

ISSUE

The old saying ‘it takes a village to raise a child’ is more true than ever as families struggle with the high cost of raising a child. For many households, child care is the second largest expense after housing. The median monthly fee for child care in Canada is \$761 for infants, \$701 for toddlers and \$674 for preschool-age children.

CONTEXT

In addition to high fees, child care can be tough to find regardless of income. Canada has regulated child care spaces for less than one-quarter of all children 0-5 years, and space for just over one in five between the ages of 0-12 years.

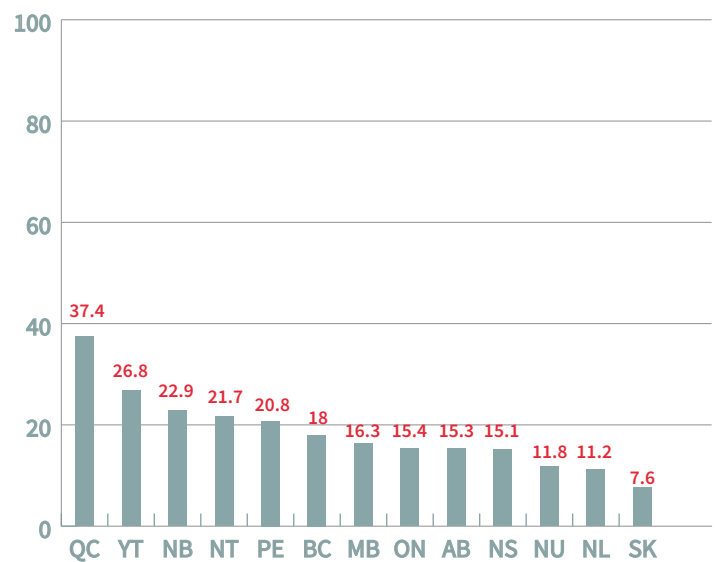
Despite the need, Canada has no national child care program. The federal government does provide a cash benefit to parents called the Universal Child Care Benefit (UCCB). But even with planned increases to the UCCB this year, parents will receive just \$1,920 per year for each child under the age of 6. That won’t even cover a quarter of child care costs. A cash benefit also does nothing to ensure that we have enough regulated child care spaces to meet the need.

With tens of thousands of children on the waiting list for affordable child care and families struggling to find high quality child care in their communities, the need for a national child care system is clear. Ensuring that parents can access consistent, safe, affordable and quality child care supports families and prepares children for later success. High quality, regulated child care is in the interest of all Canadians.

QUESTIONS

- How will your party tackle the high cost of child care and the lack of subsidized spaces?
- Will your party introduce a national early learning and child care system that is accessible to all?

% of children 0-12 for whom there is a regulated child care space by province—2012



Source: Ferns & Friendly 2012

RESOURCES

For more information and additional fact sheets in this series:
<http://spno.ca/canada-votes-2015>