

FAT STATS, FUZZY NUMBERS, FALSE CONCLUSIONS

A CLOSER LOOK AT CUPE'S NEWFOUNDLAND POLL ON DAYCARE/ALL- DAY KINDERGARTEN

September 2011

The poll itself is not available so it is unknown what exactly was asked.

Poll summary at:

http://nl.cupe.ca/updir/nl/NL_Child_Care_Survey_Analysis.pdf

CUPE'S VESTED INTEREST

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) is a leading lobbyist for tax-funded institutional child care. CUPE has a vested interest in advancing this cause as many daycare staff are CUPE members and required to pay union dues to CUPE.

However the vast majority of child care is not done by CUPE members or by other unions' members, or even by waged workers. This work is done primarily by parents, mostly mothers. CUPE competes with these workers by lobbying against them for tax funding. In this lobbying work CUPE has the great advantage of a very large revenue obtained from tax-payers paying CUPE members' wages.

POLL SIZE AND MAKE-UP – HOW MANY PARENTS?

304 “respondents” who were "adults" included in telephone survey. How many were parents of kids under 13? The on-line summary does not say.

DIFFICULTY FINDING CHILD CARE IS NOT SUPPORT FOR A TAX-FUNDED MASS DAYCARE SYSTEM

“1/3 of parents have problems arranging child care”

“One third of parents and guardians in Newfoundland and Labrador who have young children (33%) say they recently had problems finding someone to look after children who live with them.”

It is surprising that only one third had this problem. Finding a babysitter usually takes some time and effort, and therefore can be a “problem”.

COSTS OF PARENTAL CHILD CARE NOT REPORTED

All children need child care. Parental child care is the most preferred and used type. It has considerable costs – that is foregoing job income in order do child care for our own children. This cost is not reported.

COST OF DAYCARE FAILS TO MENTION MASSIVE SUBSIDY

The report makes much of costs and rising costs of child care.

All non-parental child care is tax-subsidized with daycare centres being by far the most heavily subsidized type. Even families paying the full fee cover far less than half of the real cost of operations, capital, training, monitoring, bureaucracy, advocacy, etc

CATCH-ALL VAGUELY DEFINED TERM used to claim huge support for daycare system in school

“Some 89% of parents and guardians with young children in the home say a government early learning and child care system would be a good idea for a child of theirs.”

But what does that mean?

“Interviewers described a provincial child care system in public schools as “for example, early learning programs for children under 5, and for children 6 to 12, programs before and after the regular school day.”

Using such a broad vague description inflates appearance of support because this can included (it has in past polls that provided the questions asked) anything from direct finding for parents, drop-ins, parent education seminars, 1 morning a week, to 50+ hours/week daycare as is proposed by Ontario and BC all-day K gurus.

DAYCARE USE – MISSING NUMBERS

The poll does not say HOW MANY or WHAT % OF TOTAL used daycare centres - OR how many have job schedules that would FIT CENTRE HOURS

Daycare centre is not even listed as a separate category and other categories listed combine different kinds of care into one category

UNREPORTED: FEW KIDS IN DAYCARE CENTRES

Based on Statistics Canada 2006 child care report data only 10.23% of Newfoundland and Labrador children age 6 months to 5 years were in daycare centres.

<http://www.kidsfirstcanada.org/chart-daycare-use.htm>

DAYCARE USE – INFLATED NUMBERS

p 6 says how many use what types of care and claims:

"One in three parents has used child care centres (including services operated in private homes) for at least one child in the past year or so."

"Child care centres" numbers should not include care in "private homes".

"Child care centre" category is too broad and inflates numbers. It includes what? – Preschool? Kindergarten? Library program? Drop-in? Sunday School? Babysitter?

Any use at all in the 'past year or so' also inflates numbers.

PREFERENCE FOR LOOKING AFTER OWN KIDS WITHOUT SERVICES

"Most parents who do not have a child in child care centres or in kindergarten, pre-school or after-school programs say they don't rely on these services because they prefer to take care of their children themselves (58%)."

That could be much higher if they did not use such a catch-all list - an after school program is what? swimming? music class? scouts?

UNFAIR: SUBSIDIZING HIGHER INCOME FAMILIES OVER LOWER INCOME FAMILIES

p 8 "shows that parents in upper-income groups are twice as likely as lower-income parents to have children in child care centres"

p9 "Part-time workers are more likely to prefer taking care of their children themselves"

UNFAIR: SUBSIDIZING SMALL FAMILIES OVER LARGER FAMILIES

p7 "The more children they have, the more likely parents are to say they prefer looking after their children, not having them in child care."

PEOPLE WHO USE DAYCARE FIND DAYCARE HOURS OK (sort of)- WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO DON'T?

"Nine in 10 parents using early learning or child care centres say the centres are convenient in terms of the days of the week or hours of the day the services are available. Fewer than half (48%), however, say the centres' hours are "very convenient"

Subsidizing institutional child care (all day K, daycare, pre-school) on the pretext that this frees parents to take a job ignores the fact that few are living the 1950s myth of Mon-Fri 9-5. There is little recognition or support for families who do not fit the mold, yet they are required to fund other people's child care through taxes.