

National Post

News

We need to focus on child care

National Post · Friday, Feb. 25, 2011

Re: Why We Need A National ChildCare Program, Laurel Rothman, Katherine Scott And Martha Friendly, Feb. 11; Dust-Up Over Daycare, editorial, Feb. 5

A comprehensive system of child care involves assisting parents with a range of supports for the care of their children, whether it is in the family's home, in the community or both. Many challenges exist in Canada across this field -from opportunities to build one's parenting skills, to providing parental leaves, to adequate child tax benefits, to creating quality community based child care. The lack of licenced home or centre-based care and after-school care is the weakest link.

In Toronto, for example, there is only enough licenced child care for one-fifth of children under age 10. The subsidy wait-list stands at about 18,000 children. And there are only enough full-week after-school programs for one-tenth of children ages six to 12 years.

Community child care that is safe, accessible, affordable and high quality is in short supply. The Post's Feb. 5 editorial mischaracterizes these community programs as institutions full of strangers plying the care of children away from parents. The editorial pits financial support against community child care. Families deserve solutions, not wedge issues. Canada needs to do more to support families and must create more highquality, community-based child care.

David Rivard, CEO, Children's Aid Society of Toronto.

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