

**YWCA Toronto Submission to the Standing  
Committee on Social Policy regarding  
Bill 242: Full Day Learning Statute Law  
Amendment Act, 2010**

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**March 29, 2010**



Advocacy | Employment & Skills Development | Girls & Family Programs | Housing & Shelter

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## **I. YWCA Toronto**

YWCA Toronto is the city's trusted multi-service organization by, for and about women and girls. YWCA Toronto is a turning point for women who are escaping violence and rebuilding healthy lives. We offer a range of housing options, employment and skills development and girls' and family programs. Last year YWCA Toronto served more than 26 000 people in Toronto.

## **II. Introduction**

As an organization committed to improving the lives of women and girls and as a childcare provider, YWCA Toronto is supportive of the vision of full day learning articulated in Dr. Pascal's report "With Our Best Future In Mind." We believe the vision articulated in the Pascal report will increase women's equality and better support the development of children and the lives of families with working parents.

We are concerned that the recommendations made in the Pascal report be carefully and fully implemented as quickly as possible. Currently, information regarding the implementation of full-day learning is minimal. Parents, schools and childcare providers are unable to plan without better and more complete information. Further, there are significant omissions in Bill 242 that need to be addressed.

## **III. Recommendations**

### **a. Year round learning**

YWCA Toronto works primarily with low-income women. We know very well that all parents, and in particular those with low-wage and precarious jobs, need stable childcare year round.

Bill 242 needs to be amended to establish clearly that full-day learning will be provided year round, including during March Break, the summer and on professional development days. Further, it needs to be clearly established that subsidies will also be available for the extended care year round.

### **b. Ensure existing childcare centres remain open**

Access to affordable childcare is a critical component of poverty reduction, as well as women's equality.

With the establishment of full-day learning, childcare centres currently serving four and five years olds will be significantly impacted.

In order to ensure existing childcare centres remain open, the government and community must tackle the difficult problem of the cost of providing child care for children ages infant to 3.8 years. This cost is significantly higher. Additionally, childcare centres will need to be supported to repurpose their space previously used for their four and five year old program.

#### IV. Conclusion

The Early Learning Program recommended in the Pascal Report, “With Our Best Future In Mind,” has the potential to make important contributions to our children’s development and learning, to women’s ability to engage in paid work and to the quality of life for families with working parents.

However, there are significant risks with a gradual implementation of the recommendations. Of immediate concern in relation to Bill 242 is the failure to establish clearly that full-day learning will be available year-round and subsidies for extended care will also be available year round.