



Ontario gov. accused of ‘egregious’ spinning of research on ‘benefits’ of full-day kindergarten

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TORONTO, November 27, 2013 ([LifeSiteNews.com](#)) – Canada’s leading marriage and family think tank has accused Ontario’s Liberal government of "egregious" misrepresentation of the conclusions of research that the government claimed shows the “nothing short of incredible” benefits of full-day kindergarten.

“We are genuinely concerned about the misrepresentation of the research,” said Andrea Mrozek, Executive Director of the Institute of Marriage and Family Canada (IMFC), to [LifeSiteNews.com](#). “I think parents need to know what the research actually shows.”

In early September, the Ontario government [partially released](#) the government-initiated study in partnership with Queen’s and McMaster universities, claiming that it showed that students in full-day kindergarten (FDK) were “better prepared” than children without FDK to “enter Grade 1 and to be more successful in school.”

Mainstream media and champions of early child-education were ecstatic at the news. The Toronto Star ran the story with the headline: “Full-day kindergarten gives kids huge step up, study shows.” Daycare advocate Margaret Norrie McCain claimed the results were “like winning Olympic gold.”

But even though the government had the full 2012 report in its hands, it did not release it until last month, weeks after its sensational FDK press conference.

What the reports actually said

When IMFC got its hands on the actual report, it says it found that what the Ontario government claimed the report said, and what the report actually said were not the same thing.

“[T]he university reports do not say what the government claims they do—and they certainly do not hold the glimmer of ‘gold medal’ results,” stated IMFC in its own report, released today, titled “[Full-day kindergarten in Ontario: Reading the fine print](#)”.

The research actually showed what the IMFC called “lacklustre results” and “significant challenges” faced by FDK programs, results that were no different from previous research on the topic and that were conveniently “left off the government press release”.

For instance, the Queen’s University report highlighted the problem of FDK “overcrowded classes” where children “had more behavior issues because students found it difficult to self-regulate when their personal space was consistently invaded.”

The study also found that children with special needs were not receiving “proper support”.

“Even with two adults, meeting the needs of 30 demanding young children is difficult, but this is even more challenging (if not impossible) in classes with students who need more support, like in the case of students with special education needs,” stated the study.

The IFMC pointed out that in a time of “serious provincial deficits, what is the likelihood that children in overcrowded classrooms will see improved adult-child ratios?”

Thee Queen’s report also found that “some children appear to have done worse with the FDELK [full day early learning kindergarten] than with the non-FDELK”.

Meanwhile, the McMaster University study actually found that children with no full-day kindergarten fared better than the rest.

“In almost all domains, children in the No full-day kindergarten group had better scores than children in either of the groups with full-day kindergarten, and sometimes this difference was statistically significant,” the study authors found.

The McMaster researchers called their findings “opposite to expectations”.

The IMFC suggests that the government put its own spin on the research to suit its own purposes, stating: “It is never wise to take any government press release at face value because they have people working full-time on spin.”

“In this particular instance, the misrepresentation of the research is so egregious, one is forced to consider whether those cheering it on actually bothered to read it.”

Mrozek said that the government’s September spin on the research puts “tremendous pressure [on parents] to use these programs for fear of denying your child valuable ‘education’.

Concerns about FDK

Former Premier Dalton McGuinty announced the FDK plan in 2010, with the goal of completing the rollout by September 2014. Reports [indicate](#) that the government is spending about \$1.5 billion on top of millions in operating costs to make the program succeed.

Mrozek said that now that the government has “spent the major taxpayer dollars to put this in place against the recommendation of people like Don Drummond, they need to prove that it is ‘worth it.’”

In his 2012 665-page report, noted Canadian economist Drummond recommended the “[cancellation of the FDK program](#) with appropriate phase-out provisions” in order to rein in provincial spending so as to avoid a \$30-billion deficit by 2017-18.

Pro-family leaders have criticized the governmental push for earlier and earlier child education as a state takeover of parenting.

“This is a deceptive way” for the elite “to prevent parents from teaching foundational principles of family, religion, and socialization,” said Brian Rushfeldt, executive director of Canada Family Action, when Alberta [pushed](#) for government mandated full-day kindergarten in 2012.

The [content](#) of the government-approved FDK curriculum pushes the normalization of diverse sexual lifestyles and practices. The child's “Personal and Social Development area of learning” includes a focus to eradicate “sexist, racist, and homophobic behaviour, in age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate ways.”

The FDK curriculum will also teach children what the program calls “healthy and respectful relationships”. Children will begin to understand concepts of “equality, fairness, tolerance, and justice,” but “in relation to the treatment of minority groups,” including those with “diverse family structures.”

The program also demands that teachers raise the “comfort level” of “same-sex parents” as a “prerequisite to involving them in the program.”