

Modernizing Child Care -

Along with child care, Ontario Early Years (OEYCs) and Parenting and Family Literacy (PFLCs) centres are part of a core network of children's services with a shared mandate. All must be included in a modernized early years system. Including OEYCs and PFLCs would permit more coherent operations, better utilize staff and improve linkages to public health and intervention services such as Healthy Babies, Healthy Children and Preschool Speech and Language.

A 'schools

A review of the through the lens of new evidence and experiences.

A suggestion that registries of informal providers can provide a pipeline to support quality into the large unregulated sector. No evidence suggests that registries contribute to quality; in fact registries are shown to mislead families into assuming there is public oversight of their child care arrangement.

A proposal that home child care providers team up to look after larger numbers of children. This is a popular form of regulated care in Quebec. Unfortunately it receives some of the lowest quality ratings. In Quebec licensed providers at least receive pre-service training. There are no similar requirements in Ontario.

The solution to the large numbers of children in informal child care is to expand licensed options; not to squander scarce resources on a false security that quality can be encouraged in the absence of sufficient public funding and oversight.

A representative working group to propose specific alternatives.

The DNA adequately promotes health and safety, a modernized act need to focus on mechanisms supporting healthy child development. The Toronto Operating Criteria is a validated tool that links quality assessment to the ELECT resource. Results are publicly posted. Consolidating licensing with evaluation and public accountability is a more likely route to program quality.

A major threat to quality is the rapid expansion of for-profit child care, particularly the commercial chains. A moratorium on licensing commercial operators would be prudent during the modernizing process.

more times in a year. Parents want to be involved in their children's early childhood experiences. They don't want responsibility for administrative minutia. Systems managers need the authority to rationalize programs to provide more coherent and sustainable service delivery.

Data Access Coordinators analyze community assessments of children's well being. Their data are critical to systems planning and accountability. DACs are now housed in various settings throughout the province. They belong with the systems managers.

The 90-day turn around for responses to the government's document is short and the summer an inopportune season for organized discussion but it is what it is. The Atkinson Centre will develop a more detailed response to the paper in the next weeks focused on achievable goals and timelines. We encourage you to share your views with us.

For more information on this topic, as well as about the Atkinson Centre, please visit: www.oise.utoronto.ca/atkinson