

2024-1 Ensuring Equitable Access to High Quality Childcare for Newcomer Families

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Whereas: Newcomers face unique challenges in securing child care regardless of their immigration status. Understanding the childcare system and the inability of accessing waitlists prior to immigration cause parents and caregivers lengthy delays in securing child care placements further reducing their ability to participate in English/French acquisition and/or employment.

Whereas: Newcomers often have fewer social networks, limited language capabilities and/or reduced capacity to navigate the complexity of the child care system. In Winnipeg, some of the areas where newcomers are most likely to find housing, they experience the most difficulties securing childcare. For larger newcomer families with school aged, pre-school and infants needing care, the need to find daycares that suit all the needs of the family are insurmountable.

Whereas: Recently, in April 2023, The Manitoba Government announced a commitment to \$10/day child care which allowed more families to access child care. This announcement alone decreased the number of spaces available. However, it also came during the middle of high numbers of immigration of CUAET holders. This announcement and other initiatives that address the increase for more child care spots do so without any support for individuals or organizations to start or expand child care spots.

Whereas: For the fortunate few who do secure child care, there is also an added concern of advocating for quality care versus potentially losing their spot or concerns of their immigration status being revoked. For families who find unlicensed care as a desperate option, parents' concerns around safety and accountability are real.

Whereas: Quality child care for newcomer children is vital to communities that migrate to Canada and their ability to successfully settle, integrate, and participate in language acquisition and contribute to the Canadian economy. Without a more concerted approach by the Government of Manitoba, to not only increase the current number of daycare spaces in Manitoba, but to also actively engage individuals or organizations ready to start or expand, some newcomers simply will not be successful in Canada.

Be it Resolved That: MANSO and member agencies urge federal and provincial government bodies to communicate regularly with each other about the anticipated needs of newcomers pertaining to childcare, and to act collaboratively to address these issues so that childcare is available to newcomers in the early days of settlement when they need it most.

Be it Resolved That: Funders and service providers that provide pre-arrival and post-arrival services incorporate the following topics into the information delivered to newcomers and prospective newcomers to Canada:

- Canadian laws and societal norms pertaining to care of children
- The role of Child and Family Services in Manitoba

- Information about unlicensed and licensed child care options available in Manitoba, including realities of systemic barriers (i.e. long wait lists)

Be it Resolved That: MANSO and member agencies urge the Province of Manitoba to allow CNC programs to access funding currently restricted to provincially licensed childcare facilities (including funding for inclusion support workers and other supports for special needs children and their parents or caregivers).

Be it Resolved That: MANSO and member agencies urge IRCC and the Province of Manitoba to fund service providers to develop in-house training programs for newcomer clients interested in childcare professions, enhancing employment opportunities for newcomers and increasing capacity within CNC programs.

Be it Resolved That: MANSO and member agencies urge the Province of Manitoba to remove barriers for service providers seeking to apply for a provincial daycare license to complement CNC programming, by providing more supports and funding to these agencies to navigate the licensing process, and targeted grants for pre-planning and land acquisition phases of childcare program project development.