



April 20, 2021

Submitted via email

Niagara Regional Council  
Office of the Regional Clerk  
Niagara Region  
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way, P.O. Box 1042  
Thorold, Ontario L2V 4T7

Dear Chair Bradley,

On behalf of the members of the Gender Equity Task Force please accept this letter in relation to the important issue of childcare in Niagara.

As stewards of our community we would like to invite you to ask the question "who benefits?" from the decisions you make. Social policy and corresponding public investments enshrine priorities and privileges the needs of some citizens over others.

Many studies highlight the social and developmental importance of childcare services for children directly. We would like instead to highlight the link between childcare and labour force participation.

While some may argue that direct payments to families for childcare is a preferred option, we ask you to examine who benefits from this approach? Direct cash payments for parents to find and pay for their own childcare may benefit families with the ability to discern for themselves high quality providers where children are safe from harm. However a system of subsidized childcare provides many more benefits to many more of Niagara's citizens by not only meeting the standard of no harm but also setting the conditions for children to thrive, establishing reliable childcare for parents who are working and contributing to the local economy through employment for childcare providers, opportunities for childcare operators and resources for labour market participation. A subsidized system of childcare levels the playing field for all families by ensuring equal access to high quality childcare.

We see a system of childcare as the better investment and the best way to ensure that the benefits of taxpayer funds are evident for children, families, job seekers and businesses.

Respectfully,

Gender Equity Task Force – Founding Members  
Mishka Balsom  
Rashmi Biswas  
Elisabeth Zimmerman  
Sarah Pennisi