



June 17th, 2020

Ms Tracy Allard, MLA
#207, 10605 West Side Drive
Grande Prairie, AB
Canada T8V 8E6

Re: Recommendations for updating the Child Care Licensing Act and Regulation.

Dear Ms Allard,

The YMCAs of Alberta are pleased to provide feedback for the review of the Child Care Licensing Act and Regulation.

On behalf of the children and families we serve, the YMCA supports a high quality, affordable, and accessible child care system. Our expertise, proven early learning curriculum and national standards ensure an enriching, safe and healthy environment for all children. As a large, grassroots charity, we have experience and perspectives in urban and rural child care programs for all ages in Grande Prairie, Wood Buffalo, Edmonton, the Capital Region, Calgary, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat.

At a high level, the **YMCA is very concerned that QUALITY of child care is enshrined in legislation**. We recognize that the government has a focus on streamlining services and reducing red tape. While we agree there are areas of the child care system that could be more streamlined, this must not be at the expense of high quality, safe child care. With the elimination of the accreditation system earlier this year, we strongly feel that the revised regulations guarantee:

- healthy child development and learning.
- health and safety of children and staff.
- inclusion and diversity.
- recognition and support of child care professionals through quality education/training and wage top ups.

The YMCA works closely with other child care providers and networks in the province. For our submission, we wish to amplify the recommendations submitted on **June 12th** by the **Edmonton Council on Early Learning and Care (ECELC)**. These recommendations include:

1. **Adopt FLIGHT as the required curriculum framework** for all approved early learning and care programs.
2. **Restructure the educational requirements for early childhood educators** to enhance their knowledge and skills to deliver the FLIGHT curriculum framework.



3. **Include appropriate legislation for unlicensed child care providers** to ensure all children in Alberta are cared for in safe, high quality settings. This is particularly urgent during a pandemic, as COVID-19 will continue to be present in our communities for some time.
4. **Amend the Preamble to the Child Care Licensing Act** to clearly state the principles of *high quality, affordable and accessible child care* and the recognition that the legislation supports International agreements about the rights of children.

We have attached the ECELC's submission for reference.

Thank you for your ongoing leadership during this challenging time, and for stepping up to lead the important review of Alberta's Child Care Licensing Act and Regulation. We welcome any questions you have about our recommendations.

Sincerely,

Shannon Doram, President and CEO
YMCA Calgary

Jennifer Petracek-Kolb, CEO
YMCA of Lethbridge

Nick Parkinson, President and CEO
YMCA of Northern Alberta

Sharon Howard, CEO
YMCA of Medicine Hat

cc .

Hon. Rebecca Schulz, Minister of Children's Services
Ms Tania Brudler, Executive Director, Early Childhood Development Branch