

# UNICEF Daycare Report: Children and Parents' Rights Wronged

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The daycare lobby and the opposition parties are waving a UNICEF report in their latest attempt to wrest billions from taxpayers. They are ignoring the report's warnings that such spending is a "high stakes gamble," and that children need "love."

(Full disclosure: I have a 13 month old, and I love him. I provide his "early education and care" – ECEC – nearly 24/7/365. My family lives in "poverty" by the report's measure, and I do paid work.)

## Daycare Lobby Co-Opting the UNICEF Brand

The sole author of "The child care transition, Innocenti Report Card 8" is Peter Adamson, founder of the *New Internationalist* magazine. John Bennett, a top Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) daycare promoter, provided the supporting research. The World Bank provided "input."

The Canadian "academics" consulted but not named turn out to be leading daycare lobbyists: Martha Friendly Coordinator of the Child Care Resource and Referral Unit and a former Executive Director of the Canadian Childcare Federation.

Thus the highly marketable UNICEF brand is being hijacked by the OECD and the World Bank, the global forces pushing daycare down the throats of elected politicians. Neither is a brand famed for love of children.

But the report is not exactly a UNICEF report at all, coming out of something called the UNICEF Innocenti Centre, which promotes compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

UNICEF actually takes no responsibility at all for the report. We read the buyer-beware disclaimer typical of daycare promo-material: **"The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy or views of UNICEF."**

## "A High Stakes Gamble" and Other Caveats

Adamson's warnings regarding his report continue in repeated admissions of **"important caveats"** regarding the need for **"better definitions"** and **"the weakness of the data."** **"Weaknesses"** include biases such as **"tak[ing] no account of other significant services"** and only **"relat[ing]...to out-of-home, centre-based child care."** He even calls the policy he promotes – institutional daycare for all kids in all nations – a "high stakes gamble."

Moreover: **“It is recognized that governments can accept no responsibility for the interpretation of the information.”**

No one taking responsibility? So much for “accountability.”

The OECD says it is about “free markets” and “enabling globalization” – that same force currently exporting chaos around the planet from US free market banks now receiving billions in corporate welfare. The World Bank claims its goal is ending poverty, but no one seriously believes that.

Do we want bankers and globalizers handling policy for our children too?

Did anyone elect these people?

## **What Does the UN Say about Children’s Rights?**

Adamson attempts to prove that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child requires states to spend billions on daycare.

His argument rests on one article: “States Parties shall...ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services and facilities...”

He leaves out mention of more basic articles such as,

**“The child has the right to ... be cared for by his or her parents.”**

And **“the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment.”**

And **“States Parties shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents”** .

And, from the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights, **“Everyone has the right to education.... [but] Parents have a *prior right* to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.”**

The Convention is emphatic that **“States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth...without discrimination of any kind.”**

Isn’t it discrimination to spend tens of thousands of dollars on one child and nothing on another simply because they experience different forms of ECEC?

## Why Let the OECD's Deceitful Daycare Promo-Team Dictate Canadian Child Policy?

When it comes to child policy, the OECD's credibility is dubious. For example, their highly publicized ranking of Canada at the bottom in spending on ECEC excluded all but spending on Kindergarten.

Also the OECD's Bennett publicly covered up the involvement of Canada's top daycare lobbyist, Martha Friendly, in his review of Canada, as did Ms Friendly herself. She was singled for "a special word of thanks" as one of "the authors of the Background Report" on which Bennett told McLeans he "relied to a great extent." Yet he wrote to the National Post, "the (OECD) report on Canada, 2004, was an external report... The statement...that the report was 'written in part by Toronto-based childcare advocate Martha Friendly' is inexact and misleading."

(See "The OECD and Canada's Daycare Lobby: Ties Denied"  
<http://www.kidsfirstcanada.org/martha-denies.htm>)

### Getting a Few Facts Straight

Adamson's notion of a "transition" to a regime of daycare and McJob mums taking place like a force of nature rather than due to the agenda of the OECD and the World Bank is highly overstated: "Today's rising generation is the first in which a majority are spending a large part of early childhood in some form of out-of-home child care."

Statistics Canada says under 15% of children 0-5 attend daycare centers.

And beware of alarmist historical revisionism: the "majority" of children never did spend all day inside the house alone with mum.

Likewise Adamson trots out the ubiquitous propaganda that about 70 percent of mothers are "employed". "Employment" is no measure of demand for daycare. It is a catch-all term covering those: on paid and unpaid leave, doing any paid work part time, doing unpaid work in a family business, doing paid work while caring for one's children. Parents still provide the vast majority of ECEC, which interferes with the globalizers's agenda.

### The OECD'S New Order Transition: McJobs for Mums, Daycare for Kids

The "transition" of the report's title is spelled out in a widely circulated OECD document: we are in a **"transitional period from an old to a new order. This includes deep changes in societies in general and in the family's structure in particular... a redefinition of public (state) and private (family) relationships concerning children's affairs"** and the "professionalization of care." The title of an

OECD colloquium further clarifies the goal: “Putting More Women to Work.” The World Bank sees parents primarily as “employees and consumers.”

(See: “The OECD: Globalizing Daycare Lobby Ideology”  
<http://www.kidsfirstcanada.org/OECD-ideology.htm> )

For Adamson, the OECD, and the World Bank a labour pool flooded with mums is a blessing they call “gender equality.” Practicing this form of equality, Toronto pays up to over \$70/day – over \$18,000/year – on daycare fees so a single parent can get up to \$16,000 at a minimum wage McJob.

## **The New Liberation: Exploitation + Corporate Welfare**

Spin doctorates have replaced “women’s liberation” with “gender equality.” Perhaps this change tacitly recognizes that for many McJob mums in the forced Labour Farce, the World Bank’s equality is not liberty.

Financing daycare rather than families themselves is both a form of corporate welfare and of exploitation of women, marketed as children’s rights and gender equality.