



WOMEN IN FILM
AND TELEVISION
CANADA COALITION

News Release

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Family Care Report exposes the critical need to implement balanced and equitable working conditions in the Canadian Film and TV production industry.

October 12, 2021— Women in Film and Television - Canada Coalition (WIFT-CC) in conjunction with **Reel Families for Change Canada**, have released the results of the **Family Care Report**—a cross-Canada survey that explores the impact of COVID-19 on child and family care for women in Canadian screen industries.

[Download the Family Care Report](#)

The report concludes that the federal government should immediately call for an industry round table to begin discussions with unions and employers on the goal of implementing changes to federal labour tax credit policy to support childcare and family care by 2024, while simultaneously addressing the critical need to implement balanced and equitable working conditions in the Canadian production industry.

The facts:

- There is limited funding and availability of childcare or family care, including culturally appropriate child and family care, throughout the larger community.
- The work life balance of the screen industry is notably unbalanced. Long hours, compulsory overtime, and gig working conditions keep out people with family obligations or limit their opportunities.
- There is no over-arching requirement for unions and the industry to address child and family care.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated women in the workforce in Canada, including in the film and television production industry, where women have been struggling to find adequate childcare and care for their aging and special-needs family members.

And more specifically in Quebec, where a province-wide subsidized daycare program has operated since the mid-1990s:

- The numbers were significantly better, with only 24% of respondents reporting childcare availability issues. However, the Quebec subsidized childcare program is oversubscribed and is based on 'regular' working hours from Monday to Friday. It does not provide coverage for the demanding work hours required by the film and television production sector.

- In general, however, the childcare program has been widely successful in terms of increased participation of women in the workforce and in cost efficiency. The Quebec program demonstrates how childcare is key to having parents, especially women, enter and remain in the film and TV production industry, particularly now when the industry desperately needs labour.

Recommendations

1. Trust and relationships must be built with under-represented communities in the Canadian industry. There is a lack of fair representation and data for workers and carers across the production sector, and more critical research needs to be undertaken as a first step.
2. Government, unions and employers must collaborate with workers/caregivers to design, finance and provide flexible and culturally appropriate childcare and family care for workers. Clear targets and timelines should be devised for establishing a national industry childcare and family support program by 2024, beginning with the establishment of an overarching Canadian industry policy with guidelines and standards, together with a coordination framework to advance appropriate and equivalent service provision in all production regions in Canada.
3. Federal and provincial government agencies do not currently allow childcare as an allowable production budget line item. In order to implement change, the government must require culturally appropriate, affordable and flexible child and family care as a production budget line item in order for projects to be eligible for federal or provincial labour-based tax credits and/or government agency funding, by 2024.
4. Given the overlap in jurisdictions relating to the licensing of daycares, particularly between provinces and municipalities, the resulting licensing requirements are often not in sync and can be confusing. Federal and provincial governments must revise childcare licensing and zoning requirements at the municipal, provincial and federal levels to allow for the establishment of comparable on-set and on-demand childcare across the various production centres in Canada by 2024.
5. Government, employers and unions must immediately work together to establish healthier working conditions, through mandating reasonable work weeks, work safety, and work hours in the industry, such as a maximum 10-hour workday and 50-hour work weeks.

Some statistics from the survey

- Women were 93% of respondents
- 86% worked in unionized production
- 27% of respondents had been fired for being pregnant
- More than 82% of respondents outside Quebec and 59% of Quebec-based respondents said they struggle to find affordable childcare
- Almost 64% of non-Quebec respondents reported having lost work because of childcare challenges, compared to 24% of Quebec respondents.

- Union members believe their union will not support them in the face of parental discrimination, giving the unions a less than 4 out of 10 confidence rating across the survey.
- 25% of respondents gave their unions a 1 out of 10 confidence rating that their union/guild would support them in cases of parental discrimination, almost 62% of all respondents said their union or guild did not offer typical family accommodations or were unsure if their unions even had a childcare policy.

“Many Canadian production unions were very supportive in promoting the Family Care Project’s survey amongst their members. WIFT Canada is in contact with the various associations and guilds of the industry in order to explore ways to apply original and sustainable solutions to implement balanced and equitable working conditions in the Canadian production industry. This is particularly crucial as the sector continues to grow and prosper, and particularly if the industry continues to receive government funding,” said Family Care Report author Susan Brinton and expert researcher Heather McQuillan.

The St. John’s International Women’s Film Festival (October 13-17) Film Industry Forum features a panel discussion entitled **Caregiving in the Creative Industries**. [Click here to access the panel discussion](#).

About the report

The Family Care Report was commissioned by the WIFT Canada Coalition with funding from the Government of Canada’s Emergency Support Fund for Cultural, Heritage and Sport Organizations, administered by the Canada Media Fund.

To prepare this report a survey was conducted during January and February of 2021, in conjunction with Reel Families for Change Canada. To augment survey findings and analysis, the project team conducted research on childcare and industry work practices through sector organization data from Canada and around the world.

A total of 322 responses were received from workers in the Canadian film and TV production industry by the end of the survey in February 2020. At the same time, the project team also researched childcare and industry work practices with data from Canada and around the world, in order to supplement the survey and expand on key issues.

Additionally, the Family Care Project had an ad hoc advisory committee comprised of WIFT Canada members, Women in View members, members of Reel Families for Change Canada, as well as discussions with numerous individuals working in the industry. Collectively, their expertise and input were invaluable in the content and drafting of recommendations for this report.

About Women in Film and Television (WIFT) - Canada Coalition

The WIFT Canada Coalition is a dynamic group of autonomous WIFT chapters across Canada. The Coalition is committed to exploring issues, to challenging the status quo and to championing initiatives that contribute to an equitable and safe environment for all women and gender diverse people in the Canadian screen industry. (<https://wiftcanadacoalition.ca/>). Contributors: WIFT Atlantic, FCTMN Quebec, WIFT Toronto, WIFT Alberta, WIFT Vancouver, Women in View.

About Reel Families for Change Canada

Reel Families for Change is committed to transforming the long-term health and stability of families in the film industry through innovation-based dialogue, research and community building. We are focused on creating more equitable workplaces and believe that equity in the workforce is essential to creating good content. We bring our initiative to life working with local, provincial and federal government bodies, production and a strengthened community of caregivers who work in the screen industries.

About Canadian Media Fund

The Canada Media Fund (CMF) fosters, develops, finances and promotes the production of Canadian content and applications for all audiovisual media platforms. The CMF guides Canadian content towards a competitive global environment by fostering industry innovation, rewarding success, enabling a diversity of voice and promoting access to content through public and private sector partnerships. The CMF receives financial contributions from the Government of Canada and Canada's cable, satellite and IPTV distributors. Please visit cmf-fmc.ca.

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Source: WIFT Coalition Canada
<https://wiftcanadacoalition.ca/>

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