

Child care conspiracy

One can be forgiven for thinking there's a conspiracy going on around here. In a study entitled *The Benefits and Costs of Good Child Care*, authors Michael Krachinsky and Gordon Cleveland conclude that there is a \$2 savings in labour productivity and decreased social costs for every \$1 the government invests in 'quality' child care. The solution? More money for it, naturally.

Another report by the feds concludes that child care workers are woefully underfunded, and National Crime Prevention Council research shows that negative childhood experiences are closely linked to latter criminal behaviour. These studies may be entirely sound, but their authors seek more than mere mammon. They want nothing short of a national, tax-funded universal day care program, and we're being inundated with messages for its need.

Some argue the traditional, single-income family is under attack by those who advocate such a program. The problem, say the critics, is that the taxes of the already beleaguered single income family would be further increased to expand the subsidy to their dual income neighbours benefitting from the program, an inequitable transfer of funds from those who make sacrifices to keep one parent at home to those who do not. And those pesky critics, of course, are exactly right.

Reform MP Eric Lowther correctly contends that the government needs to extend a child care credit to "ALL parents, including those who care for their children at home, instead of further straining the most critical relationship in the long term health of society: the

parent-child bond.” Plato, who advocated that children be removed from the home and reared entirely by the state, would be pleased with the proposed developments in Canada. Those who recognize the need for such bonding should be anything but.

On a positive note, Dr. Kyle Pruett's eighteen year study at Yale's Child Study Center concluded this year that children raised by men “are often active, vital and vigorous” and show a particular interest in “the external environment.” Can you say, ‘politics’? Perhaps the fact that my father was very instrumental in raising me is the reason you're reading this column today.

Studies also show how the nurturing activities of both parents stimulate the emotional attachment so vital in the development of personality in the early years. The changing faces of day care workers can't replace that, so if staying at home with them is an option, take the option! The benefits could be inestimable.

ADDENDUM: The Swedish government provides virtually free day care for all preschoolers sixteen months of age and older. To finance this and other lavish programs, their parents' tax rates are among the highest in the world, forcing both to work, which in part explains why 92% of qualifying preschoolers in that country find themselves in said care. And the outcome? Education standards are falling while psychosomatic disorders among Swedish youth are climbing at a faster rate than in comparable European states. Closer to home, recent studies also suggest that universal daycare in Quebec has led to a general decline in the emotional stability of their young charges. Assuming a correlation between these things, it would appear that making child rearing a state responsibility is precisely the destructive liberal misadventure those pesky socons have always said it is... which would make them both smart and caring.