Coalition recommended the inclusion of legislation to facilitate sectoral bargaining in this round of amendments. At the very least, said the Coalition, the government should appoint a task force on broader based bargaining, with the mandate to review models of sectoral bargaining.

The Coalition also protested the continued exclusion of agricultural workers from collective bargaining. It supported amendments concerning the determination of bargaining units, successor rights, and banning the use of scabs, which the legislation refers to as "replacement workers". The Coalition also called for improved enforcement of both the Employment Standards and Labour Relations Acts.

In concluding their presentation, Coalition representatives raised the issue of the backlash against the proposed reforms. Noting that the proposals contained in Bill 40 already existed in other jurisdictions, the Coalition reminded the committee of the growing numbers of women and visible minorities entering the workforce. The **Ontario Labour Relations Act**, as it currently stands, does not address their needs. It is time, said the Coalition, to extend labour law to cover the rights and needs of women.

*Copies of the Coalition's brief to the Resources and Development Committee on Bill 40 can be obtained by calling the Coalition office.*

Mum can't make enough money to look after us because she has to look after us!



FBDB - Federal Business Development Bank: providing loans to start up new small businesses

HCCAO - Home Child Care Association of Ontario

LCMT - Labour Council of Metro Toronto (and York Region).

MCSS - Ministry of Community and Social Services

MITT - Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technology

NAC - National Action Committee on the Status of Women

NAFTA - North American Free Trade Agreement

NCC - Native Council of Canada

OCAP - Ontario Coalition Against Poverty

OCBCC - Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care

OCDC - Ottawa-Carleton Day Care Association

OFL - Ontario Federation of Labour

OLRA - Ontario Labour Relations Act

OMSSA - Ontario Municipal Social Services Association

OPSEU - Ontario Public Service Employees Union

“WHERE’S THE WEG?!”

OTAB - Ontario Training Adjustment Board

OWAC - Ontario Women’s Action Coalition

WEG - Wage Enhancement Grant

UV - United Voices: parents and operators who support for-profit child care.

*Do you have a favourite acronym you would like to share with us? One we’ve missed? Or one you just can’t figure out? What about acronyms that don’t exist, but should?! Give us a call or drop us a line and we’ll print your name and acronym in our December issue.*

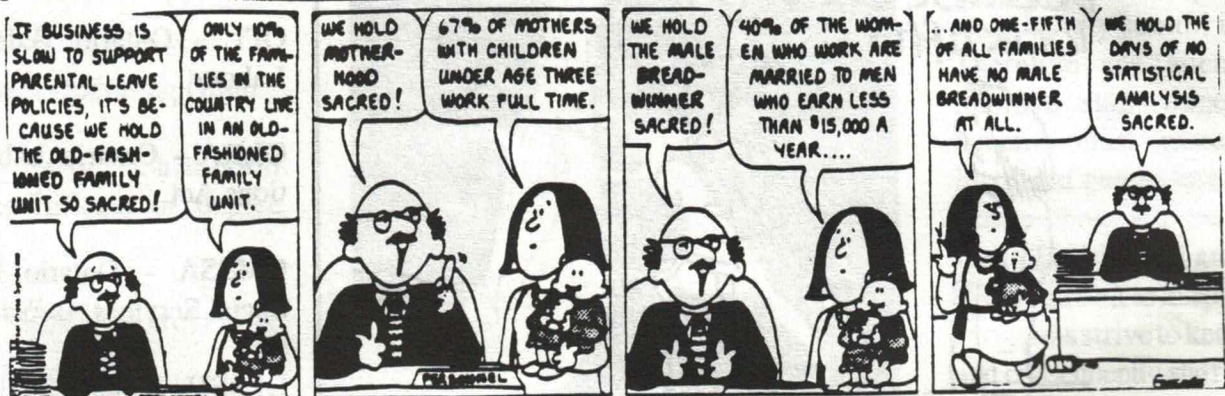
**C**hild care program staff have kept us busy with calls about the Wage Enhancement Grant, known as the WEG and/or PEG. According to Michael Bates of the Toronto Area Office the Ministry of Community and Social Services (MCSS) plans to deliver the funds with the October instalment of the Direct Operating Grant (DOG).

The payment will be included with your regular DOG cheque. Please read the cheque stub for a breakdown of how much is WEG monies, and the amount and type of all deductions. The WEG/PEG amounts will be the same as last year’s, with a 1% increase. The payment will be pro-rated if you are a part-time employee, or have worked in the program for less than one year.

You may wish to refer to the special pull-out on the WEG/PEG published in the Winter 1992 issue of this newsletter. It will give you some background on the “how’s and why’s” of the WEG. Or you can call the Coalition office in Toronto at (416) 538-0628 if you have any concerns.

The ministry hopes to streamline the WEG process so that the same form child care programs use to receive the DOG would also serve for the WEG/PEG. This would mean receiving your WEG/PEG in quarterly instalments at the same time as the DOG. In a meeting with MCSS, the representatives from the Child Care Network emphasised the need to ensure that staff were not penalised by combining the different criteria governing the WEG/PEG and the DOG.

MCSS hopes to have the new reporting process in place as soon as possible. In the meantime, mark October ’92 on your calendars as “WEG/PEG Month” and watch for your cheque to come in!



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## MEECH LAKE II: WHO'S SPEAKING UP FOR CHILD CARE?

*The year is 1993. A newly elected federal government announces plans for a national child care system. But three provinces state that under Section 106A of the new Constitution they will not participate. The federal government has no ability under the Constitution to make them comply. The new federal child care program is abandoned.*

Once again a constitutional deal is on the table, and in the congratulations about the constitutional compromise, the trading away of a national child care program has been scarcely noticed. Yet the section of the agreement which allows provinces to opt out of new shared-cost programs with (financial) compensation - if a "compatible" program is provided - writes the end of any hopes for a national child care program firmly into the Canadian constitution.

Like the Meech Lake Accord (and with the same wording), this agreement eliminates the federal government's ability to use its **spending power** to shape national social programs. Although the agreement would not **prevent** the federal government from initiating a new social program, or from spending money in a program under provincial jurisdiction (like health care or child care), it **would** prevent the federal government from withholding funds from a province which didn't wish to participate. This is because those provinces wishing to opt out of a new national social program would only have to demonstrate they are offering instead a "...program or initiative which will meet the objectives of the Canada-wide program." The wording is so vague there will be few limits on a province's ability to opt out and receive compensation.

For example, if Ottawa decided to implement a national child care program and Alberta did not want to take part, it could implement some other program - child care tax deductions say - and claim that those tax deductions meet the objectives of a national child care program. (This despite the fact that they do not create child care spaces, and only benefit those whose income is high enough to show receipts for child care.) Alberta would then not have to participate in the national program, and the federal government would provide it with financial compensation - Alberta's share, so to speak, of the funding that would have gone towards paying for the national program to operate in Alberta.

The spending power has been the only mechanism available in Canada's highly decentralized federation which has contributed to the development of national social programs. The concept of a social charter, raised by Premier Bob Rae last year, was another mechanism perceived by social groups as having some potential to protect social programs. However, the social charter provisions which are part of this constitutional deal are merely

## CALENDAR

The Child Abuse Coordinating Committee of the North York Inter-Agency and Community Council (NYIACC) is holding its first meeting of 1992-93 on Monday September 14, 1:30 p.m. at 270 Yorkland Blvd., Unit 101, in Committee Rooms 1 & 2. Special guest speaker is Mr. Rix Rogers, Chief Executive Officer of the Institute for the Prevention of Child Abuse.

NYIACC is holding an Open House at 3:00 p.m. on September 24, at 270 Yorkland Blvd., North York. All are welcome.

Umbrella Day Care Fair '92, Sunday October 25, 1992, 10:00 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Rosedale Heights (Castle Frank) High School

For further information contact Linda Lallouz at (416)487-0844.

The Home Child Care Association of Ontario is holding its 10th Anniversary Conference, "Challenges of the Decade", October 21-23 at the Valhalla Inn, Kitchener Ontario. For more information call (416)-783-1152 or (519)885-9574.

The Manitoba Child Care Association's 17th annual provincial conference "Caring For A Living" will be held November 6 - 8, 1992 at The Red Oak Inn, Brandon Manitoba. Key-note speaker is Patti Schom-Moffat, principal researcher for the National Salary

Study, "Caring For A Living". For further information contact MCCA House, 364 McGregor Street, Winnipeg, MB. R2W 4X3

Postponed: Canadian Association of Volunteer Bureaux and Centres national conference on volunteerism. Changed to Spring 1993. For further information contact Cathy Labatt at (416)446-1241.

Saskatchewan Child Care Conference '92: "Kids Are Worth It!" November 6-8, 1992  
Contact: Verity Wright at (306)664-4408 or write the Conference Office, #1 - 3002 Louise Street, Saskatoon, SK S7J 3L8.

Toronto Studio Players  
Theatre School

Non-profit, Ages 7 - 11, 12 - 15, 16+

Interviews through September for 92-93 program

Outside group seminars and workshops available

For information contact  
(416) 863-1309.

window-dressing, and not truly enforceable. In any case, child care is not mentioned.

Canada's history of national programs includes provincial initiation of what became our national health care system by Saskatchewan in the 1950s. However, it was the federal government, through its spending power, which was able to parlay Saskatchewan's provincial program into a program with a national framework. It is this national power which is now under attack.

A way to meet the demands of Quebec and aboriginal people for more autonomy was a key requirement for this round of constitutional bargaining; there may have been other ways to do this rather than providing autonomy to all provinces. Creative, plausible ideas were put forward which never reached the First Minister's bargaining table. Whatever happened to the results of the extensive consultation with Canadians...the Spicer Commission, the five thematic conferences, the telephone hot-lines...all mounted at considerable public expense, and all ignored? What about public support for a strong federal role in social programs? Whatever happened to proposals by social groups for entrenching a social charter with some clout in the constitution? Whatever happened to the concept of asymmetrical federalism, seriously discussed at several of the five constitutional conferences of "ordinary Canadians"? This proposal supported self determination for aboriginal people, distinct society for Quebec and strong central government for the rest of Canada. Were these proposals discussed as seriously at the constitutional bargaining table?

In 1990, the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care asked Premier Rae for assurances that he would make constitutional guarantees for social programs part of constitutional reform. At the group lobby the following year, the Coalition again asked Premier Rae to include a future child care program in constitutional considerations and proposed a structure for a truly enforceable social charter.

None of this happened, and no one at the constitutional table spoke up for child care. In lieu of this, child care supporters will have to speak up for child care ourselves. We must take every opportunity to ensure it is an issue when constitutional referenda are held, as well as actively lobbying legislators who will be themselves voting on the deal.

At the same time, how Ontario approaches its own child care reform strategy assumes new significance. If child care is to be (as the constitutional package prescribes) left strictly to provincial discretion, it becomes incumbent upon Ontario, the most populous province with a government which has outspokenly supported it, to provide leadership for the rest of Canada. In order to do this, Ontario's child care reform must clearly depart from the patchwork system of the past and must be powerful enough to survive future reversals by other governments and philosophies.



## ADVOCATES BLAST "MEECH LAKE II"

**C**hild care advocates and women's groups expressed their anger at constitutional proposals which they claim will end any hope for a Canada-wide child care program. The May 1992 meeting of provincial representatives to the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care sharply criticised the constitutional proposals which would weaken the federal government's ability to develop any new cost-shared national programs. Provincial representatives from teachers', labour, women's and anti-poverty organizations were unanimous in expressing their anger concerning the proposals.

"The federal government has abandoned plans for a national child care strategy. By agreeing with these proposals, the provinces have abandoned child care as well," charged Jane Bertrand, president of the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care.

At a June 1st press conference held at Queen's Park Bertrand was joined by Judy Rebick, president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, and Laurel Rothman of the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association in condemning the proposals for constitutional change.

The proposals would allow the provinces to opt out of any proposed national programs. Previously the provinces risked losing federal contributions to cost-shared programs if they declined to participate. Under the new proposals they can not only opt out of new cost-shared programs, but will receive financial compensation if they do so.

"This is Meech Lake 2" stated Bertrand. "They have changed a few words, but the formula is the same. This is contrary to views expressed at the recent constitutional conferences, which had much wider representation and were far more democratic than the closed door deal-making which produced this agreement."

Spokespersons emphasized their concern that by agreeing to the proposals, the provinces are telling the federal government it may proceed with its plans to further weaken Canada's social programs.

Participants were particularly critical of the position taken by the Ontario government. Said Bertrand, "The government of Ontario has failed the citizens of this province by not taking a firm stand in rejecting constitutional proposals that limit federal spending powers."

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

## New Staff on Board!

The Coalition office welcomes **Gael Hepworth**, who will be looking after our financial and fundraising areas. Gael comes to us with extensive experience in non-profit housing boards, daycare, and fundraising.

**Desrine Dawkins** is our new administrative assistant, and will be working on the upcoming conference, and with our membership and Network data base. Her computer skills will be of real help to us in the coming months.

## Coalition "Mini-Members"

Congratulations to OCBCC Council members Vivian McCaffrey, Janet Davis, and Anita Price on the birth of their children this past spring. Vivian's little girl and Janet's and Anita's boys are doing just fine, as are their parents. We know this means that Vivian, Anita and Janet will be working even harder for more and better daycare!

## PUBLICATIONS

**Storytime Handbook for DayCare Workers** :practical suggestions for planning and delivering story programmes in day care centres.

To order: Helen Lerach, Regina Public Library, PO Box 2311, Regina SK, S4P 3Z5.

**Child Abuse:**

**How to Handle Allegations Against the Child Care Provider:** Manitoba Child Care Association, 364 McGregor St., Winnipeg, Manitoba, R2W 4X3.

**Building Connections:**

**A Caregiver Training Model** by Jeanette Browne and Susan Gowans: Macaulay Child Development Centre, 1674 Eglinton Avenue West, 3rd Floor, Toronto M6E 2H3.

**Canadian Child Care in Context: Perspectives from the Provinces and Territories** is a two-volume reference work exploring child care in Canada. Available from Statistics Canada Regional Offices.

## WHERE'S HOWARD?!

**O**n Tuesday September 8 the highway #1 Manitoba/Saskatchewan border crossing will be the scene of a special welcome for "the father of child care in Canada", Howard Clifford. Howard will be meeting members of the Manitoba Child Care Association as part of his 11,000 kilometre trip across Canada to promote awareness of the need for quality child care.

Howard's journey began on May 1, 1992, when the 55 year-old federal child care expert bicycled from Vancouver to Ft. Nelson, kayaked down the Mackenzie River to Inuvik, and resumed cycling through Dawson, Whitehorse, Edmonton, Calgary and Regina, on his way to the September 8 rendezvous. While travelling through northern and western towns Howard heard first-hand the stories of parents and children in need of quality child care. Says Clifford, "Today not only urban families need child care. Families in rural and isolated communities in all regions of Canada need quality child care too."

Local television, radio and newspapers have generated extensive coverage of Howard's journey. This in turn has put child care 'on the map' as a serious issue in these communities. Howard's odyssey by bicycle has captured the imagination - and attention - of every community he has visited. The receptions, press conferences, lunches, radio phone-ins and other events organized by local child care advocates have added to the momentum and high spirits that continue to build as Howard travels on.

From the Manitoba border Howard will bicycle to Brandon, where he will be the special guest at a reception organized by local child care professionals, students, and families. The next day he will be officially greeted by the Mayor of Brandon, visit some Brandon centres, and then pedal off to Portage la Prairie where he will be met at a local child care centre by the Mayor. From there its off to Winnipeg and a greeting at City Hall, a press conference, a radio-call in with the CBC, another reception, more reporters, and of course parents, children, child care advocates, program staff, and all those who care about child care.

The first leg of Howard's journey ends Saturday September 11 in Winnipeg. The second stage will start in Newfoundland next spring and conclude in central Canada. If the first part of Howard's journey is any indication, next spring will see a profusion of child care stories sprouting in local papers, television and radio programs. Stay tuned!

*For further information on Howard and his cross-Canada project, contact the Canadian Child Day Care Federation, 401-120 Holland Avenue, Ottawa. K1Y 0X6 Tel: (613) 729-5289.*

# The Child Care Network

Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care

## The Child Care Network

The Child Care Network is the key membership category within the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care developed to strengthen the child care community's ability to negotiate and organize and directly assist child care programs with practical administrative support.

### Network Benefits and Services

- \* Network Newsletter (published 10 times a year)
- \* Reduced registration rates for all Coalition events
- \* Annual Conference
- \* Annual Lobby at Queen's Park
- \* Annual Constituency Lobby
- \* Regional Forums
- \* OCBC publications
- \* Coordinated resource development
- \* Use of the Coalition's Resource Centre
- \* Use of the Coalition's library of child care videos

#### Comprehensive Insurance:

A number of packages are offered to meet your program's needs and budget, including life, health, vision care, dental (including major restorative and orthodontics) and disability benefits at rates usually only available to very large employers.

#### Computerized Bookkeeping & Accounting Packages:

Includes the New Views accounting software and a wide range of services from training and support for this accounting software.

#### "Better Child Care":

is a superior records management custom computer software. This user-friendly program is a software for recording and retrieving attendance, managing waiting lists, accessing medical and other standard data for fast and accurate reference and processing.

#### Computer Hardware:

The Child Care Network offers assistance to centres who need help in buying computer hardware at the best possible price.

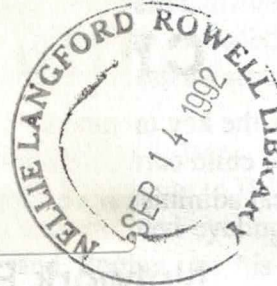
**Join The Child Care Network and receive a free copy of the Child Care Management Guide.**

Call the Coalition office for more information about Network services, benefits and fees.  
(See Network member fees on page 11)



**Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care**  
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Vicki Drummond  
Nellie Langford Rowell Library  
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**Inside This Issue:**

***Constitutional Confusion Cleared Up!***

***Jobs Ontario Child Care Spaces!***

***A New Conversion and Management Plan for Child Care in Ontario!***

***Wage Enhancement Grant Update!***

***And...The Acronyms Dictionary: all those acronyms you've wanted to know about but were afraid to ask!***