



March 25, 2025

To whom it may concern,

We are concerned and disappointed to learn that the University of Alberta is ending its financial support (approx. \$300 000 per year) for the six university-affiliated daycares. These daycares provide excellent educational quality and nurturing environments for the children of faculty, staff, and students of the university community. At a time when the University of Alberta professes to care about creating and fostering a community that is accessible to all,<sup>1</sup> the choice to end their support for childcare seems to be contradictory to that aim.

Under longstanding agreements, the university has provided a basic level of financial support to the affiliated child care centers, such as offsetting rent and janitorial services. Supporting child care represents a miniscule proportion (a few hundredths of a percent) of the university's approx. \$2.04 billion annual budget. This financial support seems immaterial to the overall university budget but is very material to the budget of each daycare; and to the educational development of each of the children who attend. Tight regulatory and space restrictions prevent small, nonprofit child care centers from compensating adequately.

The University of Alberta takes pride in its "culture of care," a core principle that guides the actions and policies of the institution. According to the People Strategy, the university aims to cultivate "...a vibrant and inclusive community where people at all levels thrive professionally and personally..."<sup>2</sup> For parents, caregivers, and families, the high-quality child care provided by the affiliated daycare centers provides peace of mind, enabling them to focus on their work or studies. This peace of mind is emphasized in the university's Students Who Parent project, which strives to "create a campus environment that promotes equity through the availability of services, resources, and physical plants that support campus parents and remove barriers to their full participation in campus life."<sup>3</sup>

The university directly benefits from the financial support of the affiliated daycares, for they provide nearby opportunities for students and faculty to undertake educational research and observation. These collaborations are fruitful to both the university and the children of the daycares.<sup>4</sup> The affiliated daycares enrich the campus community, provide an essential and high-quality service to parents, and help the university achieve its goal of cultivating a vibrant and inclusive community.

The financial support of the university is essential to continue the high-quality care and support that is provided by the affiliated daycares. Child care in the province of Alberta is already hard to come by, with a spot available for only 38% of children in Edmonton.<sup>5</sup> Providing high-quality, easily accessible child care is essential to ease the burden on the parents, caregivers, and families of the university, allowing them to

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<sup>1</sup> [Access, Community + Belonging](#)

<sup>2</sup> [A Culture of Care | University of Alberta](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Students Who Parent Project | Office of the Dean of Students](#)

<sup>4</sup> [U of A project could help children in daycare breathe easier during wildfire season | Folio](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Community Child Care Coverage in Alberta \(Q4 2024\)](#)

fully participate in campus life. With upwards of 200 university families currently on the affiliated daycare waitlists and provincial child care shortages growing, our campus centers are a critical lifeline. In the current childcare climate, our campus community's child care capacity urgently needs to expand, not contract.

If the University of Alberta wishes to be a world-class institution, it must offer a world-class working environment and learning community. These short-term budgetary decisions undermine the long-term prosperity of the institution and are damaging to the university community. Dr. Janet Elliott's words from the 2002 Report of the Daycare Advisory Committee at the University of Alberta are still relevant and true in 2025: "... a university that makes quality childcare a priority succeeds at many levels: it helps free leading teachers, researchers and staff to pursue excellence in their fields; it saves precious resources otherwise lost in re-hiring and retraining staff; it makes our university more attractive to prospective faculty...; it broadens the range of excellent students who have the opportunity to attain a post-secondary education; it demonstrates a commitment to academic disciplines that research such things as teaching, learning, and psychology; finally, an organization that makes children and their care a priority is simply doing the right thing in a compassionate, productive, and caring human community."

Sincerely,



**Michael Baggaley**  
PDFA VP Internal



**Quinn Benders**  
NASA President



**Lisa Glock**  
UASU President



**Gordon Swaters**  
AASUA President



**Haseeb Arshad**  
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