



## Do you have a hard time finding quality, affordable child care?

**You're not alone.**

The Ontario government has recently introduced new supports for families and children with the implementation of full day early learning for 4-5 year olds.

## But child care continues to be unaffordable and hard to find for those who need it most

In Oxford, child care fees without a subsidy vary, with some as high as \$51 - this is in contrast to child care in Quebec which costs just \$7 a day. With 10.5% of Oxford families with children living in poverty, access to high-quality, affordable, licensed child care is more important than ever. But without investment in child care by our provincial government, it is likely the disparities in the affordability and quality of child care facilities will only grow. In Ontario, 4 out of 5 children still do not have access to regulated child care spaces. Here's what child care looks like in Oxford right now:

- Oxford has over 780 licensed centre-based child care spaces.
- Of children aged 0-5 years in Oxford County, only 21.4% have access to regulated child care spaces.
- In 2013, 406 children from low-income families had access to subsidized child care.
- There are currently no children on the waiting list for child care subsidies.
- Nearly all child care workers are women, and most of them are underpaid and overworked.

More funding from the Province could limit child care fees for parents, increase staff wages, and create additional facilities to reduce long waitlists. The Province has been increasing the child care budget incrementally over the years, but a long-term, viable plan is needed. For instance, Ontario can follow Quebec's and Manitoba's examples to develop a five-year plan to ensure the child care budget is not prone to underfunding on a yearly basis.

### Ask your candidates:

- Will your party support an early learning and child care system that is affordable and accessible to all?
- How will your party improve wages, benefits, and working conditions for child care workers?
- Will your party support a long-term fully funded child care plan?

### Resources:

Child Care Resource Unit: <http://www.childcarecanada.org>

Middle Childhood Matters Coalition: <http://www.middlechildhoodmatterstoronto.on.ca>

Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care: <http://www.childcareontario.org>

Oxford Community Child Care: <http://www.oxfordccc.ca>

