



*YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN  
THE OCTOBER 6, 2011 PROVINCIAL  
ELECTION*

*Tell your provincial candidate why  
your program (OEYC, FRP, PFLC) is  
important to your family.....*

What can I do if I only have.....?

### **5 Minutes or Less:**

- Put up a flyer in your program or centre
- Take flyers home, put up in your building or local stores
- Have Facebook? Change you profile picture to the FSIO logo and/or write a status about why your child's family support program matters to you and your community along with a link to campaign information
- Have Twitter? Tweet about the campaign, your local family support program and why your community needs it!
- Read the materials. Being informed yourself is the first step to being an advocate for your community!

### **10 Minutes:**

- Photocopy the campaign materials and make them available to other parents
- Talk about the public education campaign with co-workers over lunch or on a break. This doesn't need to be formal; lack of funding is an issue that affects us all and we should all be talking about it
- Invite your local MPP to visit your centre or request a meeting to discuss the needs of your community

### **30 Minutes:**

- Write an email to colleagues, friends, family and neighbours about the campaign and how they can get involved. Explain why family support programs are important to you, your family, and your community and the risks facing the child care sector if funding isn't guaranteed\*

- Present the public education materials at a staff or board meeting
- Call your MPP and tell them why you want to keep your Family Support Programs\*
- Write a letter to your MPP\*
- Write a letter to the editor or a small piece for your local newspaper\*
- Hand out materials to other parents as they drop-in or in your local parks.
- Phone 5 neighbours and discuss the issues mentioned about family support programs and child care....
- Post updates on the campaign on your website
- Write an article for your centre newsletter

## **Lack of funding for early learning and care programs**

There has not been an adjustment in funding for inflation to municipalities in over 15 years. That means every year we have less money to fund vital programs and qualified staff.

Municipalities are struggling to pay more than their 20% because the province fails to provide increases for inflation and pay equity.

Ontario Early Years Programs have had flat lined funding for the last 10 years. The funding restricts the number of hours programs can be open for families despite continued increases in attendance.

## **Impacts of Ontario's Early Learning Program on Family Support Programs**

Ontario has a new early learning program with 4 and 5 year olds in school programs. With the phased in approach to this ELP, childcare and family support faces a number of challenges.

Programs are currently being asked to vacate school space, increasing costs, risking reduction of drop in attendance and defeating the purpose of the seamless plan outlined in the Pascal Report: 'With Our Best Future In Mind'.

As programs leave community schools the opportunities for creating the seamless day is diminished, they will no longer be a priority for school space.

## **Shortage of Qualified Staff: Who Will Work With Families?**

A high quality early learning program will spend 80% of its budget on staff. Early childhood educators have at minimum a two year college diploma and several universities now offer degree programs in Early Childhood Education and are graduating hundreds of students every year.

But we have two problems – 1) we do not have enough early childhood educators and 2) we lose many great early childhood educators when they leave the job they love to earn more and help support their own families.

Statistics from 2006 tell us that 41% of trained early childhood educators are working in other fields.

There is a shortage of qualified ECE's in Ontario and this shortage is going to become more acute with the increased demand in full-day kindergarten. Many registered early childhood educators (RECE's) are underpaid and undervalued. Fair pay and benefits (like pensions) will ensure that RECE's are able to make enough money to support their own families and encourage RECE's who have left the field to come back to the job that they love and were trained to do.

ECE's are the backbone of the early learning and care community, their jobs need protection and as the FDK becomes fully implemented parents will need to access more programs to ensure their kids are getting what they need.....We need to support ECE's across the sector!

**BE SURE TO ENCOURAGE FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO VOTE ON  
OCTOBER 6, 2011.....**