

The Marginalization of Child Care: A Pilot Atlas of Child Care in Ottawa

by

Tara McWhinney

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Post Doctoral Affairs
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

Geography

Carleton, University
Ottawa, Ontario

©2015
Tara McWhinney

Abstract

Coming from an 'ethic of care' perspective, this study utilizes a critical feminist approach to examine the use of participatory mapping technologies as potential tools for social policy analysis. The purpose of this research is to address whether advances in online mapping technologies can assist governments and communities with generating more experiential evidence-based policy-making. Focusing on government child care programs and policies in the Ottawa area, a cybercartographic atlas was created using information from focus groups with parents and a review of current child care programs and policies. This Pilot Child Care Atlas was successfully able to incorporate all of the child care programs and policies researched while also allowing for the imputing of the experiences of parents from the focus groups. However, in order to fully assess the usefulness of this technology for social policy analysis further research is necessary where the atlas is made available to the community.

Acknowledgements

I would like to begin by thanking the parents who took time out of their busy schedules in order to participate in the focus groups. Without your willingness to share experiences of providing child care this research project would not have been possible. I would also like to thank the local child care centre and Ontario Early Years Centre that provided opportunities for the recruitment of parents, and I would like to thank my friends Jessica Paquette and Elizabeth Gallant for providing top quality child care support during the focus groups. As Registered Early Childhood Educators they greatly assisted my research project with their vast knowledge of child care programming.

I would like to thank my supervisors Fran Klodawsky and Fraser Taylor for their continuous support and encouragement throughout the research process. Their combined constructive feedback and guidance was instrumental in forwarding my thought process and helping me reach my research goals. I benefited greatly from their extensive knowledge and wisdom. I would like to thank the Nunaliit technicians and fellow students who assisted me at the Geomatic and Cartographic Research Centre. The training and technical support I received was essential to the creation of The Pilot Child Care Atlas. I would also like to thank the administrative staff within the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies for patiently answering all my questions.

Lastly, I would like to thank my family and my partner George for their continuous care and support. Your belief in my abilities and your constant encouragement was essential to me completing this Master's degree.

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Table of Contents	iii
Table of Figures	v
Table of Appendices	vi
Introduction	1
Redistributing the Power of Maps	1
Cybercartography and Nunaliit	3
Research Questions	5
Review of Chapters	6
Chapter One: Theory and Context	9
Critique and Action	9
Mapping Child Care Policies and Programs	14
Complexity and Changeability of Child Care Policy	14
Critical Cartography	16
Configurations of Scale	18
New Forms of Cartography	20
Cybercartography	22
Mapping Child Care Narratives	23
The Gendered Nature of Child Care Provision	25
An Issue of Women’s Equality	26
Nature of Child Care	28
Families Increased Social Risks and Changing Structures	29
The Urgency of Emergent Mapping of Child Care.....	31
Discursive Communities	32
Adopting an Ethic of Care	32
Child Care Debates.....	35
Universal Kindergarten: A Collective Approach?.....	38
The Feminist Paradox of Identity Formation	40
Cybercartography: A Way Forward?.....	42
Chapter Two: Methodology and Methods	44
Introduction	44
Cybercartography	45
Positionality and Reflexivity	47
How I came to the topic of Caregiving	49
Creating The Child Care Pilot Atlas	51
Conducting the Focus Groups	53
The Policy and Program Review	58
Conclusion	59
Chapter Three: Discussion of Results	61
Introduction	61
Focus Groups	61

Part 1: Mapping Child Care Policies and Programs	64
Parental Provision of Child Care: Lack of Knowledge of Programs and Policies.....	64
Increasing Knowledge of Child Care Programs and Policies.....	67
Parental Child Care Need: Parenting Support Programs.....	81
Part 2: Including Narratives of Child Care Programs and Policies	85
Parental Provision of Child Care: Adequate Finances.....	85
Non-Parental Child Care Needs: Accessibility.....	94
Non-Parental Child Care: Convenience	99
Non-Parental Child Care Need: Quality	101
Part 3: Graphing Information Related to Narratives	104
Non-Parental Provision of Child Care Need: Affordability and Accessibility.....	104
Conclusion	109
Conclusion: Current and Future Atlas Designs	110
Introduction	110
Atlas Design Elements	111
Conceptual Mapping of Programs	111
Physical Mapping of Programs	113
Graphing Child Care Spaces	114
Information Schemas.....	114
Addition of Comments	115
Addition of Demo Media.....	116
Artistic and Graphic Displays.....	117
Ways to Improve the Pilot Child Care Atlas Design	118
Connecting to the Purpose of the Research	120
Final Conclusions	122
Bibliography	125

Table of Figures

Figure 1: Policy and Program Changes _____	16
Figure 2: Demographics _____	62
Figure 3: Child Care Needs _____	64
Figure 4: List of Programs and Policies _____	66
Figure 5: Broad Areas of Child Care _____	68
Figure 6: Municipal and Provincial Map _____	71
Figure 7: Federal Map _____	72
Figure 8: Program Schema _____	73
Figure 9: Organization Schema _____	74
Figure 10: Kindergarten Schema _____	75
Figure 11: Extended Day Program Schema _____	76
Figure 12: Universal Child Tax Benefit Schema _____	77
Figure 13: Policy and Regulation Display _____	79
Figure 14: Demo-Media for Extended Day Program _____	80
Figure 15: Demo-Media for Best Start Centres _____	81
Figure 16: Ontario Early Years Centers Map _____	83
Figure 17: Physical Map Resource Display _____	84
Figure 18: Comments on Adequate Finances _____	88
Figure 19: Comments on Income Splitting _____	90
Figure 20: Linking Comments to Programs _____	94
Figure 21: Comments on Licensed Child Care Centers _____	96
Figure 22: Comments on Child Care Registry _____	98
Figure 23: Comments on Extended Day Program _____	101
Figure 24: Comments on Licensed Home Child Care _____	103
Figure 25: Child Care Spaces Graph _____	107

Table of Appendices

Appendix A: Recruitment Letter.....	138
Appendix B: Consent Form.....	140
Appendix C: Recruitment Poster.....	142
Appendix D: Focus Group Questions.....	143

Introduction

Redistributing the Power of Maps

Mapping is a human activity that seeks to make sense of the world, and to help us find our way in the world. As Fraser Taylor explains, today maps are much more than just “artifacts indicating location” as mapping assists in understanding concepts and processes, and maps “are used as metaphors for a wide range of human activities” (2009, “Introduction” para 2). Although they are useful, maps are not neutral representations of the world. They are a social construction, a representation of the cultures and contexts in which they are created (Kitchen & Dodge, 2007; Crampton, 2010). Created through a process of decision making on what to include, and what to exclude, maps are a political act and deploy power in the production of knowledge claims. In the words of Jeremy Crampton and John Krygier: “Maps are active; they actively construct knowledge, they exercise power, and they can be a powerful means of promoting social change” (2006, p.15).

Recent adaptations of mapping technologies have sought to redistribute and/or harness the power of maps, towards social change, by including public participation in the mapping process. Participatory Public Geographical Information Systems (PPGIS) has emerged as a method and a theory, within critical cartography, in response to critiques leveled towards claims of representational mapping and proprietary/exclusionary geographical information systems (GIS). GIS can be defined as “a computing application capable of creating, storing, manipulating, visualizing, and analyzing geographic

information” (Goodchild, 2000, p. 6). Within PPGIS, “the use of GIS has been furthered by members of the public and private sectors who believe that access to computer tools and digital data forms an essential part of an informationally enabled democracy” (Sieber, 2006, p. 491).

One aspect of promoting social change is reviewing and analyzing the effectiveness of social policies. Although policy analysis has become an important issue for policy makers within Canada, recent studies have shown a low level of ‘policy analytical capacity’ (Howlett, 2009). Policy analytical capacity is the ability of policy makers to achieve evidence-based policy-making. As Howlett explains,

“Evidence-based policy-making represents a contemporary effort to reform or re-structure policy processes in order to prioritize evidentiary or data-based decision-making. Like earlier efforts in the “policy analysis movement,” its aim is to avoid or minimize policy failures caused by a mismatch between government expectations and actual, on-the-ground conditions through the provision of greater amounts of policy-relevant information” (2009, p. 153)

This research project aims to explore the capabilities of participatory online mapping tools as instruments of social policy analysis. As a social worker adopting a feminist approach, I view the experiences and opinions of those who are directly affected by government social policies and social programs as central to the process of policy analysis. Participatory mapping and feminist theory are connected through their emphasis of ‘situated knowledges’, a feminist term which highlights the importance of research based on the perspectives of those affected by an issue. These perspectives are the ‘actual, on-the-ground conditions’ that government policies create and/or affect.

Cybercartography and Nunaliit

I first became interested in the discipline of geography, and online participatory mapping tools, during a presentation in a social work course of a cybercartographic atlas on the risk of homelessness. Cybercartography atlases are created by teams of individuals from different academic disciplines, and often include community members and community organizations. The technology behind cybercartography incorporates GIS technologies, with personal narratives, in a multisensory and multimedia form of mapping (Taylor, 2009). Through a process of communication and negotiation, an atlas allows for personal and collective narratives to be presented, discussed, contested, and/or revised and updated.

The most recent versions of cybercartographic atlases are created using the the Nunaliit Cybercartographic Atlas Framework (Hayes et al., 2014). The atlases created within the Nunaliit Framework are able to adapt and change structure based on input from users, therefore offering a unique blending of critical theory and social action. The Pilot Atlas of Homelessness is an example of a cybercartographic atlas that has informed social policy-makers. Designed by Tracey Laurilaut, alongside a team of stakeholders and cybercartographic technicians, this atlas includes interactive maps of homelessness and housing issues in Ottawa, Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver and Calgary:

“The Atlas provides researchers, municipalities and policy makers with the means to interactively engage and visualize maps of the distribution and complexity of risk of homelessness variables across time and space within selected municipalities across Canada and at a federal scale.” (Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre, 2015).

The atlas, in its final state, was successfully used to further understanding of key housing issues for each municipality presented in the atlas.

For my research project, I decided to employ cybercartography in a unique way. To explore the possibility of an atlas in organizing and presenting information of social policies and programs to those directly affected, while at the same time allowing for individuals to comment on their experiences and opinions of these policies and programs. Currently there are no other cybercartographic atlases where individuals are presented social policies and asked to comment about them. The time and resource constraints of a Masters thesis prevent this project from being available for public use. Instead, the aim of this project is to test the technology of Nunaliit in this distinctive way. Ultimately this research project explores whether the Nunaliit Framework can demonstrate the complexity of diverse human experience, while also providing a platform for connecting common experiences and struggles.

The professional experience I have had as a social worker, combined with my personal experience as a single mother, has led me to the topic of caregiving and subsequently child care, an important form of caregiving. Because child care policies and programming vary greatly from place to place, it is necessary to choose a municipality to test the effectiveness of an online mapping tool. My familiarity with child care programming in Ottawa, Ontario led to its choice as the location base of this project.

Research Questions

In the creation of the Pilot Child Care Atlas I am asking two central research questions: 1) How can a cybercartographic atlas be designed in order to explain, and capture, the complexity and changeable nature of child care policies and programs affecting parents in the Ottawa area? 2) How can the atlas be structured to allow for the inputting, and connecting, of complex and diverse experiences of child care, as they relate to child care policies and programs affecting parents in the Ottawa area?

The purpose of the first question is to assess whether the Pilot Child Care Atlas can map the variability, and changeability, of child care programs and policies. The atlas focuses on the child care policies and programs provided by the government, affecting parents' provision of child care in Ottawa, Ontario. It includes geographical information on child care programming in Ottawa, and a conceptual mapping section of child care programs and policies affecting Ottawa parents. For the function of this research project, child care is defined broadly as the care parents and guardians provide to children, and the care they organize for others to provide to their children. The care others provide can be formal care in childcare centers and home daycares, and informal care done by family and friends.

The child care policies and programs in this study include all the programs regulated and funded by the federal, provincial, and municipal government that assist parents, guardians, and child care providers with these tasks. For example, the study goes beyond the regulation and subsidies for

daycare centers, it also covers kindergarten programs, literacy centers and nutrition programs; essentially, any government program that assists with the care provided for children. However, because of the sheer number of child care programs available, this project does not cover policies or programs designed specifically for children with disabilities. Ideally an atlas would cover these programs as well, and this should be a consideration if future child care atlas projects are conducted.

The purpose of the second research question is to assess the public participation capabilities within the Pilot Child Care Atlas. Since the atlas is not available for public use, the opinions and experiences of parents within the atlas come from focus groups conducted with parents in the Ottawa area. The focus groups address these two questions in order to generate information for the atlas: 1) What are the perceived child care needs of parents in the Ottawa area? 2) How effective is the current childcare regime at the municipal, provincial and federal level at addressing these perceived needs? The usefulness of the Nunaliit technology is assessed by how well it incorporates the diverse experiences and opinions of parents expressed in the focus groups, while also providing an opportunity to connect similar opinions and experiences.

Review of Chapters

Demonstrating the connections between feminist theory and cybertography, Chapter One outlines the theoretical basis of this research project. Reviewing critical cartography and a feminist 'ethic of care', this

chapter highlights how each of these theories has informed the critical and social justice orientation of this research project. A discussion of the uneasy relationship between critique and action is provided in order to further an understanding of the relationship between theory and practice, and how a cybercartographic atlas on the topic of child care fits into this critique.

Chapter Two reviews the research methodology, and explains how feminist methods are employed in the research project. This chapter integrates a reflexive analysis of the research process, by including my thoughts, and scrutiny of, the conducting and recruiting for the focus groups, the practice of the policy review, and the subsequent creation of The Pilot Child Care Atlas. Although a reflexive approach is adopted for this chapter, I also include a critique of the use of reflexivity and the concept of positionality.

The results of the focus groups with parents, and the policy review, are outlined in Chapter Three, by explaining how these methods have informed and guided the process of creating the Pilot Child Care Atlas. In this discussion the narratives of parents are organized according to the various child care needs identified through the focus groups, each child care need is related to the child care programs and policies discussed by the parent participants. The different technological aspects of the Pilot Child Care Atlas are reviewed according to each child care need identified by participants, and screen shots of the atlas are included to demonstrate each design feature.

The final chapter discusses how the atlas design contributes to the goals of the research project in creating a space for individuals to learn about, and

comment upon, child care programs and policies. The success and limitations of each atlas design feature is outlined and assessed based on these goals. The chapter concludes with a few customization recommendations to improve this atlas, and thoughts on future research to build upon this work.

Chapter One: Theory and Context

Critique and Action

In any research project or theory there is an underlying assumption as to the nature of social reality (an ontology) and the ways in which this reality can be known (an epistemology). Adopting a critical approach means questioning our assumptions of social reality and our ways of knowing. Critical human geographers explore social, political, and economical processes within places. Within the discipline of geography places are defined as spaces filled with meaning (Knox et al, 2013). Due to the complexity and changing nature of relationships between individuals, communities, and societies these meanings are constantly refined and contested. A critical ontology views space as in a state of becoming, rather than in a state of being, and consequently there can be no fixed or universal understanding of social reality.

Critical theories question the assumptions of fields of knowledge as a way to resist oppression, and reveal other ways of knowing. Feminist theory has transformed and informed research practices across disciplines, through a critique of the production of knowledge, and an analysis of oppression in the lives of women (Dixon & Jones, 2006). Although there are many branches or types of feminist theory, each one comes from a critical stance. Therefore, there lies within feminist theory a commitment to not only challenge claims of truth, but to strive to improve the lives of women by giving a voice to those who have been silenced. One of the issues with adopting a critical feminist approach lies in the difficulty of promoting social action, and methods of change, when the

epistemological foundations of these actions can be contested. If reality is in a state of constant change, and the ways of understanding this reality vary, then any personal narrative can, and arguably should, be challenged, even claims of oppression and social injustice. Jane Flax (2013) elaborates on this by pointing out how feminist writings on “domination are claims about *injustice* and cannot be given justification by reference to Truth” (2013, p. 460). Claims of injustice are political acts and exist in the “realm of persuasive speech, action and (sometimes) violence”(p. 460). She reveals how there is a danger in transcendental notions of justice or knowledge because they release us from the consequences of our actions.

The work of Michel Foucault addresses this issue through an examination of the relationship between claims of truth and the exercising of power. Clare O’Farrell (2006) writes how, “Foucault argues that the way we link words is by no means obvious, and there is simply no way of pronouncing any of the links we make between words (or knowledge) and things to be absolutely true”(p. 10). Although Foucault has been criticized as promoting a nihilistic view, through the denial of all verified truth, his writings, in fact, avoid this relativistic stance. Foucault does not deny the existence of truth, but is interested instead in “examining the historically and culturally specific rules which regulate how people are able to gain access to the truth and how truth is distributed throughout the social body” (O’Farrell, 2006, p.10). This distribution of truth is intimately linked to the exercise of power, and is unevenly dispersed within society. Power does not exist in and of itself, it is “a

structure of actions, brought to bear upon possible actions; it incites, it induces, it seduces, it makes easier or more difficult; in the extreme it constrains or forbids absolutely” (Foucault, 1982, p. 789). Power is thus the modification of actions, and it exists only when put into action, it is not something held by individuals. Claims of truth are a way of exercising power, even claims of injustice. However, this critical view of knowledge does not need to be pessimistic. For Foucault, it is an optimistic way of viewing the world, because it provokes the rethinking of ideas, and leaves room for social change.

Flax (2013) proposes a way to practice this critique, and promote social change by calling for what she terms, the ‘end of innocence’. For her ‘the end of innocence’ means that ethical and moral decisions need to move beyond reliance upon claims of universal truths, even when these are claims of oppression and injustice, as they ultimately silence and ignore the differences and particular needs of others in society. Alternatively, she proposes that taking responsibility for our actions means situating our arguments, and ourselves, within “contingent and imperfect contexts” (p.459). Acknowledging the imperfection of our knowledge also leaves room for other ways of knowing:

“We need to learn to make claims on our own and others’ behalf and to listen to those which differ from ours, knowing that ultimately there is nothing that justifies them beyond each person’s own desire and need and the discursive practices in which these are developed, embedded, and legitimated. Each person’s well-being is ultimately dependent on the development of discursive communities which foster (among other attributes) an appreciation of and desire for difference, empathy, even indifference in the others” (p. 460).

In this framing, knowledge is created based on a plurality of views, and works towards positive change, but is always open to questioning and change.

There is no universal 'Truth', but instead a series of 'truths', which are forever modified and adjusted, based on changing situations and needs. The development of discursive communities could open up new possibilities for creating change by bringing forth narratives that have previously been silenced by dominant discourses (dominant narratives).

Adopting a feminist approach, and using recent developments in cybercartography (Taylor & Lauriault, 2014), this research project explores these issues through the creation of a cybercartographic atlas of government child care programs and policies. Cybercartographic theory views mapping, and its representation of spaces and constructions of scale, as a process whereby individuals map, share, and discuss information. The Nunaliit Framework includes personal narrative through user input, as part of the process of creating and modifying maps. This, in theory, could lead to the creation of discursive online communities by encouraging community members to share, debate, and discuss community issues. The topic chosen for an atlas should be one of importance or concern for a community in order to encourage participation with the atlas.

Child care policies and programs are an ideal choice to test the effectiveness of a cybercartographic atlas, as a tool for creating discursive communities, since child care is an important but complex and highly contested subject. Child care activities are an essential part of society as we all receive and/or provide child care at some point in our lives, and child care is necessary for the survival of society. As child care is something we all experience, there

are also many diverse experiences of providing this care. Through their focus on the lives of women, feminist researchers explore the gendered nature of child care, and how this gendering of caregiving can be marginalizing to those providing and receiving care (Lawson, 2009; England, 1996; 2010; Ornstein & Stalker, 2013; Warner & Prentice, 2012).

This chapter will review the feminist and critical cartography theories that have informed the choice of a cybercartographic atlas for mapping child care policies and experiences. I have broken this discussion into three sections, each pertaining to a different aspect of the atlas. These include: the mapping of child care policies and programs, the inclusion of personal narratives in the mapping process, and the creation of discursive communities through the sharing of personal narratives. In each section I provide a discussion of the challenges posed by adopting a critical stance, and how this has led to the decision to create a cybercartographic atlas using child care provision as a topic.

In the first section the mapping of complex child care policies and programs are connected to the questions posed by critical cartography and scale theorists towards mapmaking. The importance of including child care narratives within the mapping process is discussed in the second section, with relation to feminist theory, and the gendered and marginalized nature of child care provision. Lastly, the creation of discursive communities is linked to political and social debates of child care, issues of identity formation, and a feminist 'ethic of care' perspective.

Mapping Child Care Policies and Programs

Maps are created in order to help understand complex issues by organizing and presenting information. Cartography can be understood as a pursuit to create representational solutions in order to solve relational and spatial problems (Kitchin & Dodge, 2007). Maps are the tools of cartography and they create spatial knowledge through identifying, naming, categorizing, excluding, and ordering (Crampton, 2011). Location based information is widely popular and as Fraser Taylor (2009) explains,

“The importance of location-based information to almost all aspects of societal activities is growing. It has been estimated that over 80 percent of digital information has a locational component and this percentage is growing” (“The Age of Location”, para 1)

Complexity and Changeability of Child Care Policy

The first aspect of creating a Child Care Atlas is presenting information on child care policies and programs in a way that parents can understand and reflect upon. Complicating this creation is the complexity of child care policy and programming in Canada and the difficulty of representation, and scale construction, within the mapmaking process. Due to the federalist system in Canada, and diverse opinions regarding the nature of child care, policies and programs change frequently and vary greatly from place to place. All Canadians have access to federal child care programs, but the majority of child care policies and programs are regulated and funded provincially. Critiquing the child care policy regime in Canada, Martha Friendly (2009) defines provincial child care

policies as ‘poorly connected silos of care’, because they vary greatly in approach and administration across Canada.

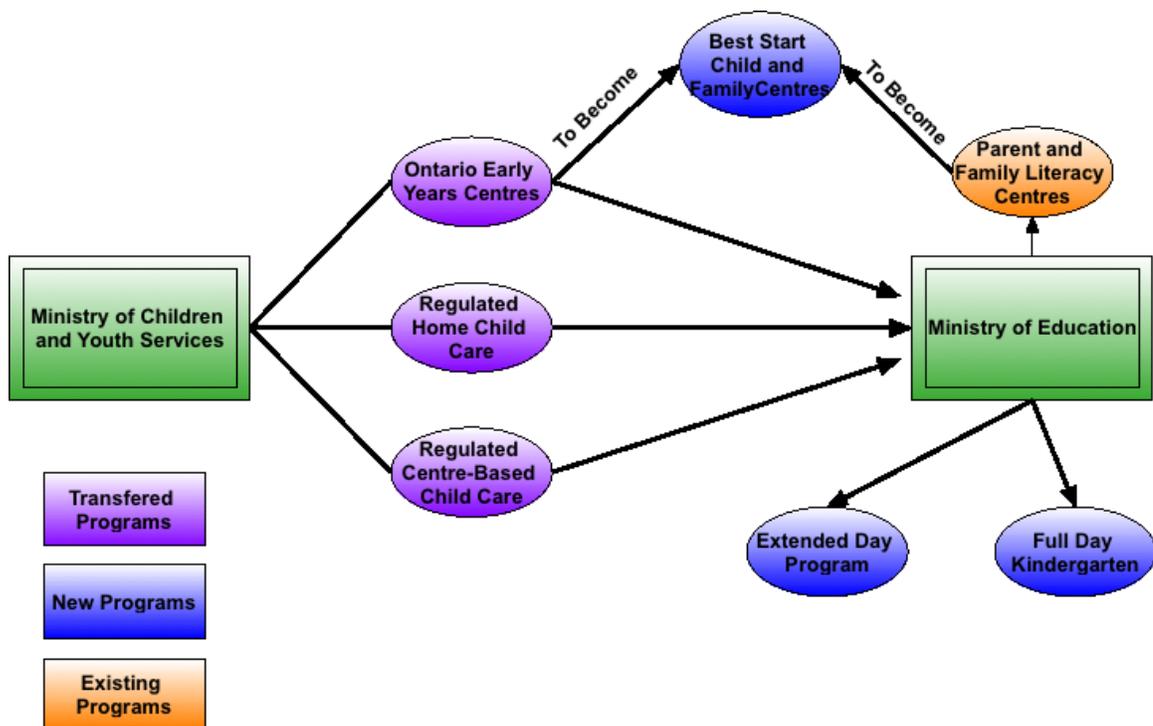
Even at the municipal level child care policies and programs vary greatly. Although child care policy is the responsibility of the Ontario government, many of the provincially funded programs are also run and co-financed by local municipalities and community agencies. Municipalities implement, administer, and provide additional financing for provincial child care programs. This creates a situation where benefits and subsidies are limited, and access to and costs of daycare vary from place to place (Friendly, Halfon, Beach & Forer, 2013).

Not only do child care programs vary from place to place, but they change often as well. Government child care supports fall under the four broad categories of daycare, education, health, and financial benefits. For example, the introduction of full day kindergarten programming represents a change in government support from a focus on daycare to one of education. This shift is apparent in the moving of provincial responsibility for child care supports from The Ministry of Children and Youth Services to the Ministry of Education. The recent and proposed changes to child care policies are outlined in Figure 1. As Figure 1 demonstrates, there are many changes happening at the provincial level of child care policy and programming. These changes also affect the municipal management of provincial funding for child care programming.

The variability and complexity of child care programs and policies makes it difficult for those providing child care to understand the current support

system provided by their governments. A mapping of child care policies and programs could be a useful tool for parents and communities in order to develop a better understanding of how political decision making affects the provision of child care. This is also an important part of working towards social change, since both critique and action are dependent upon an understanding of how one is impacted by political, social, and economic processes.

Figure 1: Policy and Program Changes



Critical Cartography

In creating a map there are certain challenges that arise regarding what, and how, information is presented that can limit the perspectives gained from engaging with the map. Although maps are useful and widely employed by

governments and the general public, critical cartography questions the ontological security of maps and challenges the objectivity and representational nature of maps. Each creation of a map includes many small decisions of what to include and how to represent things (Wood & Fels, 2008). These decisions lead to the production of a map that necessitates the inclusion of certain aspects and perspectives, while excluding and limiting others. Therefore, mapmaking is a process of creating knowledge, not one of revealing knowledge (Crampton, 2009; Kitchin & Dodge, 2007).

Central to this critique of maps are issues of power distribution. Maps are not neutral representation of space but instead promote the ideologies of the mapmaker, and as such they are a political act capable of deploying power. Revealing the ideologies behind mapmaking is a central aspect of critical cartography. J. B. Harley, who wrote extensively on the social construction of maps, believed that if the ideology behind map making was made clear then a certain truth could be revealed (Crampton, 2011). Rob Kitchin and Martin Dodge (2007) disagree with Harley, and they question the ontological security of maps. They explain how,

“Maps are of-the- moment, brought into being through practices (embodied, social, technical), *always* remade every time they are engaged with; mapping is a process of constant reterritorialization. As such, maps are transitory and fleeting, being contingent, relational and context-dependent” (p. 335)

By promoting the idea that maps ‘emerge in process’ Kitchin and Dodge reveal how maps are not just socially constructed representations of space, but are constantly remade within the social context in which they are employed. This

remaking of the map is relational and involves the interaction between the map and the map user. This is an important aspect of mapping that highlights the significance of the map user in the process of making the map.

Cybercartographic atlases acknowledge the importance of the map user by including them in the construction of the maps through the addition of personal narratives. These atlases are also able to adapt and change structure based on information provided by atlas users and therefore reflect the emergent and social constructionist nature of mapping.

Configurations of Scale

The questioning of the ontological security of maps within critical cartography coincides with critiques of scale as a method of organizing and understanding spatial knowledge. Categorizing and ordering information is useful to our understanding of the world, but as critical theory has shown, categories can shape our understanding of a subject and therefore limit the ways of knowing and constructing knowledge. Although difficult to define, within the discipline of geography scale is often conceptualized in terms of size (geographical scope), or level (hierarchical ordering)(Brenner, 2001).

The use of hierarchical conceptions of scale in geography is prominent in political discussions of child care policy in Canada because of the various levels of government involvement. Those involved in social action, and concerned with oppression, often employ scalar understandings as a way of explaining how 'broader' processes affect 'local' processes. Neil Smith (2000; 2004) uses terms

like scale bending, and scale jumping to refer to the challenging of assumptions about scales and the redistribution of power from one scale to another.

Through these hierarchical understandings of social, economic and political forces these scale theorists conceptualize methods for social change (Cox, 1997; 1998).

Other scale theorists point out the horizontal nature of scales through demonstrating how different scales are not distinct from each other, but instead are relational and interconnected. In this sense scales are conceptualized as operating simultaneously, and therefore each containing an aspect of the other (Swyngedouw, 1997). Kevin Cox (1998) relates local 'spaces of dependence' with global 'spaces of engagement' in his 'politic of scale' as a way to explain how these different scales operate in relation to each other.

To further complicate matters scales have also been theorized as both vertical and horizontal. As Neil Brenner (2001) explains,

"Scales evolve relationally within tangled hierarchies and dispersed interscalar networks. The meaning, function, history and dynamics of any one geographical scale can only be grasped relationally, in terms of upwards, downwards and sideways links to other geographical scales situated within tangled scalar hierarchies and dispersed interscalar networks"(p. 605, emphasis in original)

The confusion and difficulty of defining and conceptualizing scale has led some critical geographers to attempt explanations of processes within spaces without the language of scale (Marston, et al., 2005). This however can also be limiting to narratives, and ways of understanding and mapping (Jonas, 2006). For example, in child care a scalar understanding of policies is important as there are different levels of government involvement, and these have varied

effects upon the creation of child care programming for local communities.

Other scale theorists have adopted more complex and changeable conceptions of scale. Andrew E. G. Jonas (2006) explains how,

“Upon close inspection, many so-called ‘scalists’ are not writing about ‘scales-as-fixed- structures’; nor are they treating scalar territories as ‘vertical structures’ or ‘rational abstractions’ in the realist sense. Instead, they are responding to the challenge of narrative and deploying scalar categories in ways that attempt to show how particular material structures and processes have become fixed at or around certain sites and scales, are in the process of becoming unfixed at a specific scale, or combine to differentiate the world in complex scalar and site-specific dimensions”(p. 404)

Instead of removing scale from our narratives, it is possible to view scale as a process of social construction, always limited, but important, and able to be made and remade through reflection.

New Forms of Cartography

Critiques of mapmaking and scale construction have not diminished their widespread use, and this interest in mapmaking reflects the importance of location-based information in society. Instead of hindering the use of maps, this critique has opened up new possibilities within the discipline of cartography. Participatory mapping techniques have emerged in response to the critique of maps as social constructions that deploy power. Cybercartography is but one form, Participatory Public GIS (Brown & Kyttä, 2014; Dunn, 2007; Talen, 2000) and projects using Volunteered Geographic Information (VGI) (Sui et al, 2013; Johnson & Sieber, 2013) also incorporate the map user within the process of mapmaking, and feminist researchers are finding ways of incorporating GIS

technologies into their work (Bell & Reed, 2004; Gilbert & Masucci, 2006; Kwan, 2002; Lafferty, 2002). These new forms of mapping, Cybercartography included, are highly political and seek to harness the power of maps to promote greater social change. One way of harnessing this power is by including those who are engaging with the map in its construction. For example,

“Public participation geographic information systems (PPGIS) pertains to the use of geographic information systems (GIS) to broaden public involvement in policymaking as well as to the value of GIS to promote the goals of nongovernmental organizations, grassroots groups, and community-based organizations”(Sieber, 2006, p. 492)

Since maps are a social construction, and deploy power, including the map user in the map making process allows for a redistribution of power and provides an opportunity to present local or ‘situated knowledges’. Scott Bell and Maureen Reed (2004) point out how spatial representations have the potential to further activist and lobbying agendas by mapping and revealing issues pertinent to local communities. Visualization technology also helps present information to community groups when employing a participatory framework.

With a focus on including research participants within the research process, feminist theories have also informed and contributed to critical cartography and PPGIS. In her work, Mei-Po Kwan (2002) uses GIS technologies to represent the complex nature of gendered spaces, and work toward social change. Although there have been many feminist critiques of GIS methods, Kwan argues the methods themselves are not inherently positivistic or masculine. GIS methods are tools that can be adapted to different theoretical frameworks. By recognizing the partial and situated nature of knowledge

generated through GIS methods feminists can begin to create what Kwan terms 'feminist visualizations'. Combining GIS methods with qualitative data, feminist researchers can use this technology without silencing or 'othering' different groups. Researchers working with GIS methods can also employ feminist methods reflexively and acknowledge the limits and biases within their research.

Cybercartography

These new forms of mapping have broadened the capabilities of the discipline of cartography. But, a cybercartographic framework was chosen for this research project because, in theory, it responds best to the critique forwarded by Kitchin and Dodge as to the ontological insecurity of maps, and the issues raised by scale theorists as to the social construction of scale. Cybercartographic atlases do not need to determine in advance what kind of material they will incorporate, but instead can respond to changes in information and input from individuals (Taylor, 2013). Within this construct, mapping is viewed as a process whereby map users are part of a continual mapping and remapping of spatially linked information as new situations emerge.

The technology of the Nunaliit Framework provides an opportunity to present and engage with information in diverse ways. Atlases can have many different forms of maps, and therefore can provide an opportunity to present information in multiple ways. An atlas able to respond to the complex and

changing system of child care policy would be an important resource for those providing child care. This type of resource could help individuals recognize and reflect upon what funding their government currently provides, and promote social action through identifying common issues related to the experience of providing child care.

Mapping Child Care Narratives

“Narrative is not merely a story, or the representation of events. It is the combination of story with narrative discourse, the presentation of that story in a particular way” (Pearce, 2008, p. 20-21)

As explained before, the agenda of critical cartography is to expose the hidden narratives, or metanarratives, within maps. Artists, writers, academics, and the general public also use maps as a way to locate personal narratives, or to present and comment upon metanarratives (Crampton, 2011). Narrative, as a presentation of experience, is an essential part of the creation of place, and therefore, is also an aspect of all mapmaking. Margaret Wickens Pearce (2008) describes how narratives produce places, and places in turn produce narratives. Geographers have long understood the creation of ‘place’ as a process of filling ‘spaces’ with meaning (Knox et al., 2013). Meanings are expressed through narratives. Wickens Pearce captures the emergent nature of this process when she states that narrative does not describe the world but instead ‘re-describes’ the world (p.21).

Through the incorporation of narrative within the mapping process, cybercartographic atlases are well aligned with feminist research practices that

focus on the 'situated knowledges' of research participants. Feminist research developed as a critique of scientific method and positivist research practices. They maintain that, "science and society have limited who is considered a legitimate source or producer of knowledge" (Brisolara, 2014, p.17). Within feminist theory, 'knowledges' are plural because there are many ways of knowing, but not all ways of knowing are equal or acknowledged and promoted in society. Feminist research seeks to bring forward other ways of knowing, to empower those who have been silenced by dominant narratives. Knowledge is 'situated' because it is contextual and relational; it is socially situated, historical and influenced by social milieu and culture (Brisolara, 2014). As Gillian Rose (1997) explains, feminist researchers "see the world from specific locations, embodied and particular, and never innocent, siting is intimately involved in sighting"(p. 308). This quote from Rose poetically captures the importance of location to our understandings of the world.

The expression and locating of 'situated knowledges' requires the use of narrative. The inclusion of 'situated knowledges' within a cybercartographic atlas provides an opportunity for the redistribution of power, through bringing forth diverse experiences of child care. The inclusion of narrative also highlights the social construction and emergent nature of mapping, as atlas users can respond to information presented in the maps and comment upon the narratives of other map users. Maps can then be modified and updated as new information comes forth.

The Gendered Nature of Child Care Provision

Within feminist theory the views and experiences of those directly affected by an issue are explored as a tool for resisting oppressive structures. A feminist epistemology (way of understanding the world) views the social construction of gender as central to oppression and issues of power distribution (Brisolara, 2014). In doing so feminist theory highlights the lived experiences of women, and the gendered and marginalizing nature of child care.

Kim England (2010) writes in her work on geographies of care about a 'care deficit' caused by an increased need for care, with the rise of women entering paid employment, and a decreasing supply of care, because of declining government support for subsidized options. Outlining the gendered nature of child care, feminist research shows how this affects women's access to employment and increases the social risk they face.

Although there has been an increase in the amount of child care provided by men, women in most families still provide the bulk of child care. The number of stay at home fathers has been increasing (Doucet & Merla, 2007), but women are still more likely to take leave from work to stay home, to take time off work for family reasons, and to work part time because of child care needs (Friendly, Halfon, Beach & Forer, 2013). Even though the number of single fathers increases more each year, single parent families are still more likely to be headed by women. In 2011, single mothers made up 12.8% of Canadian families while single fathers accounted for 3.5% (Statistics Canada, 2013, January 1).

Consequently, in Canada, as well as across the globe, women are more likely than men to be involved in precarious forms of employment. Looking at women's employment in Canada, Leah Vosko and Lisa Clark (2009) point out how,

“in 2007 around 1.3 million part-time permanent employees were women, whereas less than half a million were men; almost half a million part-time temporary employees were women whereas just over a quarter of a million were men. Women are thus more likely than men to lack access to social and labour protections extended on the basis of hours of work.” (p.29).

Lacking access to social and labor protections, women in Canada are overrepresented in poverty and welfare programs, and on average they receive lower earnings than men (Rice & Prince, 2013). Even though women are participating in the workforce in higher numbers than ever before, Bittmand and Folbre (2004) point out how “women have increased the time they devote to paid work far more dramatically than men have increased the amount of time they devote to family care” (p. 2). Positioned as women's work, England (2010) explains how care work, child care included, is often invisible and taken for granted. This marginalization and gendering of care work disproportionately affects women.

An Issue of Women's Equality

The issue of women's equality has been all but erased from the discourse surrounding child care policy. The link between women's equality and child care issues began to be highlighted over 40 years ago when the Royal

Commission on the Status of Women recommended a national child care program. In 1986 they released the Report of the Task Force on Child Care, recommending that the federal and provincial governments co-fund a universal childcare system (Friendly, 2001). The goal was to have this in place by 2001, but in 1996 funding to the provinces from the federal government was severely cut with the cancelation of Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) and the introduction of the Canada Health and Social Transfer (CHST). The linking of child care to women's equality began to be replaced by a framing of child care as an issue of national security and child poverty. In 1999, with the adoption of The National Childcare Agenda (NCA), the federal government solidified this framing of child care by turning down universal child care, and promoting targeted child care programs, as a way to alleviate child poverty (McKeen, 2007).

Although the recent expansion of full day kindergarten marks a shift towards a more universal approach to child care, feminists point out how this tactic is but one in a long history of viewing child care as solely a children's issue and not an issue of women's equality (Bundy, 2012; Prentice, 2009). Jessica Bundy describes how,

“The net effect is that children's needs are put ahead of mothers' needs, a sadly familiar hierarchy. Stubbornly persistent unequal social, political, and economic relations of gender, class, and race are erased in favor of the catch-all category of the investable child, whose family, it would seem, has no needs—nor potential—of its own.” (2012, p. 702)

This focus on the child can overshadow the needs of mothers, and erase the marginalization and gendering of child care activities from the child care policy debate. As women's increased participation in the workforce was the driving

force behind child care becoming a political issue, it should not be removed from this discussion.

The gendered nature of child care and its subsequent marginalization from public debate of justice disproportionately affects women, but it also affects men who provide this care. Therefore, this research project acknowledges the gendered nature of child care, but focuses on the marginalization of child care activities performed by all individuals, regardless of gender. The marginalization of child care is also central to why a critical feminist approach was adopted for this research project. As mentioned previously feminist theory seeks to improve the lives of women through bringing forth the experiences of those who are being silenced. This critical approach is taken in order to question the current government approach to child care, by focusing on the situated knowledge of the parents and individuals providing this care.

Nature of Child Care

In his writing Daniel Engster (2007) defines caring as both a practice including the act and outcomes of caring for someone, and a virtue including the motivations and intentions of a caring person. Similarly, Joan C. Tronto (1995) distinguishes between the concepts of 'caring for' and 'caring about', whereby 'caring for' refers to the physical act of caring and 'caring about' refers to a moral or mental commitment.

Caring provision is comprised of both possibilities and problems, and caring relationships are a possible source of pleasure and fulfillment, but also of

degradation and exploitation (Cox, 2010). Even the roots of the word 'care' carry positive and negative connotations. Tronto (1995) explains how, "Caring implies some kind of on-going responsibility and commitment. This notion accords with the original meaning of "care" in English, where care meant a burden; to care is to assume a burden" (p.102). The question posed by feminist researchers is whether the 'burden' (responsibility) of child care is one that parents are able to handle given the economic and social resources they are provided, and how these burdens are disproportionately carried by women.

Families Increased Social Risks and Changing Structures

In Canada, families mostly rely on resources from employment income in order to provide for their children. Because of global economic changes there is an increasing amount of precarious employment, and families today are facing greater social risks and changing family structures, which makes child care provision more challenging. Victoria Lawson (2009) states that "marginalizing care furthers the myth that our successes are achieved as autonomous individuals, and as such, we have no responsibility to share the fruits of our success with others or to dedicate public resources to the work of care" (p 210).

Employees today are encouraged to be more flexible, and more mobile, than ever before. Although difficult to define, precarious employment includes "forms of employment involving atypical employment contracts, limited social benefits and statutory entitlements, job insecurity, low job tenure, low earnings, poor working conditions and high risks of ill health" (Cranford et al., 2003).

This type of employment includes self-employment, temporary, part-time or contract employment, with a subsequent lowering of wages and reductions to health benefits accessed through employers (Fuller & Vosko, 2008; Katz, 2001).

As Luann Good Gingrich (2010) explains,

“across all levels of globalized labor markets, we see a trend toward short-term contract work, resulting in deepening employment instability and an overall demand for flexible workers who are ready and able to make repeated and rapid adjustments in their work schedules, relevant skills and knowledge, and place of residence” (p. 108).

This increased social risk places employment needs and childcare needs at odds with each other, as child care requirements often prevent parents from being mobile employees, or working flexible hours. Health benefits and decent wages are also a key aspect of providing good quality care for children.

Along with these trends, family structures are shifting with an increase in single parent headed households and dual earning families (Friendly, 2006). More mothers are entering the workforce earlier, and in greater numbers than ever before. As of 2012 in Ontario, 70.6% of women with children 0-2 years, 75.3% for women with children 3-5 years, and 83.3% for women with children 6-15 years were participating in the workforce (Friendly, Halfon, Beach, & Forer, 2013). These statistics are based on the youngest child for women with more than one child. Single parent families have been steadily on the rise in Canada, and in 2011 single parent families made up 16.3% of all families in Canada (Statistics Canada, January 1, 2013).

Dual earning and single parent families rely on formal and informal daycare options. In Ontario, child care fee subsidies are only available for

licensed day care facilities and are based on a sliding scale depending on income. A report done in 2013 showed that in Ontario, only 20.8% of children 0-5 years old have access to a regulated childcare space, and the average cost of these spaces ranged from \$835 to \$1152 per month, depending on the age of the child (Friendly, Halfon, Beach, & Forer, 2013). This same report also outlines how women in Ottawa with children in licensed care spend on average 25% of their income on daycare fees. In Ontario most parents rely on unlicensed home daycares and therefore do not have access to fee subsidies.

These statistics demonstrate how child care provision is experiencing what England so aptly terms a 'care deficit'. Although the need for child care provision support has increased, the Canadian government primarily views child care as a private responsibility. The increased social risks parents face, and the changes to family structures, are central to why this research project works towards creating a cybercartographic atlas that has the potential to present the narratives of those providing child care.

The Urgency of Emergent Mapping of Child Care

Cybercartography incorporates the *presentation* of narrative within the structure of the map itself, and with this *presentation* of narrative the social construction and plurality of knowledge becomes more apparent to those engaging with the atlas. The Nunaliit Framework allows for continual revision, and addition, of information/narrative and therefore responds well to the emergent nature of social reality. This use of cartographic narrative is an

important part of reflecting upon experience and working towards gaining a better understanding of how social, political, and economic forces affect people and the spaces they inhabit. If such an atlas is possible it would be a step towards understanding how changing family structures and increased social risks have impacted those providing child care. Such a tool could also demonstrate how child care policy and programming affects, and is affected by, these experiences.

Discursive Communities

Adopting an Ethic of Care

Recent writings of feminist geographers about an 'ethic of care' perspective offer a unique opportunity to examine and explore issues related to presenting, negotiating, and making space for personal narratives and the narratives of others. A critical feminist 'ethic of care' perspective acknowledges the collective/social responsibility of child care, and the mutuality of experience it creates. We all need and/or provide child care at some point in our lives; child care is necessary for the survival of our society. A feminist 'ethic of care' perspective acknowledges the centrality of care work in our lives and society (Lawson, 2007).

Feminist geographers adopting an 'ethic of care' perspective acknowledge space as a process within which subjectivity is constructed in relation to others. What this means is that our identities (the way we perceive ourselves and the world) come from our experiences and perceptions, which are

formed through the interaction we have with others. In contrast to modern ethical constructions, an 'ethic of care' is based on a social ontology of connection whereby social relations are both partial/contextual, and attentive/responsible (Cox, 2010).

The roots of this theory come from Carol Gilligan's (1982) work with women on child development and philosophy. In an attempt to counter negative assumptions about women's morality put forth by Lawrence Kohlberg's (1981) work on stages of moral development, Gilligan found that women perceive social reality somewhat differently than men and were more likely to adapt an 'ethic of care' based on relatedness and responsiveness to the needs of others (Cox, 2010). Her work has been criticized for putting forth an essentialist argument, based on biology, and not taking into account social context. However, feminists and feminist geographers have written extensively on this 'ethic of care' since Gilligan's first introduction of this perspective, moving it beyond its constricted conceptual beginnings. It has become an alternative to modern moral and ethical constructions (Fielding et al., 2007) and a powerful political critique (Lawson, 2007; Staeheli & Brown, 2003; Koggel & Orme, 2011; Engster, 2007; Andrew, Keller & Schwartzman, 2005; Whisnant & DesAutels, 2008).

Gabrielle Hiltmann (2007) writes about feminist ethics and reflects upon the negative concept of the other in Western conceptions of modern ethics. She states that: "The only negative concept of the other, as developed in modern Western ethics, is not sufficient for an ethical reflection. It is necessary to

develop a positive concept of the other, which can allow for a relational ethics” (p.2). She points to the writings of Immanuel Kant during the Enlightenment period and his conception of an ethic of values. Kant’s influential perspective was based on a search for truthful knowledge (gained through reasoning) that will ultimately lead to universal ethical values that promote freedom and progress. Although Kant maintains this freedom and progress should not lead to the abuse of others, within his reasoning there is no acknowledgement of a responsibility towards the happiness of others.

Another challenge forwarded by a feminist care ethic is related to the exclusion of emotions and intuitions as an aspect of decision making within modern philosophical theory:

“In this conception the (implicitly white male) subject is a free and autonomous legislator of rational ethical laws and values which implies that the subject is supposed to be free from physical desires; thus rational values are not grounded in physical drives.” (Hiltmann, 2007, p.1)

A feminist ethic of care perspective acknowledges the epistemological power of emotions involved in ethical decisions (Lawson, 2007). Our understanding of the world comes from interactions with others, and emotions are always a part of these interactions.

In contrast to Kant’s ‘ethic of values’, Utilitarian ethics does acknowledge the happiness of others, as ethical decisions are decided upon through the calculation and determination of the greatest happiness to be achieved for all concerned. The problem, as Hiltmann points out, in this reasoning, is the

difficulty in defining and measuring happiness. In trying to find a common standard of happiness the diversity and individuality of the other becomes lost. Furthermore, the larger the group of concern in an ethical decision process (for example all of humanity) the more difficult it becomes to find consensus.

An 'ethic of care' perspective places the concerns and needs of others as a basis for action. Lynn Staeheli and Michael Brown (2003) propose that we need not agree on what a caring and just community would look like as long as we share in the goal of creating a space for these ideals. Coming from a feminist 'ethic of care' perspective, they acknowledge the conflicting and unequal relationships of power in our society, but they believe thinking relationally can further caring and just values. To clarify this position, they write that "a feminist ethic of care is one that provides a moral vision of reimagining social institutions and practices that reinforce caring relations among people. *The work of care, however, remains unfinished*"(Italics added)(p. 775-776). In other words, thinking relationally can lead to an inclusive, compassionate, and partial view of justice, but this process is never finished, as inequality, exclusion, and oppression are a permanent part of life.

Child Care Debates

Care ethics are highly political because they raise questions about social justice, social policies, and how public resources are to be allocated (Brown, 2003). There are three key ongoing debates concerning child care in Canada:

- 1) What is the nature of child care, is it primarily a parental responsibility, or is

it a collective concern? 2) What is the role of the government concerning child care? 3) How should resources be allocated if assistance is given for child care?

The relational perspective of care ethics promoted here contrasts with the autonomous conception of the individual found in liberal political theory. According to Rianne Mahon (2008), Canadian politics has been dominated by various types of 'warring liberalisms' each with their own distinct difference but all supporting an individualistic approach where state support of social programs remains limited. For example, historically in Canada, child care has been regarded as a private matter and left to the responsibility of parents. Government intervention has been limited (Warner & Prentice, 2013). Childcare programs, with the exception of the newly adopted full day kindergarten, are not universally applied, and instead target those deemed in need. Linda White (2004) clarifies how,

"In this view, governments' primary role should be to provide tax breaks to families so that one parent can afford to stay home.' If families need to be relieved or mothers need to return to work, then they should be able to rely on a variety of informal care arrangements (grandparents, neighbors, unlicensed family child care providers), or the market of commercial and not-for-profit child care centers."(p. 665)

Mahon outlines four types of liberalism in Canada including classic liberalism, social liberalism, neo-liberalism, and inclusive liberalism and gives examples of how these ideologies have affected child care policies. Under classic liberalism, state intervention in social policy is restricted to assisting the deserving poor. The role of the government is relegated to one of protecting property and allowing individuals to pursue their own self-interest. Before the

1900s, when the government did not provide child care supports, classic liberalism was dominant. Then, social liberalism was introduced in Canadian social policy with the introduction of CAP and the creation of the Keynesian welfare state. Within a social liberalist approach, state intervention is limited, but the government does take on a more positive role in creating the conditions for individuals to meet their full potential. This includes the introduction of limited and targeted programs to temper the effects of the market. An example of this is the transferring of money from the federal government, through CAP, to the provinces, to provide limited and targeted programs to assist parents in need with child care.

In contrast to social liberalism, Mahon points out how neo-liberalism challenges the Keynesian welfare state by promoting labor market flexibility, and minimal government supports. Neo-liberal policy accepts that there will be inequalities in society because of market forces, and emphasizes parents' reliance on the labor market for their caregiving supports. As Mahon (2008) explains,

“In a pure neo-liberal discourse ...women, including lone mothers, are to be treated like men, which entails, inter alia, normalizing their participation in the labour market. The resulting care needs are to be met through purchase on the market.” (p. 345)

There has been an increasing entrenchment of neo-liberal policies in Canada since 1984 when the Conservative government under Brian Mulroney came into power (McKeen, 2007). Examples of neo-liberal reforms of childcare policy include the cancellation of CAP, the resulting decrease in funding to child

care programs, and the cancellation of the bilateral agreements in 2006. But there are still many aspects of social liberalism in Canadian social policy, and inclusive liberalism has evolved in response to criticism of neo-liberalism.

Inclusive liberalism shares the same philosophies as neo-liberalism but also includes training and incentives to increase individual capacity to compete within the market place. The push-and-pull from each of these liberalist approaches has shaped and changed child care policies and programs throughout the history of social policy reform in Canada, yet the narratives of child care as a personal responsibility continue to dominate social policy constructions.

Universal Kindergarten: A Collective Approach?

Within an inclusive liberalist model of policy reform, universal kindergarten has evolved in Ontario with amendments to the Education Act (1990) to extend full day kindergarten. Although this recent development of kindergarten seems to be favoring a more collective responsibility towards child care, a closer inspection of the issue challenges this assumption. Recently in Ontario full day kindergarten programs have been extended to all children 4 and 5 years old. Advocates of this universally applied program come from, interestingly enough, the corporate, medical, and private sector (Prentice, 2009). With the expansion of kindergarten the Ontario government has invested billions in this Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) program.

The introduction of this ECEC program is part of an inclusive liberal model of a social investment state (SIS) welfare regime. The SIS welfare regime is based on the idea that government investment in social policies should have a monetary return, and that children's ECEC programs are an investment in the future workforce (Bundy, 2012). This model places "an emphasis on science, particularly neurobiology, developmental psychology and population health research" and "is used to create a particular model of the child-citizen, promoting a singular idea of the needs of the child to develop an active, useful and responsible adult-citizen in the future" (Saint-Martin, 2007, p. 291). Citing this research, proponents of the newly expanded kindergarten program argue that children who have access to early learning opportunities fare better later on in life with decreases in teenaged pregnancy, higher IQs, and will provide a return on the funds invested by reducing costly social assistance programs.

The rationale behind the full day kindergarten program is that by investing in children, and educating parents in ECEC principles, children are provided with equal opportunities leading to better future employment opportunities. This reasoning is problematic because suggesting that all children have equal opportunity, through a better ECEC program, can ignore the structural inequalities that exist within our society, and lead us to believe that poverty is a personal choice (Bundy, 2012).

The new ECEC program reflects an individualist inclusive liberal approach. Although the program itself is universal, it does not stem from a collective responsibility towards child care programming because it focuses on

school age children, and does not cover before and after school care.

Furthermore, the SIS welfare regime model leaves out those who are not deemed a worthy investment, like the sick, the elderly, and those with barriers to employment (Prentice, 2009). In contrast, an 'ethic of care' perspective addresses these issues by maintaining the importance and necessity of caregiving and supporting those who provide care.

The Feminist Paradox of Identity Formation

When promoting an 'ethic of care' perspective, and a relational construction of subjectivity, issues arise concerning autonomy and formation of self-identity. Just as a feminist 'ethic of care' highlights the negative conception of the other in modern philosophy, a feminist relational perspective could lead to a negative conception of the self. This is an important critique of relational theories because if a relational construction of subjectivity denies individual autonomy and difference, then this creates a paradox within feminist theory. A paradox whereby autonomy is equated to liberal ideology, and rejected as violent and repressive, but social action and liberation are dependent upon reaffirming the ideal of autonomy (Weir, 1996). However, it is possible to reconcile self-identity and a relational perspective. Feminist theories of identity and ethics demonstrate how intersubjectivity (relational construction of subjectivity) leads to identity formation.

Allison Weir (1996) critiques feminist relational theories for equating self-identity formation with separation and repression. This framing dates back

to Simone de Beauvoir's writings about the exclusion and othering of women from modern conceptions of a universal identity of mankind. Beauvoir extrapolates from her observations that the formation of identities, whether individual or collective, is always an attempt to negate or exclude the other. Following this reasoning, identity formation in feminist theory is equated to a repression of "the connectedness or relationality of the self to others" and "any claim to a universal social identity or equality among men and women entails a repression of women's difference... and differences among women" (Weir, 1996, p.3).

Similarly, Annemie Halsema (2007) writes about the philosophy of identity, multiculturalism, and conceptions of the self as dependent and independent of the other. She critiques the Hegelian model of the self because it conceives of the self-other relationship as combative and oppositional. To overcome this oppositional conception of the self-other relationship Halsema theorizes the intersubjectivity of identity formation. Her argument is that our identities are formed through our interactions with others, and because we have a need to be recognized and accepted by others, we give this recognition (acceptance of individual identity) to others in the hopes that it will come back to us. This giving, Halsema theorizes in a positive way as a gift, thereby avoiding the typical combative conception of the self-other relationship.

Weir also proposes that not all identity formation is repressive or negative and can be viewed positively as both reflexive and intersubjective:

"Reflexivity, for the meanings of my relationships to myself and others come down to me: I am the one faced with the question of who I am and

who I want to be. I am the one who must invest my existence with meaning for me. Intersubjectivity, because this meaning can be generated only through my participation in social meanings, which are intersubjectively constituted” (1996, p. 185).

This means the self is both independent and dependent upon the other in a reflexive way that accepts differences and complexities in life. Weir feels a positive conception of identity formation is an important endeavor since an individual’s capacity to abstract themselves from society, through reflection and self-identity, is the very foundation of critique, which is the foundation of feminism.

Cybercartography: A Way Forward?

Through their inclusion of narrative, cybercartographic atlases provide an opportunity for self-reflection, and by allowing for a continual updating of information and narratives, the atlas provides an opportunity for communication between map users. Elvia Martínez and María Del Carmen Reyes (2005) explain how,

“In cybercartographic atlases users can perceive the impact of their actions in the phenomena and situations that occur in the geographical space, as well as the way in which particular user actions relate to those of other social actors; and cybercartographic atlases play an important role in group communication processes including the construction of a spatial language.”(p. 103)

In other words, the Nunaliit Framework provides an opportunity for communication between community members that in turn creates a possible space for assessing how one’s actions relate to those of others. In doing so, atlases could become a place to create Flax’s concept of a discursive community,

where empathy and an appreciation of difference are fostered through communication.

The complexity and contested nature of child care provision and child care policies make it an ideal topic for an atlas. As feminist writings of an 'ethic of care' have shown, we are connected by our common practice of caregiving, but child care policies and programs are a point of contention and can be difficult to comprehend. Presenting and understanding individual and collective narratives of child care provision could highlight areas of marginalization, and work towards improving the lives of those providing and receiving care. Testing the possibilities of a cybercartographic atlas, in creating discursive communities, is also a step towards responding to the important critiques forwarded by critical cartography and feminist theory. As mentioned previously, cybercartographic atlases allow for the sharing of 'situated knowledges' through the inclusion of narratives, and can become a tool for encouraging and organizing social action. These atlases also incorporate the map user, and therefore highlight and incorporate the emergent and social constructionist nature of the mapping process.

Chapter Two: Methodology and Methods

Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology behind the creation of the Pilot Child Care Atlas, and the rationale for adopting a feminist approach to this research project. To assist with the creation of the Pilot Atlas, I chose to conduct focus groups with parents, and conduct a review of child care policies and programs in the Ottawa area. The reasoning behind these methods will be discussed, alongside my own account of how the research process unfolded, including the challenges and limitations I encountered.

As explained in the previous chapter, feminist theory recognizes the production of knowledge as socially produced, with contradictory perspectives. Any research method can be used within a feminist research framework; it is not the methods themselves that are feminist, but the ways in which they are employed. In *Feminist Evaluation and Research* the authors outline three main questions for feminist researchers: 1) Whose voices are not being heard? 2) Which perspectives are being silenced? 3) For whom are we producing knowledge and for what purpose? Therefore, a feminist approach to evaluation seeks to problematize the presence and effects of power, and the process of knowledge production, within society, but also within the research process.

Susan Day turns to the work of Michel Foucault for a better understanding of how power operates:

“For Foucault, power is not something that is intrinsically held by persons; it is the effect of discursive struggles over the realm of meaning and production of knowledge. Nor is power simply imposed from

above or held by a singular source; it is distributed throughout social relationships” (Day, 2012, p.67)

According to Foucault, power is not evenly distributed in society, but dispersed between us by our various positions. This conceptualization of power links to feminist theory and critical cartography by demonstrating the relationship between power and knowledge. Feminists and critical cartographers question our assumptions of knowledge as a way to reveal other ways of knowing and thereby redistribute power amongst social relationships.

Cybercartography

I chose a feminist methodology for the Pilot Child Care Atlas, because a cybercartographic atlas could be a useful tool for capturing and presenting different perspectives of social policies and programs. The creation of a cybercartographic atlas is often one of collaboration with researchers, community members, community agencies and Nunaliit technicians. Once created, the atlas becomes a participatory mapping tool, through the inclusion of narrative and information of the atlas users. The atlases created within the Nunaliit Cybercartographic Framework (Hayes et al., 2014) are able to adapt and change structure, based on input from users, and therefore offer the possibility of blending critical theory and social action. Martinez and Reyes explain the intention behind cybercartography:

“The role of cybercartographic atlases is the construction of social knowledge about the interaction processes in geographical space. This includes the use of this knowledge in collective action and in the building of self-steering capacities among the intervening social groups and organizations” (Martinez & Reyes, 2005, p. 119).

Therefore, an atlas could contribute to a redistribution of power, through the generation and sharing of local knowledge for the purpose of promoting change.

This research project seeks to test the Nunaliit technology as a tool for presenting information on child care programs and policies and gathering individual's experiences of these policies and programs. However, due to time constraints of a Master's thesis, the Pilot Child Care Atlas will not be available for public use, and the collaboration with community members and agencies was not explored. Instead, I chose to conduct focus groups with parents, and to research child care policies and programs, as a way to inform and guide the design of the pilot atlas. Therefore, the effectiveness of the Nunaliit technology is based on how well it allows for the presentation of complex child care policies and programs, and the personal narratives of child care experiences gained from the focus groups.

Throughout the research process I have been conflicted because the atlas will not be made available to the public, and will not be designed in collaboration with the research participants. As a feminist, and a social worker, I feel that participatory action research is important, because there are many pressing social issues in society, and these issues need to be addressed by those who are directly affected.

Participatory action research methods seek to redistribute the effects of power, by increasing the capacity of communities to effect social change (Breitbart, 2010; Kindon, 2010). PAR developed as a critique of research practices where community members were not involved or consulted and

gained no benefit from the research project (Breitbart, 2010). Therefore the focus of PAR is on empowering individuals and communities through the acknowledgment of knowledge present in local lived experience. To this end, research participants define research objectives and assist with data collection, analysis and design of action. Whenever possible community members are hired and trained to be research partners (Breitbart, 2010). However, the methods of creating my atlas do not include this level of involvement. Although the focus groups with parents helped to guide my decision process, as the researcher, I held the power of decision-making within this research project.

Positionality and Reflexivity

This conflict connects to another issue I have with conducting critical qualitative research. I feel keenly the political need for social action, which necessitates the need to represent and find meaning. At the same time, I must question my own research findings, as they are part of a selection process, limited by my own understanding, and by their very existence silence or ignore other representations. Many feminist researchers have attempted to overcome, or reveal this dilemma through the use of reflexive discussion of their positionality in regards to their research. In feminist research, positionality refers to one's unique, and multiple identities, and how one is placed within relationships of power. Day points out how, "knowing the position from which one speaks is crucial to understanding what one is saying"(2012, p. 7). As a researcher, my positionality affects all aspects of the research process, from the

topic I choose, to the methods I employ, the interactions I have with participants, and the analysis and presentation of the research data.

Simultaneously, my position is constructed through the experience of the research process, and the interactions I have with participants.

Reflexivity provides an opportunity to examine the co-construction of complex, and sometimes contested, multidimensional identities (Day, 2012).

Life itself is a reflexive exercise, and the act of producing research is also a process of reflexivity. Being reflexive is different than reflection, because reflexivity requires “an other and a self conscious awareness of the process of self scrutiny” (Pillow, 2003, p. 177). Linda Findlay (2002) outlines many different types of reflexivity and explains how,

“In terms of aims, reflexivity can be understood as a confessional account of methodology or as examining one’s own personal, possibly unconscious, reactions. It can mean exploring the dynamics of the researcher–researched relationship. Alternatively, it can focus more on how the research is co-constituted and socially situated, through offering a critique or through deconstructing established meanings”(p. 224)

However, it is important to point out the difficulty in practicing reflexivity, as the complexity of people, and the constant changing nature of the world around us, limits our understanding of others, and ourselves.

Furthermore, reflexivity can help us to better understand the multiple ways that power can operate, but it cannot erase the effects of this power. As Day explains, resolving issues of power should not be the point of reflexive research:

“Despite the impossibility for reflexivity to provide a universal cure all for the dilemmas of conducting research, the importance of discussing reflexivity lies within its ability to bring methodological dilemmas to the forefront in the first place.”(2012, p.12)

This idea of exposing power relations, and ethical dilemmas, without providing easy answers to them, is also reflected in the writings of Wanda Pillow (2003) on what she terms “reflexivities of discomfort’. Uncomfortable reflexivity is not an attempt to better understand the author and their motivations, but instead challenges the author, and the reader, to think about *how* we come to our understandings (p. 188). In this sense reflexivity provides an opportunity to explore how our constructions are linked to processes of power. Pillow explains how with ‘reflexivities of discomfort’ no interpretation is privileged, and no easy answers are provided.

In this chapter, I want to employ reflexivity as a tool to assist in breaking down the appearance of objectivity of myself, the researcher, and to further an acknowledgement of the role emotions play in research process. I have begun this practice by exposing some inner conflicts I have with the purpose of my research project, and concerns related to knowledge production. To continue this critique, while describing my research process, I will highlight issues I have encountered while conducting qualitative research related to power relationships and my emotions. It is important to note that this reflexive exercise is not an attempt to make my research more valid, but instead is a way to explore different ways of knowing.

How I came to the topic of Caregiving

As explained in Chapter One, a feminist ethic of care recognizes the epistemological power of emotions, by accepting the emotional aspects of our

decision-making processes. Victoria Lawson (2007) also points out the importance of emotions in academic research, and the selection of research topics. She explains how for many researchers, emotions and values are central to our identification of problems, and issues to study. In an attempt to uncover my emotions towards this research project, I would like to share a few personal and professional experiences that have led to my decision to base my research on the topic of caregiving.

I have experienced, and witnessed, gaps in the current social safety net in Ontario; gaps that placed tremendous pressure upon myself, and the lives of others, who have caregiving needs, for themselves, or for another. Although I had family support to help reduce this pressure, not every individual has family, or friends, who are willing, or able, to help in times of need. I became a single mother at the age of 25, one year after completing a university degree, while teaching English overseas. As I had been working overseas, I had no access to Maternity Leave Benefits, and no employment in Canada. Unable to find a job after returning to Canada, I moved in with my parents and went to Ontario Works for financial assistance. I remained on social assistance until my son turned three years old and I was able to access subsidized daycare.

I have also worked as a social worker helping people to access various social assistance programs in the Ottawa area. For example, I helped individuals apply for the Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). As an ODSP Support worker I encountered many individuals who, because of physical or mental health issues, were unable to financially support themselves and their family.

The health issues these individuals faced often affected their close personal relationships, and how they felt about themselves.

Experiencing the barriers to employment created by single parenthood, and listening to the struggles of individuals with disabilities, has led me to feel that change in the way we view caregiving in our society is needed. This viewpoint, stemming from an emotional response to my experience, forms the basis for the critical approach of my research on caregiving. I feel it is necessary to question the current social policies and programs we have, and to research how they affect our individual and collective experiences. Because caregiving is essential for the survival of our society, it is the care we provide for our family, our children, our parents, our spouses, and ourselves. It is a daily necessity, often taken for granted in our society. There are many responsibilities individuals face, in regards to caregiving, and sometimes these responsibilities prevent one from being employed, or reduce one's ability to work for wages. These thoughts and emotions are part of the reason why I have chosen to create The Child Care Pilot Atlas. It is difficult to explain exactly how these experiences will affect the research process, but I feel they are important enough to share in this reflexive exercise.

Creating The Child Care Pilot Atlas

To assist with the technical aspects of creating an atlas, I learned how to change and modify some of the computer code within the Nunaliit Framework (Hayes et al, 2014). Training for this was done at the Geomatic and

Cartographic Research Centre at Carleton University. The Nunaliit technicians, and other Masters students working with this technology, taught me how to create, modify and design an atlas. One of the first steps in creating an atlas is deciding upon the design of the schemas within the atlas. A schema is essentially a layout, or way of presenting and organizing data. Within each schema I was able to decide what categories of information would be provided to the atlas user.

The flexibility of the Nunaliit Framework allows for the creation and inclusion of new schemas as needed, and categories within the schemas can be added or deleted. There are however limits to changing the schemas, as information imputed into the categories can be lost with some types of modification. Once the schemas are created, the next step is to link the schemas to the various modules within the atlas. Each module in an atlas pertains to a different way of mapping and/or presenting information. Modules can take on many forms including: spatial maps, conceptual maps, and/or graphs. Modules can also be added, or removed from, the atlas at any time, increasing the capacity of an atlas to respond to user input.

When I began the process of creating the atlas, I had many ideas about what I wanted to do with the technology. The reality of creating the atlas was very different from what I had imagined. Without a background in computer programming, I was not able to customize the computer code, and this limited the ways of presenting and gathering information within the atlas. I learned to change and adapt the code that was created for other atlases, but since I did not

have funding for my research project, and because my atlas was not going to be made available for public use, there was a limited amount of time the Nunaliit technicians could provide towards the customization of my atlas.

Fortunately, I was able to incorporate other customization aspects from previous atlases, and the Nunaliit technicians did create one custom design specifically for my atlas. This customization is called an svg canvas and allows for schemas to be linked to sections of custom-built conceptual maps. Examples of the modules and schemas are provided in the next chapter on the analysis of the Pilot Child Care Atlas.

Conducting the Focus Groups

The focus group method was chosen as a way to examine the 'situated knowledges' of parents in the Ottawa area with respect to child care policies and programs. Although individualistic research methods are important to feminist research, Sue Wilkinson (1998) explains how more socially situated methods are necessary when researching the co-construction of meaning between people. Because I am testing how effective the atlas might be for creating a space for personal narratives of child care, as well as creating a space for a discursive community, it is important to have a method which can generate discussion among parents. There are two ways in which this situated knowledge is incorporated into the atlas. First, the information from parents assists with the design of modules, through guiding the themes for the modules included in the atlas. Second, as the cybercartographic atlas incorporates

personal narrative, quotes from parents are added to relevant schemas, as a way to test how the information included within the atlas, relates to individual experience.

I have experience conducting interviews with individuals on sensitive subjects, but no previous experience running a focus group. In order to prepare, I read about focus group structures and moderation techniques. Regardless of this preparation, I found the experience of conducting the focus group to be quite challenging. To encourage the generation of child care narratives, and communication between parents, an open-ended approach to the focus group questions was employed. I used prompts during the focus groups to encourage parents to comment upon what others were saying, but often this was ineffective, especially in the beginning of the focus groups. A more conversational atmosphere would happen at the end of the focus groups. Because of this, it would have been beneficial to run the groups for longer than one hour, but this was not possible because of participant's child care needs.

I tried to remain outside of the conversation during the focus groups, but there were a few times when this became challenging. When participants were unsure as to policies or programs they would turn to me, instead of the other parents, for answers. It was also difficult to remain neutral, because of my own personal experiences as a mother. When the parents would speak about experiences that I could relate to, I often wished I could join the conversation. These issues of moderating the focus groups relate back to my positionality and

what feminist researchers term an insider, or outsider, positioning of the researcher.

An insider position is when the researcher is part of the community being researched. A common view in research is that insiders are supposed to distance themselves from what is being studied, and outsiders to immerse themselves (Day, 2012), but often the researcher does not fit clearly into an insider or outsider category. As Susan Murray (2003) explains positions of insiderness/outsiderness are not fixed, but are dynamic and can shift within the research process. During the focus groups, and throughout the process of my research, I often felt pulled in two different directions; to both distance myself from, and immerse myself in, the subject matter. As a single mother who struggled with child care, I have some insider knowledge, but with my connections to academia, I am also an outsider. Furthermore, these categories are too limiting and elusive for me to clearly understand exactly how these roles impacted the research process. However, I did draw upon my experience as a mother, as a resource, in order to assist with the recruitment of participants for my research.

Participants for the focus groups were recruited through an Ontario Early Years Centre (OEYC), and a center-based child care facility, in Ottawa. A copy of the recruitment letter and consent form are attached as Appendix A and B. I attended three playgroup sessions at the OEYC. This gave me time to speak in-depth to parents about my research and what participation would include. For the center-based child care facility, I recruited parents at the end of the day,

when they picked up their children, and I also placed posters inside the center. The poster for recruitment is included in Appendix C. The recruitment method at the OEYC generated more interest in the research project than the recruitment at the local center-based child care facility. Picking up children at the end of the day, most parents did not have time to stop and talk about my research project. Whereas at the OEYC, parents spend a couple hours at the playgroup, and could speak to me, while supervising and playing with their children.

I found several restrictions to the recruitment process that excluded certain parents from participating in my research. There were several parents I approached who were not able to communicate effectively enough in English to be able to participate. Other parents felt overwhelmed by work and parenting obligations, and would therefore decline to participate, even though they were interested in the research I was doing. A few parents declined to participate because their children would not be comfortable with the child care workers during the focus groups. Had I been able to accommodate a wider variety of individuals in the focus groups, the responses of parents could have been quite different from what I encountered.

A problem related to running the focus groups with parents was financing and organizing child care for parents who participated. I attempted to hire child care workers through the Andrew Fleck Short Term Child Care (STCC) program. The STCC provides child care on-site for short term contracts. My request for child care during the focus groups was posted to the child care

workers who are employed through this program. Unfortunately none of the child care workers responded to the post. The administrator of the STCC program felt the reason why I was unsuccessful is because I was only offering 3 hours of employment, per child care worker, per day. Because I had no outside funding for my research, I was unable to hire each child care worker for a full day of work. With travel time to and from the focus groups, it was not worth the time, and effort, required for the amount of wages I would be able to provide.

Eventually, I was able to hire two of my friends who are Registered Early Childhood Educators to provide child care for each of the focus groups. Because they work in the child care sector in Ottawa, they were interested in my research and wanted to help support it. But, this limitation meant I was unable to run more than two focus groups. The child care issue also limited the number of participants in the focus group. The number of children the child care workers could safely take care of was based on the guidelines set out for home daycares. Ultimately, I was not able to have parents with more than two children. Also, because of the availability of my friends, the focus groups were only run for participants who were able to attend on a weekend or an evening.

These barriers to participation, as well as the small sample size of participants, prevent any generalizations, or conclusions of the parenting experience being drawn from the focus group data. Although the data gained from parents provide only limited views of the parental experience, they were helpful as a guide for researching child care policies and programs, and assisted with the design and testing of the atlas features. How the focus group

information connects to the atlas will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. Parents who participated also expressed their enjoyment of the focus groups, as they appreciated being able to talk about their experiences, and learn about the experiences of other parents.

The Policy and Program Review

A policy review was conducted before the focus groups in order to provide parents with a list of child care policies and programs. This list served as a starting point for conversations within the focus groups and also served as a method of gathering information on parents' understanding of these programs and policies. The results of this exercise are discussed further in Chapter Three along with a display of the full list of programs and policies provided to parents in Figure 4. A more in-depth policy and program review was conducted after the focus groups to assist with the creation of the Child Care Pilot Atlas.

There were some challenges that arose during the researching of child care programs and policies. The first challenge stems from the broad definition of child care within my research, as the care parents provide for their children and the care they organize for others to provide. There are many child care programs which are regulated and funded by the government relating to health, education, daycare and financial supports for parents. The overwhelming number of programs means having to choose which areas of child care to focus on. I discuss the process and rationale behind these choices in Chapter 3 when analyzing the research results.

Although I eventually decided on which areas of child care to focus on, I still found the researching of government funding for child care programs and policies to be difficult. There is no master list of government funded programming, for families and children, and often the information on who funds what is not readily available. Furthermore, there is a lack of transparency of the federal funding transfers that prevents a complete understanding of how much federal funding is directed towards child care.

I will discuss these issues in more detail in the next chapter when examining the results of the policy review. However, I want to stress here the limits to my decision process regarding what information to include within the atlas. Creating the conceptual maps outlining child care programming necessitated a process of excluding and privileging of information. Yet, even for myself, the creator of the maps, there is an air of authority surrounding their final version. This air of authority is what critical cartographers term 'the power of maps', as discussed in the previous chapter. Through my portrayal of child care programming in the maps, I have generated ways of thinking about child care policy that, by their particular categorizing and ordering, privilege certain ways of knowing and scalar constructions, and exclude others.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have outlined the rationale behind the methods I employed including a reflexive, confessional, account of the challenges, and messiness, of the research process. An important aspect of feminist research is

the breaking down of the appearance of objectivity of the researcher, and questioning the production of knowledge. It is through revealing my thoughts on the research process, and how I came to study child care, that I have engaged this research from a critical feminist standpoint. I have adopted what Pillow (2003) terms 'reflexivities of discomfort', which challenges our accounts, and the production of knowledge, while at the same time acknowledge the importance of finding meanings to aid political action. Like Pillow I believe that,

“The qualitative research arena would benefit from more “messy” examples, examples that may not always be successful, examples that do not seek a comfortable, transcendent end-point but leave us in the uncomfortable realities of doing engaged qualitative research”(2003, p.193)

I do not feel that my confessional account takes away from the usefulness of my research. The point of qualitative research is not to produce an account that is correct, but instead to explore the complexity of experience, provide information for social change, and understand the limitations of these findings. This is an important aspect of qualitative research, and one that can produce rich, valuable data.

Chapter Three: Discussion of Results

Introduction

This chapter discusses the process of creating the Child Care Atlas, including an analysis of how the focus group results and the researching of child care policy and programming affect the design of the atlas. Adopting a critical approach, and taking into account the limitations of the focus groups discussed in the previous chapter, these focus group results are not being forwarded as a representation of the parenting experience. Instead, the purpose of conducting the focus groups is to provide assistance with the design of the Child Care Atlas, in regards to both the presentation of information about child care programs and policies within the atlas, and the inputting of parents' comments. The commonalities and differences of experiences and opinions expressed within the focus groups are examined and presented along side relevant research studies, and sections of the Pilot Child Care Atlas.

Focus Groups

I conducted two focus groups with three parents in each, for a total of six research participants. Figure 2 outlines the demographics of the parents who participated¹. The recruitment of participants was intentionally broad, in order to capture a variety of experience. In order to protect the privacy of the focus

¹ One male participant did not provide demographic information and therefore is not included in the table numbers. Within the focus groups two out of six participants were male. This is a high percentage for child care research studies. This may be because one recruitment strategy was to attend a Daddy Playgroup at an Ontario Early Years Centre.

group participants all names and identifying information have been changed. Identifying information includes any mention of places of employment and names of children. The quotes chosen for presentation here have, in some cases, also been altered through the removal of unnecessary words, or by replacing informal speech with a more formal written word².

Figure 2: Demographics

Demographic Category			
Family Structure	Single, never married	Common Law	Married
	1	1	3
Age of Children	1-2	3-5	6-11
	3	1	3
Age of Participant	25-34	35-44	45-54
	3	1	2
Gender of Participant	Female	Male	
	4	1	
Family Income	Less than 20,000	35,000-49,999	Over 100,000
	1	1	3
Employment Status	Part-Time	Full Time	
	1	4	
Mother Tongue	English	French	
	4	1	
Other Languages Spoken	French	English	
	2	1	
Ethnicity of Participant	White		
	5		
Other Ethnicity in Family	Hispanic	Chinese	
	1	1	
Education	High School	College	University
	1	1	3

² For example sometimes when speaking individuals will use words such as 'like' and 'um'. The removal of 'like' and 'um' was done only when this did not alter the meaning expressed by the participant. When speaking individuals use a more informal manner such as the use of 'yah' instead of 'yes', I have changed these words as I feel it reads better and does not change the meaning of the viewpoints expressed.

The questions addressed within the focus groups pertain to the perceived child care needs of parents in the Ottawa area, and the effectiveness of the current childcare regime at the municipal, provincial, and federal level at addressing these perceived needs. A list of the focus group questions is provided in Appendix D. Based on the responses of the parents in the focus groups I have organized the information provided into two broad categories of perceived needs: 1) Needs regarding parental provision of child care, and 2) Needs regarding parents organizing child care for others to provide. These needs are outlined in Figure 3. This non-parental child care provision can be licensed or unlicensed forms of care including, but not limited to: center based daycares, home based daycares, preschools, kindergarten, before and after school care, or people hired by parents to take care of children in the home. Figure 3 provides an overview of the child care needs identified in each broad category, and the corresponding government funded programs discussed by the parents.

Each of the child care needs identified have been influential in the creation of the Pilot Child Care Atlas, and I was able to incorporate all the various narratives of child care needs into the atlas. An 'atlas user' profile was created for each parent who participated to test the effectiveness of the atlas as a discursive community. In some instances the needs identified also steered the focus of the policy review and themes within the modules. The following discussion on the atlas creation explains the influence of each of the narratives on child care needs, and provides examples of how they are connected the atlas.

For each example I provide a screen shot of the atlas and include the specific web address for the page. The full atlas can be accessed at:

<http://devel.gcrc.carleton.ca:8051/index.html>

Figure 3: Child Care Needs

Type of Child Care	Child Care Needs	Programs Discussed
Parental Provision	Adequate finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Canada Child Tax Benefit ▪ Maternity/Parental Leave ▪ Income Splitting
	Parenting supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ontario Early Years Centre ▪ Parent Literacy Centre
	Knowledge of programs and policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ontario Early Years Centre ▪ Canada Child Tax Benefit ▪ Full Day Kindergarten ▪ Child Care Waitlist ▪ Licensed Child Care
Non-Parental Provision	Accessible child care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Licensed child care ▪ Child Care Registry
	Convenient Child Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Before and After School Child Care
	Affordable child care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Licensed child care ▪ Child Care Wait List ▪ Universal Child Tax benefit ▪ Child Care Tax Deduction
	Quality child care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Licensed child care ▪ Registered Early Childhood Educators ▪ Full-Day Kindergarten

Part 1: Mapping Child Care Policies and Programs

Parental Provision of Child Care: Lack of Knowledge of Programs and Policies

An important factor affecting access and use of government child care programs is the complexity and changing nature of child care programs and

policies. In each of the focus groups parents expressed a need to better understand the government child care programs and policies in order to take advantage of the supports available. Because there are numerous child care programs and policies that change frequently it is difficult for parents to understand all that is available to them.

Mary: I'm an educated single mother right, so I find that, like they laugh at me at work to run a clinic for people who are single mothers. Because, and its not that I am trying to do anything devious, it is just like to really get your true...

Linda: To demystify it.

Mary: Yes to demystify it, you need to read all the small print, and figure it all out...

Mary's words "read all the small print" demonstrate the complexity of child care programming, and policy, by comparing them to complex contracts, or legal documents. Parents in the focus groups want to have a better understanding of these benefits, and how they are changing, in order to be able to budget more effectively.

In order to assess the level of knowledge, focus group participants were given a list of government child care programs, and policies, and each was asked to mark the ones they have heard about previously, and the one's they feel they understand. Figure 4 displays the results from this exercise with parents. As the totals indicate, parents have heard of many of the programs and policies available, but have a much lower level of understanding of them.

Figure 4: List of Programs and Policies

Type of Program/Policy	Name of Program/Policy	Heard about	Understand
Direct Payments	Universal Child Tax Benefit	6	4
	Canada Child Tax Benefit	6	3
	Working Income Tax Benefit	1	1
	Ontario Child Benefit	4	1
	Ontario Child Care Supplement for Working Families	2	1
Income Benefits	Maternity/Paternity Leave Benefits	6	6
	Proposed Income Spitting for Parents	5	1
Child Care Provision	Centre Based Child Care	6	4
	Home Based Child Care	6	6
	School Based Child Care Programs	6	5
	The Child Care Registry (Wait list for full-fee spaces)	6	5
	Live In Caregiver Program	0	0
Subsidies	The Child Care Waitlist (Fee Subsidies)	5	3
	Child Care Providers Wage Subsidies	2	0
Resource Centers	Best Start Child and Family Centres	2	1
	Ontario Early Years Centres	6	5
	Parenting and Family Literacy Centres	2	2
Direct Programming	Healthy Babies Healthy Children	3	1
	Preschool Speech and Language	3	1
Regulations and Frameworks	Day Nurseries Act	3	2
	The Child Care Modernization Act (2014)	2	1
	Early Childhood Educators Act	3	1
	Early Learning Framework (ELECT)	0	0
	Ontario Early Years Policy Framework (2013)	1	0
Total		86	40

All of the parents had questions about the list of programs and policies and most expressed a need to have a better knowledge of what was available:

John: I think it is important to understand the different stuff on this list and how you can use these things to your advantage, there is so much information out there, it would be nice to have a thing where you could pull it all together.

Mark: Like if somebody could do a session where parents come in and you could explain what all this stuff is.

Interestingly two thirds of participants in this focus group have some type of post high school education. This would indicate that navigating the child care programming and policy structure is difficult for most parents regardless of education. The lack of understanding of child care programming and policies may stem from the sheer number and complexity of policies and programs. For most parents in the focus group, having a resource to explain and bring together the numerous child care programs and policies would be useful. Although the findings of the focus group are limited because of the small sample size in the focus groups, the results from this exercise helped to guide the design of the atlas.

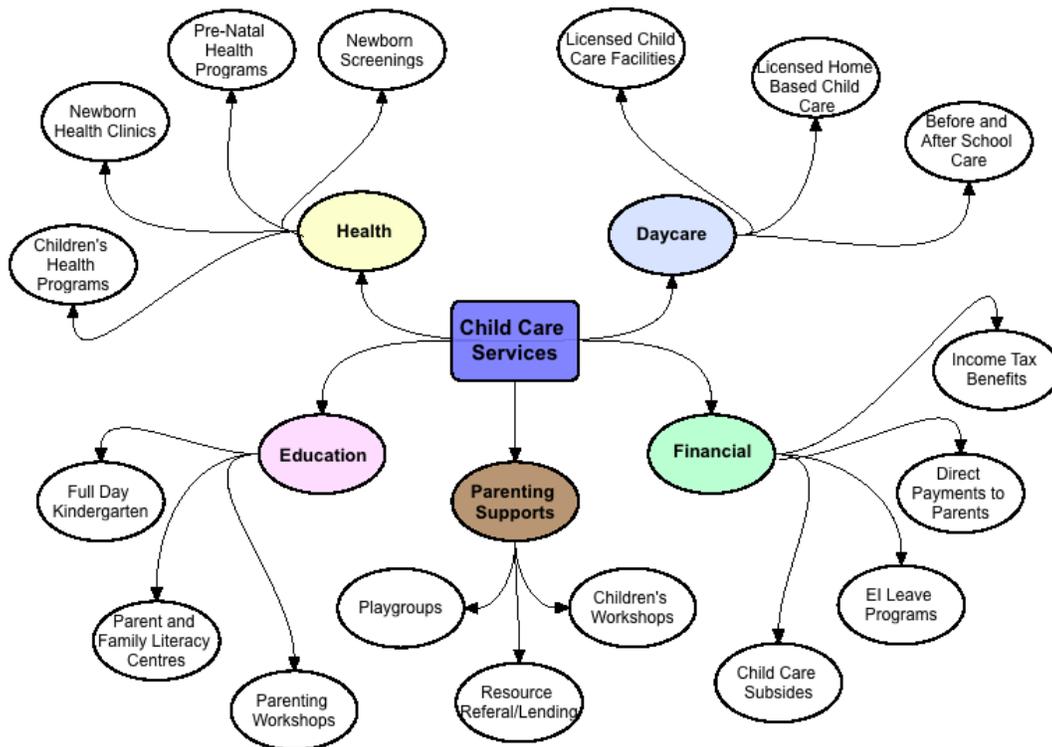
Increasing Knowledge of Child Care Programs and Policies

Policy Review and Presenting Child Care Programs:

In order to respond to parents' concerns of a lack of understanding, I created separate modules within the atlas pertaining to the child care programs provided at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels of government. After the focus groups a policy review was conducted in order to create these modules. As explained in the previous chapter there were certain challenges with the policy review due to the complexity and changing nature of child care

programming and policy. This necessitated a decision making process on what policy areas and programs to include within the atlas. Figure 5 outlines the four broad areas of child care included within the atlas, and the types of child care programs that fall under each category.

Figure 5: Broad Areas of Child Care



In the area of health, I focus on parent support programs, created by, or regulated by, the provincial/federal government that are available in the Ottawa area. For education, I cover full-day kindergarten as this program is new, and for many parents it has replaced licensed child care spaces. Under daycare options, I include all licensed child care policies and programs. For financial supports, all taxable benefits for parents, both provincial and federal, and child

care subsidies are included. I also focused on the programs run through the Ontario Early Years Centres, the local school boards, and the programs related to licensed child care agencies.

Although child care supports are provided by the federal, provincial and municipal government, the federal programs consist mainly of financial supports like direct and taxable benefits, and provincial funding transfers. After 2007-2008 federal transfers for child care programs were included within the Canada Social Transfer (CST). The CST is provided to the provinces as a lump sum and no breakdown of financial information is provided for this funding. The CST funding is to be directed to child care programming, post-secondary education, and social programming (Government of Canada, Department of Finance, 2011). Therefore, it is not possible to know for sure how much funding is being directed specifically for child care related programming. In their report on child care funding information, Lynell Anderson and Tammy Findlay (2010) also find information on child care funding difficult to access, confusing, and often times unavailable. The federal and provincial governments have set standards for public reporting of child care funding, but they have not lived up to this promise.

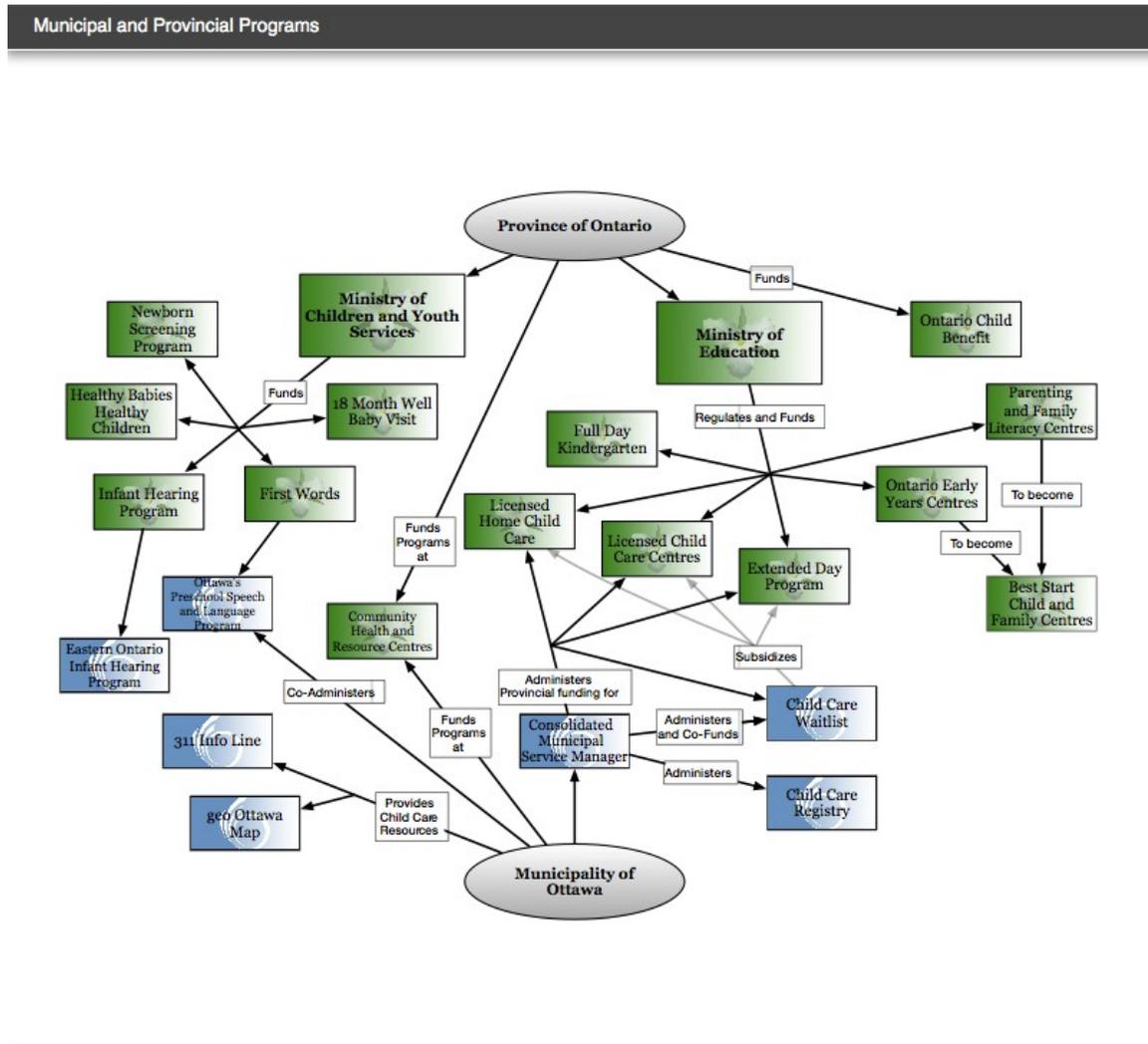
There are also many child care programs funded by the government that are not included in the atlas. The provincial government funds programming for families through the local Community Health and Resource Centres, but the information on which government departments fund these programs is not available on their websites, so they were not added to the atlas. Furthermore,

there are many local community agencies assisting families and children, which could have government funding for certain programs, but this information was not accessible online. The sheer size of the topic of child care prevents this research project from covering all of these programs.

Explanation of Conceptual Map Modules:

Within the atlas I made a separate module for the federal programs, since they stand apart from the provincial and municipal ones. The provincial government funds and regulates child care programs that are delivered by the municipal governments. The connections between the provincial and municipal programs necessitated presenting these programs together. Therefore, two modules were created with conceptual maps of programs and policies at the federal, provincial, and municipal government levels. These modules are displayed below in figures 6 and 7.

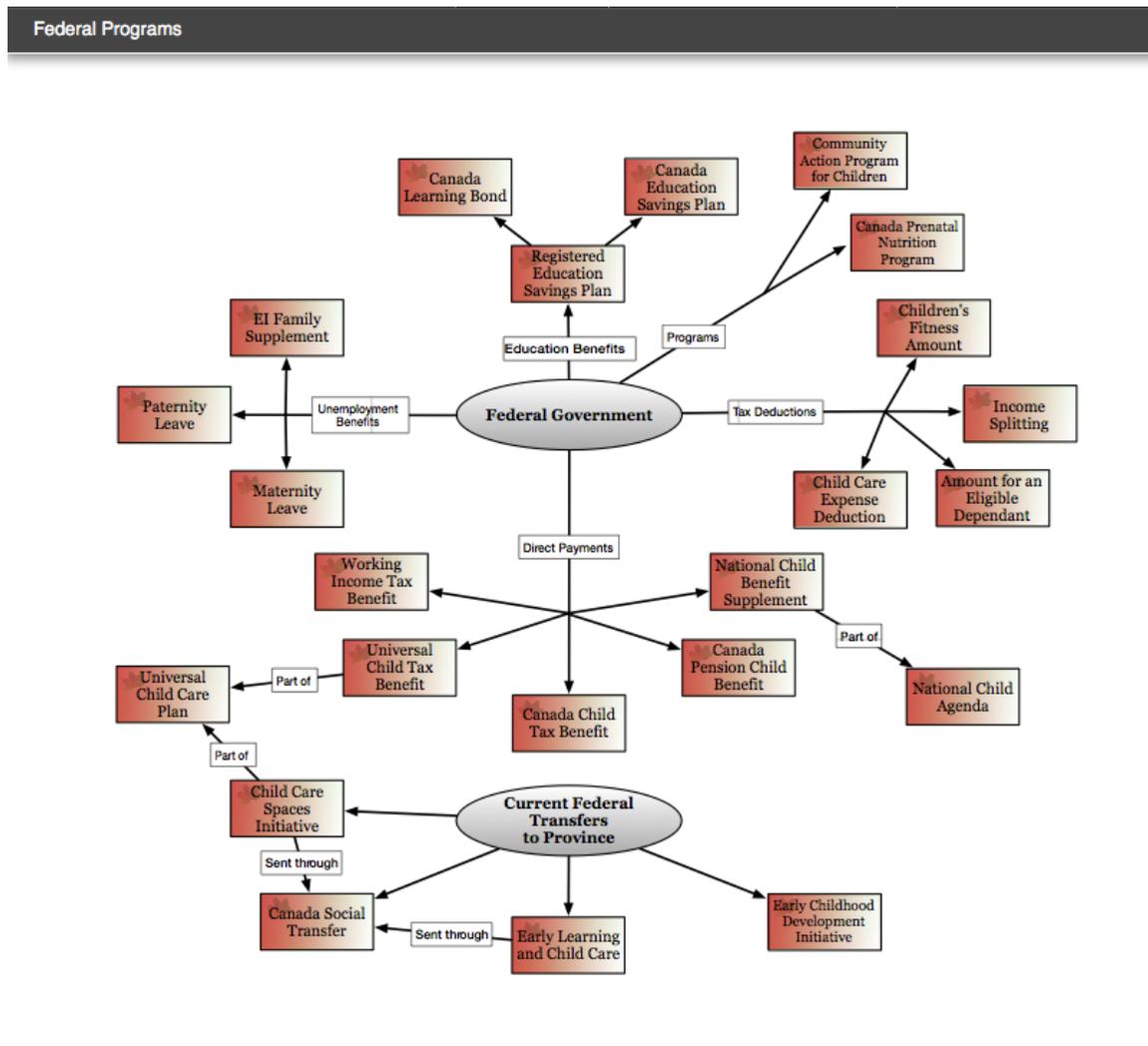
Figure 6: Municipal and Provincial Map



To view in greater detail go to:

<http://devel.grcr.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.munpro>

Figure 7: Federal Map



To view in greater detail go to:

<http://devel.grcr.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.federal>

These two conceptual maps were created with a customization svg canvas. The design of the canvas allows atlas users to click on the programs in the flow charts, and information on the program is displayed to the right of the map. Information is displayed by way of customizable schemas documents. Each schema has different categories of information. Below in figure 8 and 9

two examples of schemas are displayed, including a program schema and an organization schema. These examples demonstrate how the display categories differ depending upon the type of information the schema portrays.

Figure 8: Program Schema

[Add Related Item](#) ↕

Program Type	Licensed Home-Based Child Care
Delivered By	Private Home Day Care Agencies
Access	<p>This is a good website explaining how to find child care in Ontario:</p> <p>http://findingqualitychildcare.ca/index.php/ontario</p> <p>In Ottawa parents can add their children to The Registry for access to licensed child care centers at this website:</p> <p>https://onehsn.com/ottawa</p>
Description	<p>The Ministry of Education is responsible for licensed child care in Ontario. The Ministry administers legislation and monitors licensed child care facilities. They also provide some funding for child care facilities. This funding is administered through the Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSM) or District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSAB). In Ottawa the CMSM and DSSAB is The Children's Branch of the Community and Social Services Department of the City of Ottawa.</p> <p>All licensed child care providers must follow the regulations set out in The Day Nurseries Act which is legislated by The Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS). Until recently, in Ontario licensed child care was the responsibility of MCYS.</p>
Themes	

Figure 9: Organization Schema

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Find on Map](#) [Tree View](#)

Organization	Ontario Early Years Centre: Andrew Fleck Child Care Services: Ottawa South
Services	<p>Ontario Early Years Centres are a place where parents and caregivers can go for programs and resources related to early childhood development and health. The programming includes play-based activities, supporting learning and attachment between parent/caregiver and child. All early years programs are designed for the first six years of a child's life, when the brain forms connections that set the stage for lifelong learning, behaviour and health.</p> <p>Core Services include: Early learning activities Information and referral Toy and resource library Education</p> <p style="text-align: center;">More</p>
Contact	Address: 2330 Don Reid Drive Telephone: 613-737-6369 Email: oeycottawasouth@afchildcare.on.ca
Website	http://www.afchildcare.on.ca/oneycenterje.html
Themes	Ontario Early Years Centre
Layers	Program Layer

The information provided in each category helps to clarify the purpose and status of child care programs. For example, the recent expansion of full day kindergarten, to all 4 and 5 year olds in Ontario, has created confusion for parents who have young children:

John: But the full day kindergarten, that's not everywhere right?

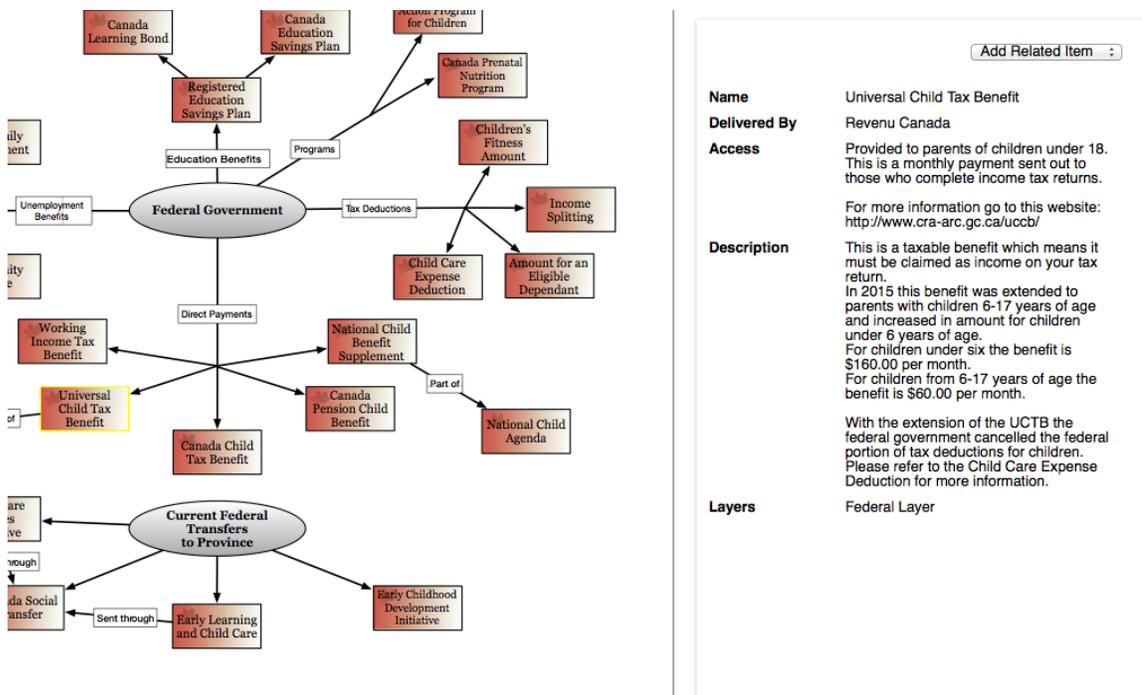
Tara: It is now,

taxable, so you will end up paying taxes on it. So they are changing, I shouldn't say exactly what it is, but yes, there are changes to how it's supposed to be...

Linda: Tara do you know?

An example of how the Universal Child Tax Benefit is displayed in the atlas provided below in figure 12.

Figure 12: Universal Child Tax Benefit Schema



To view in greater detail go to:

<http://devel.grcr.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.federal#eyJ0IjoiZmkiOiIzODBjZTI0ZDBmYjMzNzhjMDE5YjQ3M2U4MTAxY2E5YyJ9>

The Child Tax Credit has been eliminated and replaced by an expanding of the Universal Child Tax Benefit. These changes have created some confusion with

parents thinking the Canada Child Tax Benefit is being eliminated. Also, the Canada Child Tax Benefit is delivered in the same payment as the Ontario Child Tax benefit and the National Child Benefit, which further complicates the situation. The atlas explains these benefits and changes to parents by presenting the array of child care benefits available, and the ones recently changed or eliminated.

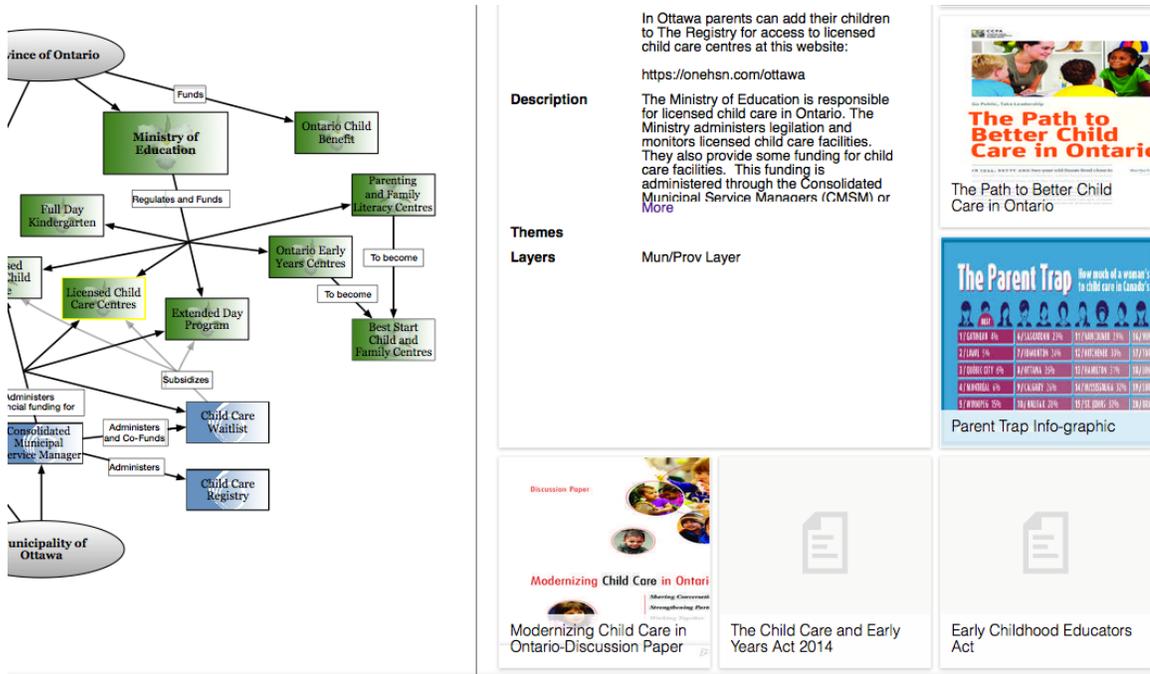
Presentation of Child Care Policies and Research:

Overall the parents in the focus groups indicated having a better understanding of child care benefits and programs in comparison to child care policies, regulations, and research. For example, only two parents had heard of Bill 10, the Child Care Modernization Act (2014). This act is responsible for the repealing of the Day Nurseries Act (1990) and its replacement with the Child Care and Early Years Act (2014). None of the parents had heard of the Early Learning Framework (Ministry of Children and Youth Services, 2007), which provides information on childhood development, and best practices, for early learning and child care programs. Although most of the parents indicate having a good understanding of center-based and home daycare, only two understand the Day Nurseries Act.

Each schema within the conceptual map modules has demo media documents displayed along the right hand side and then across the bottom. The atlas employs a tile format, so each separate document is displayed in its own tile. These demo media documents can consist of policies, regulations, research,

info graphics, and news articles pertaining to the various programs. An example of how the policies and regulations are displayed in the atlas for the Licensed Child Care Centres program is provided in figure 13.

Figure 13: Policy and Regulation Display



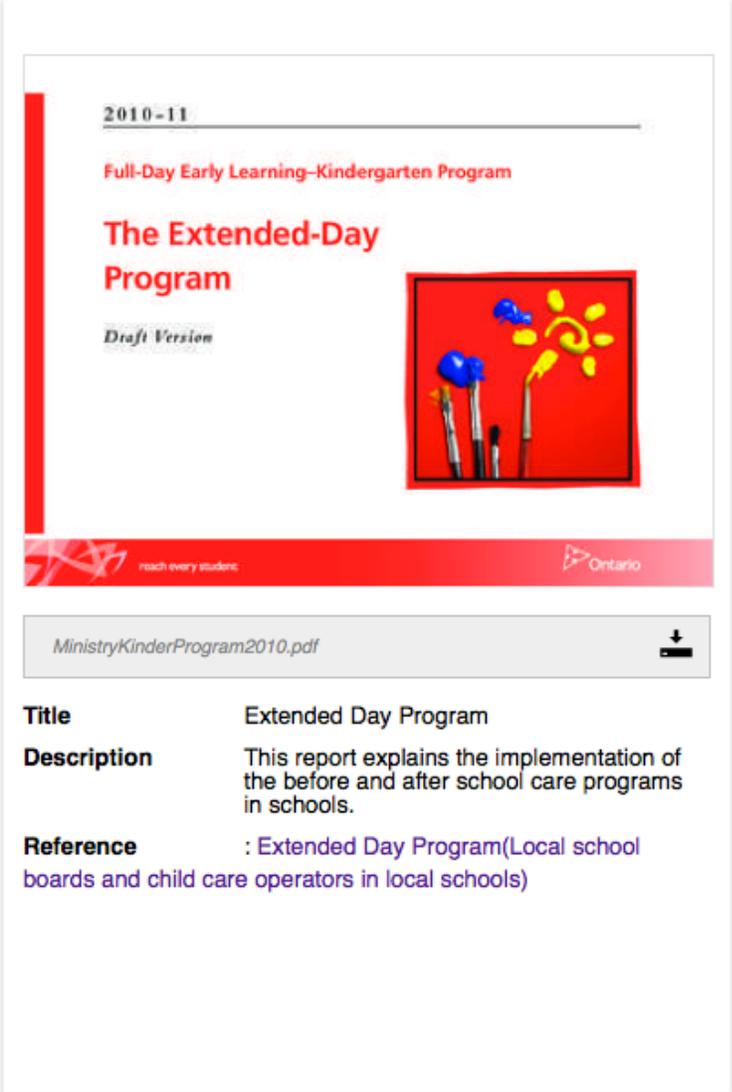
To view in greater detail go to:

[http://devel.grc.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.munpro#eyJ0Ij...
oieCIslmkiOilyZjZjZjgMDYwYmZhMGJjYjUyMTRhNGU2OGNhNjIzNyJ9](http://devel.grc.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.munpro#eyJ0Ij...)

These demo media documents can cover a wide variety of perspectives and knowledge about each program. For the Licensed Child Care Centres program I included policies like the Early Childhood Educators Act (2007, c.7), government research papers such as the Modernizing Child Care in Ontario Discussion Paper (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2012), and critical research

and info graphics published by The Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives (Macdonald & Friendly, 2014). Atlas users can select the demo media they are interested in and download them, or read a brief outlining description of them. Examples of how demo media is displayed, after being selected within the atlas, are provided in figure 14 and 15.

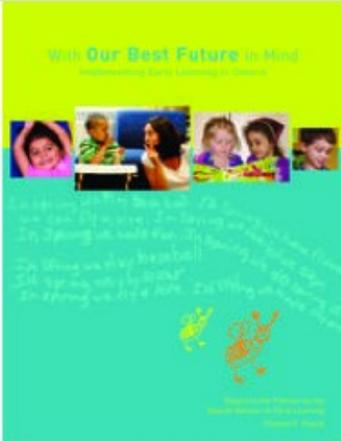
Figure 14: Demo-Media for Extended Day Program



The screenshot shows a document cover for 'The Extended-Day Program' (Draft Version) from 2010-11. The cover features a red vertical bar on the left, the title in red, and an image of paintbrushes and a sun. Below the cover is a download button for 'MinistryKinderProgram2010.pdf'. A table below provides details about the document.

Title	Extended Day Program
Description	This report explains the implementation of the before and after school care programs in schools.
Reference	: Extended Day Program(Local school boards and child care operators in local schools)

Figure 15: Demo-Media for Best Start Centres



earlylearningreporten.pdf

Title	With Our Best Future in Mind: Implementing Early Learning in Ontario
Description	This report outlines the plan for early learning changes in Ontario including the expansion of full day kindergarten as well as the before and after school care programs. There is a review of the research behind these changes and a discussion of how the proposed Best Start Child and Family Centres will fit into these changes.
Reference	: Best Start Child and Family Centres

Parental Child Care Need: Parenting Support Programs

John: I think that what we are missing at home is the structure that you would get, like when I see that when we come to groups, like the playgroups here, cause he will get bored really quickly and wants the same toys all the time, but when we come to a place like this um, he is amazing, he doesn't act up ever and he' he interacts with the with the children, and it's like you said it is the structure is a big thing.

Heather: And it can be like a lot of pressure, I'm staying at home and me and my husband, we are stay at home too, and it can be a lot of pressure to keep them as engaged as they need to be in a day, you know.

John: It's exhausting

Heather: It puts a lot on us, eh?

John and Heather talk about the pressure of parenting and how playgroups, like those provided through the Ontario Early Year Centre, assist when they have young children at home. Five out of six participants in these focus groups has a spouse to assist with child care responsibilities at home, but regardless of this the stress and pressure of child care was a common theme in the focus groups.

All of the parents in the focus groups have had experience with some type of parenting support program from local parent resource centers. Many of the child care programs run in Ottawa are organized through the Ontario Early Years Centres. There are seven of these centers in Ottawa, and each one provides on-site and off-site programs including: playgroups, child and parent workshops, toy lending, and resource referrals (Ontario Ministry of Education, Ontario Early Years Centres, 2014). These centers act as a resource for parents regarding early development and education programs and all the programs are provided free of charge. OEYCs also provide space for programs run by the City of Ottawa:

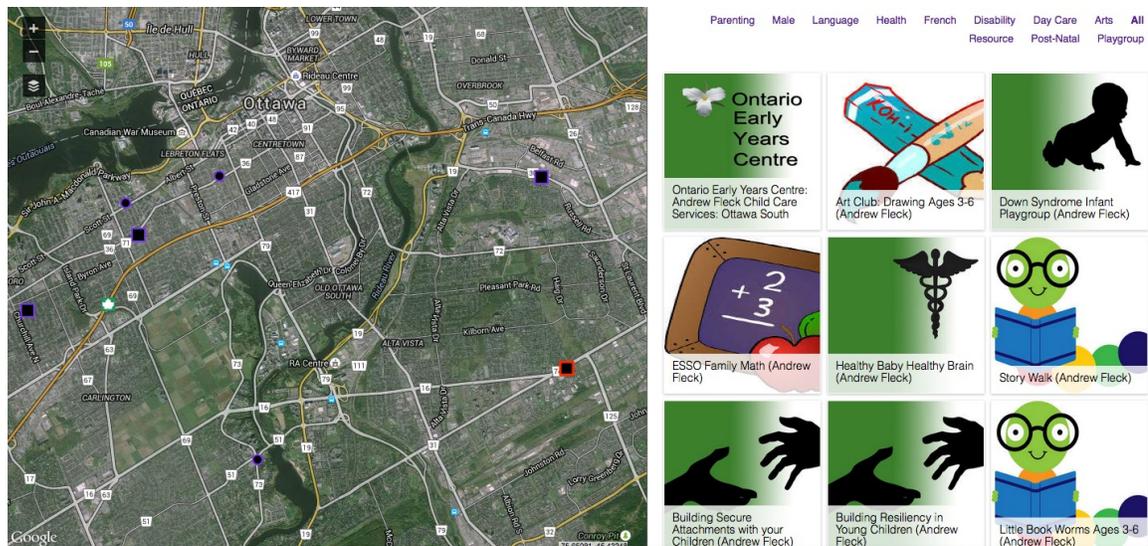
Susan: The City of Ottawa does that, they have well baby drop in clinics where you can speak to a nutritionist consultant to like weigh your baby and I took my daughter to that because we were like concerned with her weight and so we liked to go when I was nursing her, the second time around you are like an old pro (laughs) and you can do that without.

As Susan points out, these screening programs are an important resource for parents, especially for first time parents, who may have concerns about their child's development.

Physical Mapping of Parent Support Programs in Ottawa:

The Ontario Early Years Centre module is an example of mapping child care programs by showing their physical locations, program content, and access and information. I used two local OEYCs to test the effectiveness of the Nunaliit platform in presenting this information. As seen in the screen shot in figure 16, this module also uses a tile format in the right hand side display.

Figure 16: Ontario Early Years Centers Map



To view in greater detail go to:

http://devel.grc.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.program#eyJ0lj_oibSIsInMiOjE0NDg1MTU1NDU5Nzl9

Atlas users can click on points on the map to find out what programs are provided at each location. The map uses a clustering effect so that physical locations with more than one program, or programs which are close to each other when zooming out, are displayed as a box instead of a dot. Atlas users can zoom in and out of the map, and move around to find out what programs are in their neighborhood. Themes of the various programs are displayed above the program tiles and can be selected to filter what types of programs are shown for each location.

Figure 17: Physical Map Resource Display

Add Related Item : Find on Map

Organization Ontario Early Years Centre: Andrew Fleck
Child Care Services: Ottawa South

Services Ontario Early Years Centres are a place where parents and caregivers can go for programs and resources related to early childhood development and health. The programming includes play-based activities, supporting learning and attachment between parent/caregiver and child. All early years programs are designed for the first six years of a child's life, when the brain forms connections that set the stage for lifelong learning, behaviour and health.

Core Services include:
Early learning activities
Information and referral
Toy and resource library
Education

[More](#)

Contact Address: 2330 Don Reid Drive
Telephone: 613-737-6369
Email: oeycottawasouth@afchildcare.on.ca

Website <http://www.afchildcare.on.ca/oneycenterje.html>

Themes Ontario Early Years Centre

Layers Program Layer

Spring Workshops (Andrew Fleck)

Resources (Andrew Fleck)

Health Development Screenings (Andrew Fleck and Partners)

To view in greater detail go to:

<http://devel.gcrc.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.program#eyl0lj>

[oieCIsImkiOilyZjZjZjgxMDYwYmZhMGJjYjUyMTRhNGU2ODNjYjA2ZSJ9](http://devel.gcrc.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.program#eyl0lj)

As shown in the screen shot in figure 17, the presentation of information on the support programs, and their corresponding resource materials, is done in the same way as the conceptual maps using customized schemas and demo media documents.

Part 2: Including Narratives of Child Care Programs and Policies

In order to test the effectiveness of the atlas in presenting parents' narratives of child care programs and policies I created a user profile for each parent who participated. Quotes from focus group participants have been reformatted and placed within the atlas as user comments. In the following discussion I present the remaining child care needs identified by participants and provide examples of how these narratives are integrated into the atlas as comments.

Parental Provision of Child Care: Adequate Finances

When discussing child care responsibilities the issue of adequate finances was a common thread throughout the research study, and one that parents could relate to each other about regardless of income level. Half of the participants in this focus group have a combined annual family income of over \$100,000. Even with this above average income level these participants still felt financial pressure due to child care needs. In talking about financial issues, parents would agree with each other, and laugh together about the difficulties.

All of the participants in this study discussed how the choice to have children creates a financial strain on families.

Direct Payments and Child Tax Benefits:

The federal and provincial governments provide tax benefits and direct payments to parents with young children to assist with the costs of raising children:

Heather: The child tax benefit is awesome, I'm happy that we all get \$100 to go in our bank accounts. For us it is like a treat for her. We can go and do something with her.

Tara: \$100 that would be the Universal Child Tax Benefit.

Heather: The Universal, yes, and the Child Tax Benefit, well we receive part of it, and when I don't do my taxes for a year and then (laughs), you get it all in a chunk and it is kind of nice. It is money in the bank, if you don't need to do a tax return, or whatever, then if I am not feeling that financial stress then, you go to the bank and you can get three or four months' worth, then it is nice.

Linda: Well ah, there nice to have but they there's a real gap between how much it really costs to have a child and what the tax benefits are.

Susan: Cause they just look at you on paper, how you look, they don't actually know how much you pay for your house and car and gas. Do you know what I mean?

Linda: And that's one of the problems.

Susan: Yes.

Linda: Because houses have gone up 50% in the last two years...

Susan: Groceries, everything...

Linda: Everything's gone up.

Susan: Yep

As demonstrated in the comments above, parents are appreciative of the direct child tax benefits provided by the government, but feel that the amounts provided do not reflect the increasing costs of having children. Furthermore, the way in which the child tax benefits are administered can also create financial

stress. Here Mary speaks about her experience with the child tax benefits while on Maternity leave:

Mary: It's always prorated on your income from the year before, so when I was on Maternity leave it was based on the money I made the year before. So I was running up my line of credit, getting this very small amount, allotment from the government every month, baby bonus you know. When you go back to work after you have been off for an entire year, it is great cause then they base it on when you were on EI, and then I was getting something like \$856 dollars a month, and I was earning a salary. But I needed it when I ran my line of credit for an entire 12 months. I could have really used that money then. It's always based on the income tax you file the year before.

Because the Canada Child Tax Benefit is based on employment income levels, the amount each parent receives is decided after they file their taxes at the end of the year. This means that a drop in income, like when accessing Maternity and Paternity Leave, does not correspond with an increase in benefits until the following year.

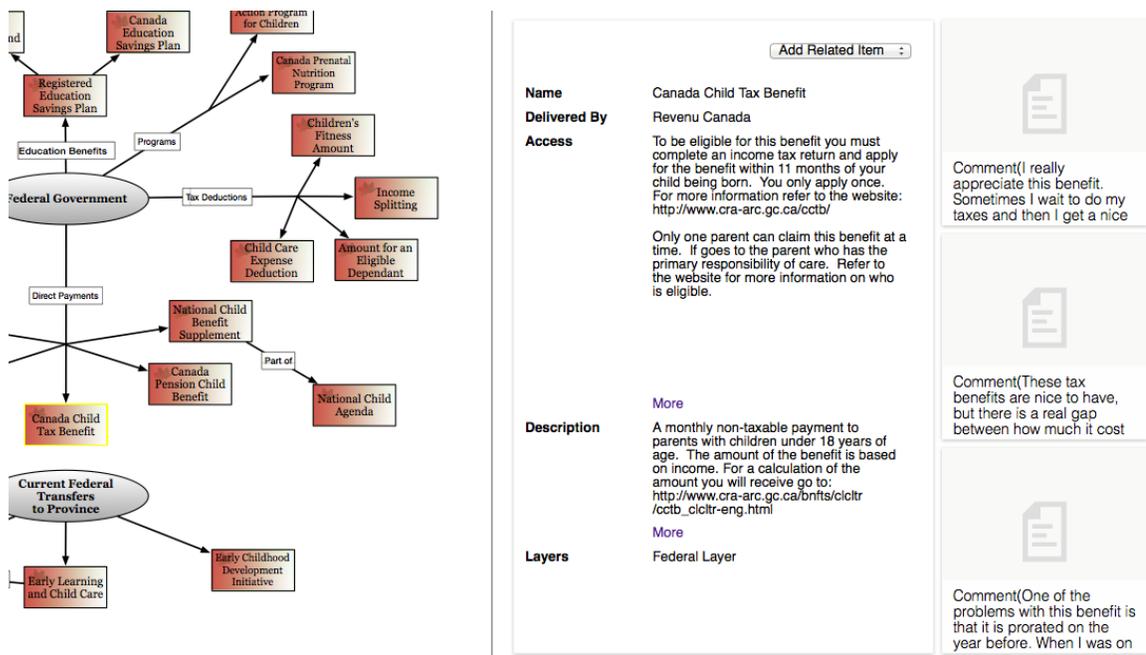
The Addition of Comments and Demo Media:

By creating a user profile and logging into the atlas, individuals can select the 'Add Related Item' tab for each schema, and then choose to add a comment or demo media file. Figure 18 provides an example of how the narratives surrounding adequate finances were incorporated into the atlas as user comments.

Each comment and demo media file is presented in a separate tile that is displayed alongside the schema. There is a hierarchy to the display of information, whereby demo media is presented first, and comments follow after.

Once selected for further reading the comment display includes the name of who wrote the comment, and the date it was created. In the Pilot Child Care Atlas, each atlas user can add, edit and delete any demo media or comment, but only those they have added to the atlas. As the moderator and creator of the atlas, I also have the ability to delete and remove any inappropriate or abusive content.

Figure 18: Comments on Adequate Finances



To view in greater detail go to:

<http://devel.grc.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.federal#eyJ0IjoieClImkiOiIzODBjZTI0ZDBmYjMzNzhjMDE5YjQ3M2U4MTAxZDkzZCJ9>

Income Splitting:

John: So I heard that uh, I heard bad things about it, that it is really only going to benefit the higher income people, families.

Mark: I think that it does benefit more, anybody who is a higher tax bracket so um,

Heather: Everybody needs perks, right,

Mark: From a social perspective, I don't think that is the best way of helping families out, even if I will be a beneficiary of it, I think it is definitely, like you said, it probably helps some of the families that don't need it as much and doesn't help some of the families who, there is probably a better way of spending that money to help, but it probably gets more votes out. So I think it is all a political thing.

In the report on Income Splitting, The Canadian Centre for Policy

Alternatives contend that families making \$56,000 or less would see an average benefit of \$50, while those making over \$147,000 would benefit on average by \$1,100 (MacDonald, 2014). This means the financial gains for this program are not assisting those who need it most. As demonstrated in the screen shot in figure 19, when atlas users select the Income Splitting program they can read parents comments, and the research report on income splitting.

Figure 19: Comments on Income Splitting

[Comment](#) [Demo Media](#) [Benefit](#) [All](#)

<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;"> Edit Delete Add Related Item Tree View </div> <p>Name Income Splitting</p> <p>Delivered By Revenu Canada</p> <p>Access This benefit is provided for the federal portion of an income tax return. This is available as of the 2014 tax year.</p> <p>Description This income tax program allows common law and married individuals to combine and split their yearly income for the federal portion of their tax return.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">For example: If one spouse makes \$60,000 and another makes \$20,000 yearly. Then each would pay federal income taxes on \$40,000. For an online calculator go to this website: http://incomesplittingcanada.com/</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">This benefit has been criticized because it provides higher tax credits to higher income families. For more information on this critique refer to the resource in this atlas: Income Splitting in Canada.</p> <p style="margin-left: 20px;">This benefit is capped at \$2000.00</p> <p>Layers Federal Layer</p>	 <p>Comment(I found this report on income splitting that says families will not benefit from this program.)</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">  </div> <p>Comment(From a social perspective I don't think that this is the best way to help out families, even</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0;">  </div> <p>Comment(Everybody needs the perks. Even families who make more income.)</p>
--	--

To view in greater detail go to:

<http://devel.gcrc.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.federal#eyJ0IjoieClImkiOiIzODBjZTI0ZDBmYjMzNzhjMDE5YjQ3M2U4MTI5ODM4NyJ9>

Maternity/Paternity Leave:

Another common experience for the parents in these focus groups is the use of Maternity and/or Paternity Leave Benefits. In Canada, Maternity and Paternity Leave is offered to parents through the federal Employment Insurance

(EI) program. Susan and Linda have this to say about Maternity and Paternity Leave:

Susan: Ah, well it is good because it allows you to stay home and take care of your child the first year... I think that it is fair that it is based on how much you make throughout when you're not on Mat leave. (Pause)

Linda: I took it as well...and so there is of course the Maternity Leave and the Parental Leave, which is even better, so the Maternity Leave is just 15 weeks and the Parental leave gives you another 35 bringing you up to 50 weeks, which is fantastic. And I know that a lot of countries are not as generous. For example I did my graduate work in the United States and guess how much Maternity Leave they get? 6 weeks that is it. That is all the employer has to offer them. 6 weeks. I don't know about you, I was still in a lot of pain after 6 weeks, I would not have wanted to go back to work.

All the parents in the study were either working or looking for work, and in the past had returned to employment within the first year of Maternity and Paternity leave. This high level of returning to work has been demonstrated by other studies as well. In 2005 a study found that "Almost 90% of Canadian women who were employed when pregnant returned to work within a year after birth, with 60% having returned within six months after childbirth" (Bushnick, 2005).

Mary: I did Maternity leave, and again it is yes, it is 50% of the maximum which is like, I don't know, for my daughter it was \$38,000 that year, or \$40,000, and 50% of 38 when you are used to making \$65,000, you know, whatever, it was... I went back after nine months with my daughter.

Linda: Because you couldn't afford to stay longer.

Mary: I couldn't afford it.

Heather: ... but without the family support, financially we wouldn't have been able to do it with Maternity Leave, with what the government offered us. It allowed me to take some time off work and actually just be there with her and my husband too. But both our parents and our aunt

and uncles and just people who came to support us during that time, it would have been impossible with what the government had offered us. Yes but again, I remember when I first got, like what my actual finances, like what we would actually get from them, like I almost broke.

Mark: No, it's not much.

Heather: What like I can't, do I have to look for a new place to live now? Like that's crazy. Well, but anyway it all worked out and if was fine, but that is what my Maternity Leave was like.

As the comments of Mary, Linda, Mark, and Heather demonstrate, another shared theme within the focus groups was how unemployment and Maternity/Paternity leave programs provide a significantly lower amount of funds to families than employment, and therefore increase the financial stress of parents. The vast majority of parents who were working before pregnancy receive EI while on leave, which provides a maximum of 55% of wages. This maximum is capped at \$49,500, which means parents receive up to \$524 per week (Government of Canada, Service Canada 2014). For Mary this meant going back to work before her one year of Maternity and Paternity leave were completed.

Even with top-ups to their benefits, parents are sometimes compelled not to take time off work:

Linda: There can be issues with actually accessing it, or making use of it. I am in the private sector and most of the women I know in, the, ah law firm environments I know, took 6 months or less even though legally they were entitled to take more. Most of the men I know ah there is no Paternity Leave top up offered in the firms and so they ah most men don't take it. But even when it is on the books, for example my husband's work, where it is on the books, there can be pressure to not take it. Which he felt he was the first man in his organization, in the history of his organization to take 3 months parental leave. And then of course when he did it, it opened the door for others to do it... anyway, it is just

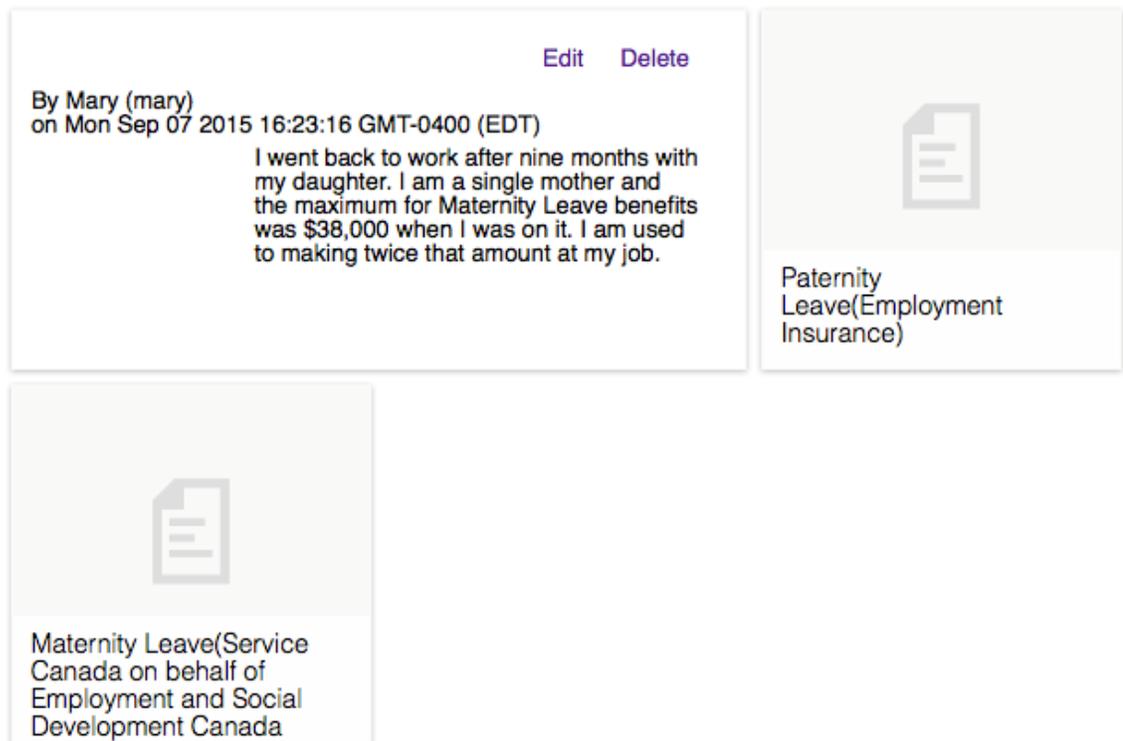
the point that even when it is legal you may, or may not, feel that you can take it.

And in the case of one participant, taking Maternity leave resulted in negative consequences for the family and his wife's employment:

John: My wife and I were both working when she got Maternity, she was actually let go while she was on Maternity so that was a difficult one, and they didn't even want to pay her severance, so she fought that and she got her severance, but there is nothing, there is no penalty for them letting her go illegally, the only thing you can do is get your severance, as far as we were told, so she got that.

In the atlas Paternity and Maternity Leave are represented separately since they are different programs. Because many of the comments relate to both Paternity and Maternity Leave they can appear within both schemas when atlas users create a relation between the comment and the program they want to link with. In the example provided in figure 20, when Mary's comment is selected it is shown as relating to both Maternity and Paternity Leave benefits. This feature allows atlas users to make more complex comments concerning more than one program at a time. After reading the comment, atlas users can select and read about the connected programs.

Figure 20: Linking Comments to Programs



The screenshot shows a comment interface. At the top right of the comment box are the words "Edit" and "Delete" in purple. The comment is attributed to "Mary (mary)" and dated "on Mon Sep 07 2015 16:23:16 GMT-0400 (EDT)". The text of the comment reads: "I went back to work after nine months with my daughter. I am a single mother and the maximum for Maternity Leave benefits was \$38,000 when I was on it. I am used to making twice that amount at my job." To the right of the comment is a box containing a document icon and the text "Paternity Leave(Employment Insurance)". Below the comment is another box containing a document icon and the text "Maternity Leave(Service Canada on behalf of Employment and Social Development Canada)".

Non-Parental Child Care Needs: Accessibility

Because many families are dual earning couples or single parents, returning to work is a necessity, and therefore access to non-parental child care arrangements are essential. All of the parents in the focus groups were employed or looking for work, with most indicating a partner who was also employed. There has been a dramatic increase in the amount of dual earning families (Buschnik, 2005), and single parents (Friendly, 2006), in Canada since the 1970s. As Katherine Marshall (2009) explains, “In 2008, dual- earners accounted for three-quarters of all couples with dependent children—up from just over one-third in 1976” (p. 5). This means that non-parental forms of child care are something most parents need.

Licensed Child Care:

The major finding from the focus groups in regards to accessibility of child care is the need for more daycare spaces for children in Ottawa, especially licensed child care:

Mark: we were on a bunch of waiting lists and it was really tough, we thought well we will never get to the top, and finally we just happened to be at the top of one. Because the center based child care, are tough to get into, not only are they expensive, but they are tough to get into.

Linda: And there's another issue of your supposed to go back to work after 50 weeks, but it is very difficult to find daycare for a child that is under 18 months.

Mary: There is a real shortage of infant programs.

Linda: Very difficult, yes.

Mary: There's no money in it that's why.

Linda: Because they have to have a ratio of three to one.

Mary: Yep, three to one.

Linda: Right.

Susan: I think with the full day kindergarten a lot of daycares are being forced to open up more infant spots, more toddler spots, which I think was the idea. But, I don't actually know, because I am not out searching for it, but from what I have read in the paper they are having to transition from that to fill the spots in the daycare. So hopefully that is a change that come about soon.

Linda: And I think that it is really very, um, unrealistic in a cruel way, that what are you supposed to do, bring your kid into work for 6 months to a year because you can't find care for them.

Susan: That is where the stress comes in.

Mary: Yes, or are you supposed to go without any income for a year until you can get a spot for your child. It makes no sense.

Figure 21: Comments on Licensed Child Care Centers

Demo Media **Comment** Program All

[Edit](#) [Delete](#) [Add Related Item](#) [Tree View](#)

Program Type	Licensed Center-Based Child Care	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div> <p>Comment(The center based child cares are expensive and tough to get into. We were on a bunch</p>
Delivered By	Non-Profit and For-Profit Organizations and the Municipality of Ottawa	
Access	<p>This is a good website explaining how to find child care in Ontario:</p> <p>http://findingqualitychildcare.ca/index.php/ontario</p> <p>In Ottawa parents can add their children to The Registry for access to licensed child care centres at this website:</p> <p>https://onehsn.com/ottawa</p>	
Description	<p>The Ministry of Education is responsible for licensed child care in Ontario. The Ministry administers legislation and monitors licensed child care facilities. They also provide some funding for child care facilities. This funding is administered through the Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSM) or More</p>	
Themes		
Layers	Mun/Prov Layer	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div> <p>Comment(I think with the full day kindergarten that a lot of daycares are being forced to open up more</p>
		<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;"></div> <p>Comment(I was very lucky to have my son at a licensed child care facility. The ECEs know a lot about</p>

To view in greater detail go to:

<http://devel.grcr.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.munpro#eyJ0IjoieCIsmkiOilyZjZjZjgxMDYwYmZhMGJjYjUyMTRhNGU2OGNhNjIzNyJ9>

Figure 21 provides an example of how parent comments, from the focus groups, were incorporated into the atlas for Licensed Child Care Centers. The child care arrangements the parents in these focus groups prefer, or are able to access, are quite varied, but there was a clear preference for licensed child care facilities. Because the recruitment for one of the focus groups was done through a local licensed child care facility, this finding may be biased. Licensed options for child care include: center-based child care and home daycares, as well as nursery/preschool care, and before and after school programs. Unlicensed options can be with private home daycares, nannies, or family members. In Ottawa in 2014 there were 250 licensed child care facilities and 18 licensed home daycare agencies (Child Care Information, 2014). More than two thirds of these licensed child care facilities are run as non-profit.

Child Care Registry:

Linda: you might think that if you're willing to pay full freight that you would actually get a spot quite easily but that is not true, um, yes that's not true, I'm, I was dismayed to find out when I got pregnant that you should have actually registered your child years ago, before you even considered having a child if you actually wanted to have a spot in time.

In the statement above Linda is referring to registering her child with the Ottawa Child Care Registry, which is run by the City of Ottawa. Parents place themselves on a list, and can choose which child care options and facilities they are interested in. The Registry includes only licensed child care options. Although the Ottawa Child Care Registry is a necessary service, the parents in

the focus groups who had involvement with this program, like Linda and Mary, were dissatisfied with their experience.

Figure 22: Comments on Child Care Registry

The screenshot displays a web interface for the 'Child Care Registry'. At the top right, there are navigation tabs: 'Comment', 'Program', 'Demo Media', and 'All'. Below these, there are action buttons: 'Edit', 'Delete', 'Add Related Item' (with a dropdown arrow), and 'Tree View'. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains program details:

- Program Type:** Child Care Registry
- Delivered By:** City of Ottawa
- Access:** Apply online at:
<http://ottawa.ca/en/residents/social-services/daycare/apply-daycare>
Parents create an account online.
- Description:** A wait list for licensed child care facilities in the Ottawa area, including: home-based care, centre-based care, school age care and or nursery/pre-school care. Parents can choose which facilities or home daycare they are interested in once they create an account. The local child care providers manage the system and they contact parents when a spot becomes available.
- Themes:**
- Layers:** Mun/Prov Layer

The right column contains two comment boxes, each with a document icon above the text:

- Comment 1:** (I wasn't able to get a spot through the registry. Instead a woman I knew who works at a local
- Comment 2:** (I found out after I was pregnant that I should have registered before getting pregnant in order to

To view in greater detail go to:

<http://devel.gcrc.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.munpro#eyJ0IjoieCIsmkiOiIyZjZjZjgxMDYwYmZhMGJjYjUyMTRhNGU2OGY4OGUwMij9>

All of the parents in this study who used the Registry found it very stressful, as the demand for licensed care is much higher than the availability of spaces. The difficulty of accessing child care options creates a situation which

limits parental choices. Those who do find a child care spot in a place they are comfortable with feel like they have won a lottery, or were extremely lucky. Figure 22 provides an example of how the narratives of the Registry were incorporated into the atlas.

Non-Parental Child Care: Convenience

With the busy lives that parents lead, alongside the difficulty with accessing child care options, convenience of child care options is a common thread of conversation for parents.

Extended Day Program:

Heather: It's also super convenient, like another friend of mine would have to have her son go to school and then would have to go to the Y, or have to go to a different environment, take a bus to do that. It must be nice to have them in one space.

Mark: Oh absolutely,

Heather: Less chaotic for them.

Mark: I just see positive aspect of that as well.

Heather and Mark are discussing the newly extended kindergarten program with before and after school care. Interestingly, the extension of full day kindergarten was seen as positive by parents of pre-kindergarten aged children, but, for Mary, the experience of coordinating pick-ups for her children has been complicated by the new changes:

Mary: And at my daughters' school the extended; well first of all, I have to coordinate two pick-ups. So he's at the daycare facility, and I can't do it, like they close at 5:30 and that said everything is running 8-6, the third party provider, if they already had a relationship with the school, which at my daughter's school it is the case, they always closed at 5:30, they are closing at 5:30. So I have to work till 5, and I have to go there, I can't

come here and get my son and then go to my daughters school.

So...(pause)

Tara: You are going out of your way then,

Mary: So and with him, he is supposed to go to school next year, he is three, he will not be 4, but he is a November baby, I won't send him, because then I have to coordinate, two weeks at Christmas and PD days.

For Mary, the extended day school program is not more convenient. If her daughter went to the before and after school care at the daycare facility it would be more convenient for her to pick them both up in one place. Also, as Mary indicates, the before and after school care programs in schools do not run over PD days and vacation times, whereas a center-based child care facility would offer care over these times, except for holidays. The screen shot in figure 23 demonstrates how parental comments were added to the Extended Day Program Section.

Figure 23: Comments on Extended Day Program

Comment Demo Media Program All

Edit Delete Add Related Item Tree View

Program Type	Extended Day Program	
Delivered By	Local school boards and child care operators in local schools	Comment(I think this program is great. It is more convenient for parents to have their child in one
Access	Registration is necessary. The cost per day is \$22.00 for both before and after school care. The cost for only before care, or only after care fluctuates per school. Subsidized spaces are limited and must be applied for through the City of Ottawa Wait List.	
Description	In Ottawa before and after school care programs are available in all publicly funded elementary schools where at least 3 children have enrolled. This Extended Day Program was introduced along side the full-day kindergarten program in Ontario.	Comment(I had to switch my son's school because the extended day program was not available at his old
Themes		
Layers	Mun/Prov Layer	

Comment(I now have to coordinate two pick ups because my daughter is at the extended program and

To view in greater detail go to:

<http://devel.gcrc.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.munpro#eyJ0IjoieCIslmkiOilyZjZjZjgxMDYwYmZhMGJjYjUyMTRhNGU2OGNhNmMwMyJ9>

Non Parental Child Care Need: Quality

Licensed and Unlicensed Child Care:

Linda: I have been very lucky that when my son was in preschool, before he went to school, when he was full time daycare, he was at a licensed facility where the workers were all ECEs and they knew ah, a lot about child behavior and they were very patient with the children, very kind to the children, but also set a very high standard for behavior.

Overall, the parents in this focus group are very happy with the quality of care their children are receiving with Early Childhood Educators. However, parents had conflicting views about licensed and unlicensed home daycare options. Two parents in this study have personal experience with home daycare, one was satisfied with the experience and the other was not:

Susan: We just have a really open relationship, and it is very positive and she treats the kids in her care as if they were her own. And they go and do things, like they go to playgroups and pumpkin patch and they'll go and do yoga. I've just been very fortunate.

Mary: I didn't have much success with private childcare, I started out as private because I didn't want my kids to have sickness, and I thought oh well I'll just go small with a home daycare. But then, um, it didn't really work, because you're dealing with one on one, and it's a personality issue, and even if you choose the right person it's like there's foibles you know, and just trying to navigate that communication with this one person, and also their wanting the day off, or their sickness, I just felt like it was like a lie. Whereas in an institution, it is somebody else's problem, the supervisor gets a replacement, they run a relief pool.

Linda: And if you have an issue you can go to the employer, the coordinator, and talk to them and they can help mediate the problem.

Mary: Yes.

Linda: As opposed to you dealing with someone directly, where it can get heated quickly.

Although most of the parents in this study prefer a licensed child care facility, the general consensus of parents is that quality child care options occur when the parents trust, and have a good relationship with, the home care provider. Shown in Figure 24 is the section on Licensed Home Child Care where parents can add comments.

Figure 24: Comments on Licensed Home Child Care

[Comment](#) [Program](#) [Demo Media](#) [All](#)

<div style="text-align: right; margin-bottom: 10px;"> Edit Delete Add Related Item Tree View </div> <p>Program Type Licensed Home-Based Child Care</p> <p>Delivered By Private Home Day Care Agencies</p> <p>Access This is a good website explaining how to find child care in Ontario: http://findingqualitychildcare.ca/index.php/ontario In Ottawa parents can add their children to The Registry for access to licensed child care centers at this website: https://onehsn.com/ottawa</p> <p>Description The Ministry of Education is responsible for licensed child care in Ontario. The Ministry administers legislation and monitors licensed child care facilities. They also provide some funding for child care facilities. This funding is administered through the Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSM) or District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSAB). In Ottawa the CMSM and DSSAB is The Children's Branch of the Community and Social Services Department of the City of Ottawa. All licensed child care providers must follow the regulations set out in The Day Nurseries Act which is legislated by The Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS). Until recently, in Ontario licensed child care was the responsibility of MCYS.</p> <p>Themes</p>	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  </div> <p>Comment(I prefer to have my daughter in a home daycare situation. I don't trust a lot of people and I</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  </div> <p>Comment(Once I found out that I would not be getting a subsidy, I decided to go with a home daycare</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">  </div> <p>Comment(I don't have personal experience with home daycare, but many people I know have trouble</p>
--	--

To view in greater detail go to:

<http://devel.gcrc.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.munpro#eyJ0IjoieCIslmkiOiIyZjZjZjgMDYwYmZhMGJjYjUyMTRhNGU2OGNkNmI0OCJ9>

It is important to note that the issues parents in this study experienced, or heard about, with home daycare provision centered around reliability of service, and issues of communication, rather than the actual quality of care. As seen with

Mary's comments, a lack of trust, and difficulty in communicating, were identified as key issues with home day care provision.

Part 3: Graphing Information Related to Narratives

Non-Parental Provision of Child Care Need: Affordability and Accessibility

Mark. The center based child care is so expensive. We wouldn't be able to afford it with two kids. With one we are fortunate at this point that we can do that.

Susan: I had my daughter on the waitlist because we were living in Ottawa whenever I was pregnant with her, I was on Mat leave anyways, as soon as we found out that we weren't getting a subsidy, or anything like that, again we just kind of like ok, well like this is more what we can afford because to do a full fee at a licensed center is, its very expensive.

Linda: It is very expensive.

Mary: It is ya.

John: With us both working it was enough for us to get by fine, but right now the cost of child care, we, and for me looking for a job, and now she is only working part time in retail. So we can't afford, or even consider any childcare, so what our plan is and what we are doing is opening up a home based childcare in the spring.

Heather: For me, she is still at home with me, I work really part time, and me and my husband we've arranged our schedules so that he has three days off that he has two of those days where I go to work.

As all the comments above indicate, parents in this study find the cost of non-parental forms of child care to be costly, especially licensed child care. For parents who are not able to access subsidies, government assistance for child care costs is provided through The Child Care Tax Deduction, and the Universal Child Tax Care Benefit. Although parents appreciate these benefits many still feel they are spending too much on child care.

Child Care Waitlist for Subsidies:

Because subsidized spaces are only available at licensed child care centers, a certain number of child care spaces at licensed centers are reserved for those with subsidies. The parents who were able to access subsidies at licensed facilities spoke of their sense of good fortune, or luck at being able to do so:

Mary: And then once you get a spot, it was a subsidized spot, because I qualify with being on my own with two kids, so I lucked in, I got a lottery, that's what it felt like. And then once you get one child in your other child gets priority.

In Ontario the provincial government provides funding to local municipalities to provide subsidies for licensed child care, but most parents do not qualify for subsidies and for those who do the waiting lists are very long. Priority for child care subsidies, in Ontario, is given to families on social assistance, and to those who are low income. There has been a significant increase in the demand for subsidies in Ottawa since 2010, but the number of subsidies available has remained steady at approximately 6500 (City of Ottawa, 2014). As of 2013 there were 5112 families on the Waitlist, this is a significant increase from the 2038 families who were on the waitlist for subsidies in 2010 (City of Ottawa, 2014). This means parents are waiting for months or even years to access subsidies.

Licensed Child Care Facilities:

Both full fee paying parents and those receiving subsidies, in these focus groups, have had trouble finding a child care space in a licensed facility:

Mary: I got this tremendous windfall by having this relationship with the lady at the resource center who had a relationship with the staff at the child care facility, cause otherwise people are like they wait forever, well even subsidy or paying full fee, and I tell people well maybe try calling and they just get doors slammed, their like...

Linda: They get stonewalled.

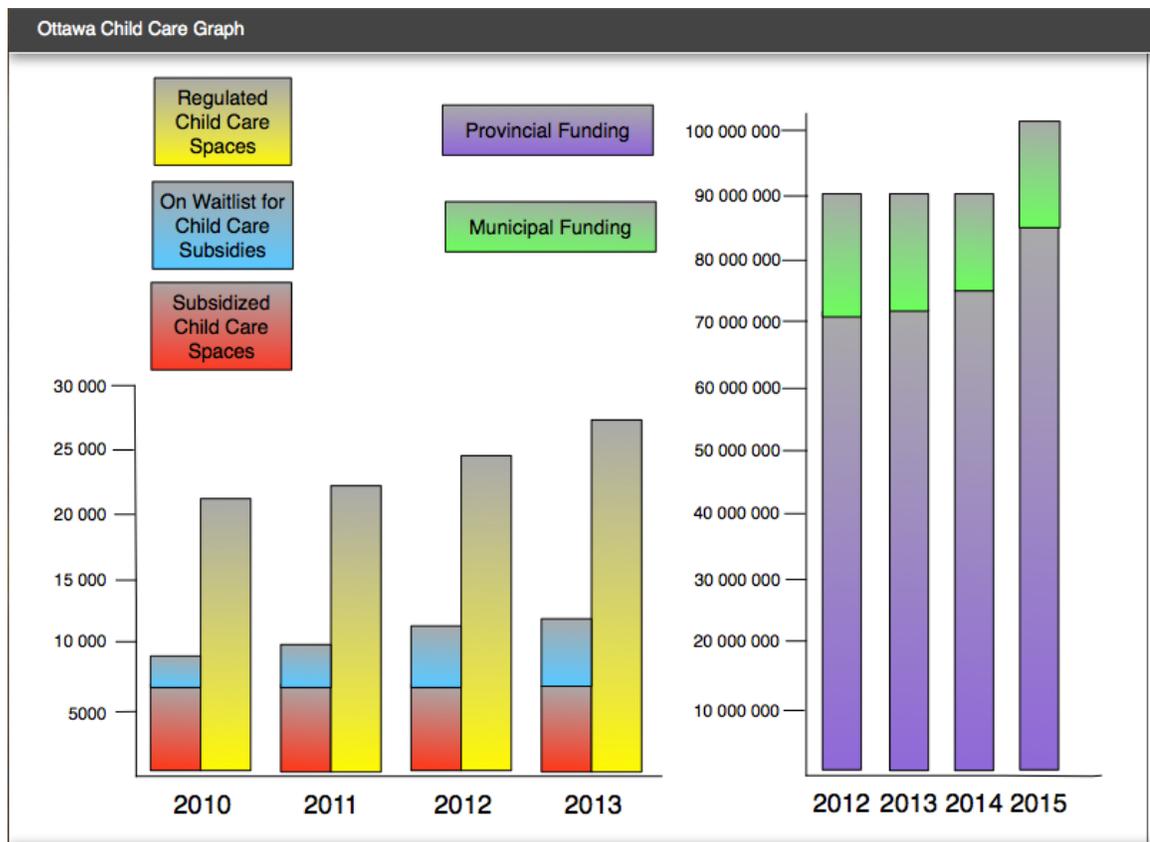
Mary: It does not work. You can't do it. You just have to sit with your name on the waiting list.

The federal government in 2007, introduced the Child Care Spaces Initiative (Government of Canada, 2009), and the Multilateral Framework Agreement on Early Learning and Childhood Care (Parliament of Canada, 2007). These programs include a transfer of funds to the provinces in order to encourage the creation of more regulated child care spaces. Regardless of this extra funding for regulated care, the parents in this focus group found that licensed care spaces were not readily available. In 2012, in Ontario, there were 275,900 spaces for children in licensed center-based daycares, and 17,097 children in licensed home daycare. Yet, the number of children with employed mothers was 1,218,300 (Friendly, 2012). This means the majority of children in Ontario are in unlicensed child care options (with family members, friends, nannies and/or babysitters), or the parents arrange work schedules to avoid the need for child care.

Graphing Accessibility and Costs of Non Parental Child Care:

The atlas also incorporates a graph of information relating to narratives of accessibility to non-parental forms of child care. The Child Care Spaces Graph is included as a module and is interactive in its design. The Child Care Spaces Graph is shown below in figure 25.

Figure 25: Child Care Spaces Graph



To view in greater detail go to:

http://devel.gcrc.carleton.ca:8051/index.html?module=module.child_care_grap

[h](#)

In this graph the number of child care subsidies is indicated with the number of individuals waiting for a subsidy. This graph reflects the difficulty in obtaining a subsidy by showing how the number of actual subsidized spaces has remained the same since 2010, but the number of those waiting for a subsidy has increased significantly (City of Ottawa, 2014). Even though the provincial funding has increased over the last four years, as the graph indicates, municipal funding has not increased, and in fact decreased some years. I also included the number of licensed child care spaces available (City of Ottawa, 2015), but I was unable to find data on the number of parents waiting for a licensed child care space. I had the same experience with the City of Ottawa budget information on child care spending. Although I was able to find some numbers to work with, the city budgets were confusing and unclear, and there was a lack of consistent reporting on regulated child care spaces and subsidized spaces.

The Child Care Spaces Graph is interactive and allows atlas users to select parts of the graph, and to have access to more information on the topic of accessibility and costs of child care. For example, when selecting 'On Waitlist for Child Care Subsidies' atlas users are provided with an info graphic comparing the percentage of income women spend on child care in different Canadian cities, and a research report promoting more public funding for child care in Canada. This report and info graphic were created for The Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives (Macdonald & Friendly, 2014). Like all the other schema formats, atlas users can add comments to each part of the graph they select.

Conclusion

Although the results from the focus groups are limited because of the small sample size in this study, they did assist with the design and testing of the Pilot Child Care Atlas. Each of the modules, including the conceptual maps of child care programming, the physical map of programming in Ottawa, and the Child Care Spaces Graph, are a result of the narratives of child care needs identified by the research participants. Maintaining a critical feminist approach to research analysis, in the next chapter, I will discuss issues related to the atlas design, as well as how the atlas design elements perform in creating a space for policy analysis and a discursive community of child care.

Conclusion: Current and Future Atlas Designs

Introduction

The goal of this research project is to test the ability of the Nunaliit Framework (Hayes et al, 2014) in capturing the complexity, and changing nature, of child care programming and policies, and in creating a space for the inputting and connecting of experiences of child care. Coming from a feminist social activist perspective, the purpose of testing the Nunaliit Framework is to create a tool that has the potential to be employed in policy analysis that draws from the experiences of individuals. Caregiving activities, like child care, are an essential yet marginalized activity in our society. Connecting experiences of providing care to government programs and policies could help to further an 'ethic of care' perspective, which views care as central to justice and politics. These connections may also create a place where individuals and communities could increase their self-steering capacity, and encourage the enacting of change, through the sharing of experiences and perspectives. This research project marks the first time that the Nunaliit platform has been tested in such a manner.

The previous chapter connects the child care narratives, of the focus group participants, to the different design elements and content of the Pilot Child Care Atlas. While highlighting the successes and limitations of each feature, this final chapter concludes with a review of how well the atlas design features contribute to the goals of this research project. This assessment explores three main questions: 1) Can the atlas provide an interactive and

informative platform for explaining child care programs and policies? 2) Are the diverse narratives of child care able to be included within the atlas? 3) Is there a space for individuals to discuss and connect child care experiences? The features discussed in this chapter include, the conceptual maps, the physical map, the graph, the schemas, commenting tiles, demo media tiles, and graphic art files.

Atlas Design Elements

Conceptual Mapping of Programs

As demonstrated by the focus group responses, when accessing programs in the community, parents are often unclear as to who is administering or regulating programs. In order for the atlas to serve as a policy analysis tool, individuals need to have an understanding of the different programs and policies, so they can provide informed feedback. The addition of the svg canvas to the Nunaliit coding allows for the creation of diverse types of visual representations. These conceptual maps are created using a graphic program, and then uploaded into the atlas as a canvas. The visual displays in this atlas make connections between the various programs and government agencies. This gives the atlas creators a lot of flexibility in deciding how to portray relationships between government departments, programs, and policies.

The Nunaliit platform was successful in incorporating all of the child care programs and policies that were selected for use within the atlas, but the sheer

number of programs included necessitated the creation of multiple modules. Originally, I wanted to have the federal, provincial, and municipal programs all in one conceptual map, and have the option of zooming and moving around, as is done for the physical map. But one map was not possible, because of the number of child care programs available at each level. With all of the programs in one map, when zooming all the way out, the map becomes unreadable. The close partnership between the provincial and municipal levels of government makes these an ideal pairing for a conceptual map, and so the federal map portion stands alone.

Limitations were also encountered in regards to the changeability of conceptual maps. An important aspect of child care programming raised in the focus groups was the frequent changes to programs and policies. As demonstrated in the previous chapters, there have been many modifications to child care programming over the last few years. Although it is possible to update the information included in the schemas for programs and policies, changes to the visual display of the conceptual maps require the assistance of the Nunaliit technicians. This technological need does not prevent the module from responding to changes if a program is cancelled or shifts to a new department, but it does mean that technical assistance needs to be acquired/purchased when changes arise. To alter the programs located in the physical map does not require this level of expertise, and can easily be done by atlas users who are given this permission level.

Physical Mapping of Programs

The physical map provides a visual of the locations of the Ontario Early Years Centre's (OEYC) programs in Ottawa, and allows parents to find the ones closest to them. This type of program mapping also provides a good understanding of how program services are physically distributed in an area. Parents wishing to remark upon the services provided by the OEYCs can add comments to any of the schemas, or demo media documents in this module. The 2015 spring and summer programs for two of the OEYCs in Ottawa were mapped to test the atlas capabilities. If the atlas were made available to the public it could easily include all of the programming provided by the OEYC, and their partner agencies. New locations on the map are easily generated, and can be linked to particular schemas. Some of the points on the map link to multiple schemas as there can be multiple programs in one location. The schema information is simple to update as programming changes from season to season.

However, there are some issues related to the searching features of the physical map for the Ontario Early Years Centre programs. I wanted to create a place where parents could go to search for a particular program in their area. Atlas users can zoom and move around the map, to search for programs in certain areas, but there is no easy way to search for a particular program of interest. Themes can be selected, but only for one location at a time, and the 'search atlas' tool provided searches from all modules, and can therefore be confusing.

Graphing Child Care Spaces

The Child Care Space Graph was designed as a module, in order to create a space where individuals can comment upon the analysis of data regarding child care issues. This graph contributes to a more diverse understanding of child care issues, by providing a critical analysis of child care subsidies and government funding. Although child care research reports were included in the atlas, compiling and creating visuals of child care information provides a more accessible platform for the sharing of information and statistics. Accessibility of information is important as this data analysis can act as a starting point for discussion of key issues related to child care. Graphs and other data visualizations can be provided as an interactive module, or as an attached demo media document.

Information Schemas

The design of the schemas, that link to the different elements of the maps, allow for the atlas creators to present information to increase the atlas users knowledge of each program and policy. Although the maps connect the different programs together in an interactive and engaging way, it is the schemas that provide the bulk of information about each program. The program schemas for the Pilot Child Care Atlas contain information on the services provided, eligibility and access.

New schemas can be added as needed, and individual categories, within the schemas, can be altered by changing their display names. The flexibility of

the schema design means that an atlas can provide information in a multitude of ways. This increases the ability of the atlas to portray different aspects of the programs and policies. However, when modifying schemas, if a category is removed, all the information within that category will be lost. For example, in my program schemas I included the four categories: program type, delivered by, access and description. Atlas users with special permissions can easily change the information contained within each category. To change the names of these categories is simple as well, but requires an understanding of the coding within the Nunaliit platform. Therefore, it is important to have a good understanding of how you want information to be organized before the schemas are created. Deleting categories once information has been added to the schema could result in confusion or a loss of information.

Addition of Comments

As demonstrated in the previous chapter, the comment tiles allow for the inclusion of personal narratives of child care. The atlas was able to accommodate all of the different views and experiences discussed within the focus groups. This was done through the selection of quotes from the focus groups. Once selected, it was quite easy to find schemas in the atlas for the comments. However, there are some limitations to the design of the comment tiles in the atlas. Because the comments are displayed as separate tiles, and listed according to the date of creation, it is not possible for atlas users to have a back and forth discussion about an issue, like the parents did in the focus

groups. Comments cannot be added to demo media documents, and this limits the ability of atlas users to provide feedback about policies, news articles and research papers. Currently there is no way to search or organize the comment tiles. This is not an issue for testing purposes, but could become an issue if the atlas was made available to the public and generated numerous comments.

Addition of Demo Media

Including the policies and relevant research as demo media, means atlas users can download and read about the topics of greater interest. Demo media can be added and deleted within the atlas, with minimal effort, and provide the atlas creator, and atlas users, with an opportunity to provide research and information with different perspectives and/or critiques about programs and policy. This aspect of the design increases the capacity of the atlas to provide complex information about policies and programs, because any viewpoint can be added through the addition of demo media.

Because of my critical standpoint, and drawing upon the personal narratives of the focus group participants, I have included research about child care programs that critique current programs and policies (Macdonald, 2014; Macdonald & Friendly, 2014). These include an info graphic analyzing the high costs of daycare from The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (2014), and research promoting more public funding of daycare options (Friendly, Halfon, Beach, & Forer, 2013). However, individuals with a different standpoint could add research to support their particular view. To avoid any copywrite issues,

only news articles and research that are available to the public on the Internet are included with reference information.

Artistic and Graphic Displays

As shown in the screen shot appendices, the schema and demo media tiles each include visual graphics. Customized graphics were created for the schemas and the different elements of the conceptual maps. These graphics increase the appeal of the atlas, and for the conceptual maps they help to visually categorize the different levels of government. Schemas graphics are uploaded to the each schema as a related file, and demo media graphics are automatically generated by the atlas, and usually consist of the title page of the document. For some of the demo media, there is no display graphic generated automatically, and therefore one cannot be displayed in the current design structure. Individuals who provide comments for the atlas can upload a picture, if they want, but each new comment requires a new file for the display graphic.

Early on in the research process I decided not use the official logos of the government agencies that are represented in the atlas. I did not want the timing of the atlas creation to be delayed because of copy write permissions. Instead graphics were created that use similar elements of the existing logos. For the federal government I used the color red, and included the maple leaf, for the provincial government I used the color green, and the trillium flower, and for the municipality of Ottawa I used the color blue, with a stylized 'O'.

Ways to Improve the Pilot Child Care Atlas Design

To improve upon the design, and respond to the limitations outlined above, I will include a few customization recommendations. By including comments and demo media individuals are able to share personal narratives of child care. Yet, when commenting on a similar issue, it would be helpful if individuals could choose between adding their thoughts to existing comments, or creating a new comment topic. This would expand the ability of the atlas to provide a space where individuals can share and discuss personal narratives and critiques of programs and policies. One aspect of creating a discursive community is having a space where individuals can debate and discuss the topics presented in the atlas. Allowing atlas users to comment upon demo media documents would also increase the ability of atlas to capture opinions of relevant research and news articles.

If there are numerous comments about one program, it would be worthwhile to have themes to assist the atlas user with selecting areas of interest. For example, the comments about licensed child care relate to accessibility, access, convenience and quality, it would be useful to design a commenting structure that allows individuals to classify comments based on themes or perspectives on common debates. New atlas designs could also include a searching feature, so atlas users can easily retrieve all comments related to themes of interest. This type of categorizing, and searching of information, would increase the ability of the atlas to serve as a policy analysis tool. Also, to increase the visual appeal of the comment tiles, and to help sort

them by author, it would be beneficial to have a standard graphic chosen by the author that is displayed in the comment tiles they create.

Any future atlases of policy analysis might attempt to simplify the process of updating and modifying the svg canvas. Then those who are responsible for moderating and revising the atlas do not need to rely upon technical assistance each time something changes. Furthermore, it would be helpful to have layers within the conceptual maps when dealing with complex or numerous programs. This way more information can be included within one module. For example, when selecting one feature in the canvas a new canvas could open with new features and visualizations. For the physical maps, the searching features could be modified so that individuals can search a particular type of program within each module.

Ideally any atlas analyzing government programs and policies, should consider obtaining information, and permission for the use of their logos, directly from the relevant government agencies. If time permits, and the social activist approach of the atlas is not compromised, these partnerships could expand upon the accessibility of information about programs, policies, and funding sources. As mentioned in the previous chapter, it was difficult accessing data online for the child care spaces graph. Future atlas projects of this nature would benefit from working in partnership with the agencies and organizations that compile the statistical information needed. Although only one graph is included in this atlas, projects of this nature could easily add more to increase the accessibility of information in research and statistical reports.

Another important step in improving the design of an atlas is to conduct usability testing. Usability testing can assess how real users respond to the atlas design and the presentation of information. While I have pointed out some of the issues with the current searching functions and commenting structures, other perspectives are necessary for adequate feedback.

Connecting to the Purpose of the Research

Overall, the Pilot Child Care Atlas performs well technically as a tool for gathering personal experiences of child care programs and policies. Implementing the design improvements listed above would help to increase the ability of atlas users to share and discuss the narratives presented. The current atlas design also helps to clarify the complexity of programming and policies, and although there are limitations to modifying the information portrayed, the atlas can be updated when programs change.

To create a discursive community, or a platform for policy analysis generated from personal experience, individuals, especially busy parents, must have a reason for wanting to engage with the atlas. By including all child care programs and policies at the municipal, provincial and federal level this atlas acts as a resource for parents, and this aspect could encourage parents to visit the atlas. However, to have atlas users respond to the information presented by providing their personal experience requires having a topic of importance, or pressing concern for the target audience.

Although the atlas is helpful for parents as a resource, the sheer scope of the atlas prevents an in-depth analysis of particular child care issues. For example, parents in this research project identified accessibility, affordability, quality and convenience as four child care needs. An atlas could be created with a module for each of these four topics, or one atlas could focus on the different aspects of just one need, such as the high cost of daycare options. If this were a concern identified by most parents then it would be easier to generate interest in the atlas. Diverse interest in the atlas is important if the goal of creating a discursive community is one of questioning knowledge constructions and bringing forth new ways of knowing.

Furthermore, how information is presented within the atlas will affect the responses of individuals who engage with it. Therefore it is important to present, map and/or graph information in various ways. If time permits an atlas can also be modified in response to the input of users. For example, if there is a lot of interest about one topic, a new module can be added to allow for a more in-depth coverage of information, and modules of less interest can be removed. All maps are social constructions, and are limited to portraying certain scalar constructions. The flexibility of the Nunaliit platform provides an opportunity for the changing these constructions by responding to the ways in which the map user is engaging with the atlas.

For future atlas projects I would recommend choosing topics or issues that have been identified through community consultations. Having community agencies and community members involved in the creation of future atlases

increase the participatory and action orientated nature of the research. Even though the information gained from the focus groups with parents steered the creation of the Pilot Child Care Atlas, the current scalar and map constructions are ultimately a product of my choices. I prioritized the information from the focus groups and the child care policy review, and I decided how and what information to include. Any atlas projects, which seek to question constructions of knowledge, require participant involvement in order to bring forth multiple ways of representing information. Generating involvement with how information is presented from the community also increases the capacity of communities to affect change, by focusing in on the topics they find relevant.

Final Conclusions

This research project began with the idea of testing recent developments in participatory mapping technologies as a tool for generating public feedback on government programs and policies. The purpose of testing this technology is to review its ability to serve as a tool of policy analysis and a space where discursive communities can be created. Discursive communities are places from which social change can possibly happen, by encouraging the sharing and connecting of diverse narratives of experience.

The debates surrounding our individual and/or collective responsibilities towards child care make this topic suitable for testing an atlas as a tool for policy analysis. While the small sample size from the focus groups prevents any generalization of findings, the narratives presented by parents

reflect the feminist research on the marginalization of caregiving activities. Families in Ontario spend a large percentage of their income on child care, and access to licensed child care and subsidies are limited. The findings of the focus groups are that the current government supports provided to parents are appreciated, but financial stress is common for most families.

The creation of The Pilot Child Care Atlas is just the first step in assessing the cybertopographic atlas usefulness as a policy analysis tool, or discursive community. How individuals will engage with, and respond to, the information provided within the atlas is difficult to predict without the atlas being available for use online. Public availability of the atlas would generate more avenues of inquiry for future research projects. Will there be interest in this type of community discussion using online technology? Do individuals want to share and discuss their experiences of policies and programs? How can community members be encouraged to participate? Does the information need to be presented in a different manner? How can atlas projects like this respond to Internet accessibility and literacy issues? The only way to examine these questions is to have the atlas accessible to the public.

Overall this research has demonstrated that there is great potential for the Nunaliit platform to be employed as a tool for gathering community input on the impacts of social policies. Although there are some limitations to the current atlas design, the possibilities for new customization and design elements are vast. Developing these types of participatory mapping technologies for analyzing social policies is of importance for those who are creating social

policies and the individuals who are affected by them. Knowing how programs and policies effect individual lives, and providing a space for individuals to debate and discuss these experiences could increase our government's policy analytical capacity thereby achieving more evidence-based policy-making.

Bibliography

Acker, S. (2000). In/out/side: Positioning the researcher in feminist qualitative research. *Resources for Feminist Research*, 28(1/2), 189.

Anderson, L., & Findlay, T. (2010). Does public reporting measure up? Federalism, accountability and child-care policy in Canada. *Canadian Public Administration*, 53(3), 417-438.

Andrew, B., Keller, J. & Schwartzman, L. (2005). *Feminist Interventions in Ethics and Politics: Feminist Ethics and Social Theory*. Rowman and Littlefield: Oxford.

Andrew Fleck Child Care Services (2012). *Modernizing Child Care in Ontario-September 2012: A response from Andrew Fleck Child Care Services*. Retrieved from: afchildcare.on.ca/download_file/view/19/260/.

Beach, J., & Friendly, M. (2008). *Child care fee subsidies in Canada*. University of Toronto, Childcare Resource and Research Unit.

Bell, S. & Reed, M. (2004). Adapting to the Machine: Integrating GIS into Qualitative Research. *Cartographica*, 39(1), 55-66.

Bill 10: Child Care Modernization Act (2014). Royal Assent. Chapter Number S.O 2014 C.11. Retrieved from Legislative Assembly of Ontario website: http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=3002.

Brauen, G., Pyne, S., Hayes, A., Fiset, J.-P., & Taylor, D. F. (2011). Encouraging Transdisciplinary Participation Using an Open Source Cybercartographic Toolkit: The Atlas of the Lake Huron Treaty Relationship Process. *Geomatica*, 65 (1), 27-45.

Breitbart, M. M. (2010). Participatory Research Methods. In N. J. Clifford, & G. Valentine (Eds.), *Key Methods in Geography* (pp. 161-178). London: Sage.

Brenner N. (2001). The limits to scale? Methodological reflections on scalar structuration. *Progress in Human Geography*, 15, 525-48.

Brisolara, S. (2014) Feminist Theory: Its Domains and Applications. In S. Brisolara, D. Seigart, S. SenGupta (Eds.), *Feminist Evaluation and Research* (pp. 161-178). The Guilford Press: New York.

Brown G. & Kyttä, M. (2014). Key issues and research priorities for public participation GIS (PPGIS): A synthesis based on empirical research. *Applied Geography*, 46, 122-136.

Bundy, J. (2012). Rendering (gender) invisible: early childhood education and care in Ontario as a biopolitical social investment apparatus. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 33(4), 591-605.

Bushnik, T. (2006). *Child care in Canada*. Ottawa: Special Surveys Division, Statistics Canada.

Cameron, J., & Gibson, K. (2005). Participatory action research in a poststructuralist vein. *Geoforum*, 36, 315-331.

Cameron, J. (2010). Focusing on the Focus Group. In I. Hay (Ed.), *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. (pp. 152-172). Oxford University Press: New York.

Child Care and Early Years Act (2015, c. 11, Sched 1). Retrieved from Government of Ontario website: <http://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/14c11>.

Child Care Information (2014). *Ottawa Licensed Child Care Centers and Home Child Care Agencies*. Retrieved from: www.childcareinformation.ca/forms/Daycare%20Directories-2014.pdf.

City of Ottawa, Community and Social Services Department (2014). *2014 Child Care Service Plan*. Retrieved from: documents.ottawa.ca/sites/...ottawa.ca/.../child_care_service_plan_en.pdf.

City of Ottawa, Community and Social Services Department (2015). *2015 Child Care Service Plan*. Retrieved from: documents.ottawa.ca/sites/...ottawa.ca/.../child_care_service_plan_en.pdf.

Collier, C. N. (2010). The disappearing woman? Locating gender equality in contemporary child care and anti-violence policy debates in Canada. *Unpublished manuscript*.

Collier, C. N. (2012). Feminist and Gender-Neutral Frames in Contemporary Child-Care and Anti-Violence Policy Debates in Canada. *Politics & Gender*, 8(03), 283-303.

Cool, J. (2007). *Child Care in Canada: the Federal Role*, Parliament of Canada. From <http://www.parl.gc.ca/content/LOP/ResearchPublications/prb0420-e.htm>, Accessed April 4, 2013.

Council of Ministers of Education, CMEC Early Childhood Learning and Development Working Group. (n.d) *CMEC Early Learning and Development Framework*. Retrieved from: www.cmec.ca/.../Lists/.../2014-07-Early-Learning-Framework-EN.pdf.

Cox, K. R. (Ed.). (1997). *Spaces of globalization: reasserting the power of the local*. Guilford Press.

Cox, K. R. (1998). Spaces of dependence, spaces of engagement and the politics of scale, or: looking for local politics. *Political geography*, 17(1), 1-23.

Crampton, J. W. (2001). Maps as social constructions: power, communication and visualization. *Progress in Human Geography*, 25(2), 235-252.

Crampton, J. W. (2009). Cartography: performative, participatory, political. *Progress in Human Geography*, 33(6), 840-848.

Crampton, J. W. (2011). *Mapping: A critical introduction to cartography and GIS* (Vol. 11). John Wiley & Sons.

Crampton, J. W., & Krygier, J. (2006). An introduction to critical cartography. *ACME: an International E-journal for Critical Geographies*, 4(1), 11-33.

Cranford, C. J., et al. (2003). The gender of precarious employment in Canada. *Industrial Relations*, 58(3), 454-482.

Day Nurseries Act (1990, c. D.2). Repealed August 31, 2015. Retrieved from Government of Ontario website: <http://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90d02>.

Day, S. (2012). A Reflexive Lens: Exploring Dilemmas of Qualitative Methodology Through the Concept of Reflexivity. *Qualitative Sociology Review*, 8(1), 60-84.

Department of Finance (December 19, 2011). *Canada Social Transfer*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fin.gc.ca/fedprov/cst-eng.asp>

Dixon, D. P., & Jones III, J.P. (2006). Feminist geographies of difference, relation and construction. In Stuart Aitken and Gill Valentine (Eds.). *Approaches to Human Geography*, (pp. 42-56). London: Sage.

Doucet, A., & Merla, L. (2007). Stay-at-home fathering: A strategy for balancing work and home in Canadian and Belgian families. *Community, Work and Family*, 10(4), 455-473.

Dunn, C. (2007). Participatory GIS—a people's GIS? *Progress in Human Geography*, 31(5), 616-637.

Dunn, K. (2010). Interviewing. In I. Hay (Ed.), *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography*. (pp. 101-136). Oxford University Press: New York.

- Duxbury, L., Higgens, C. & Schroeder, B. (2009) *Balancing Paid Work and Caregiving Responsibilities: A Closer Look at Family Caregivers in Canada*. Retrieved from: <http://www.cprn.org/doc.cfm?doc=1997&l=en>.
- Early Childhood Educators Act (2007, c. 7). Schedule 8. Retrieved from the Government of Ontario website: <http://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/07e07>.
- Education Act (1990, c. E.2). Retrieved from Government of Ontario website: <http://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e02>.
- England, K. (1994). Getting personal: Reflexivity, positionality, and feminist research. *The Professional Geographer*, 46(1), 80-89.
- England, K. (1996). Who will mind the baby? In K. England (Ed.), *Who will mind the baby?* (pp. 3-19). London: Routledge.
- England, K. (2006). Producing feminist geographies: theory, methodologies and research strategies. In Stuart Aitken and Gill Valentine (Eds.). *Approaches to human geography*, (pp. 286-297). London: Sage.
- England, K. (2010). Home, work and the shifting geographies of care. *Ethics, Place and Environment*, 13(2), 131-150.
- Engster, D. (2007). *The Heart of Justice: Care Ethics and Political Theory*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Ferns, C. & Friendly, M. (2014) The state of early childhood education and care in Canada 2012. Toronto: Childcare Resource and Research Unit.
- Flax, J. (1992). The end of innocence. In J. Butler & J. W. Scott, (Eds.), *Feminists theorize the political* (pp. 445-463). New York : Routledge.
- Fielding, H. A., Hiltmann, G., Olkowski, D., & Reichold, A. (2007). *The Other: Feminist Reflections in Ethics*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Findlay, L. (2002). Negotiating the swamp: the opportunity and challenge of reflexivity in research and practice. *Quantitative Research*, 2(2), 209-230.
- Folbre, N., & Bittman, M. (2004). *Family time: The social organization of care* (Vol. 2). Psychology Press.
- Foucault, M. (1982). The subject and power. *Critical inquiry*, 777-795.
- Friendly, M. (2000) A national child care program: Now is the time. *Paediatric Child Health*, 5 (5), 259-261.

- Friendly, M. (2001). Is this as good as it gets? Child care as a test case for assessing the Social Union Framework Agreement. *Canadian Review of Social Policy*, 47, 77-82.
- Friendly, M. (2006). Canadian early learning and child care and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. *Occasional Paper*, 22, 34.
- Friendly, M. (2009). Can Canada walk and chew gum? The state of child care in Canada in 2009. *Our Schools Our Selves*, 18(95), 39-65.
- Friendly, M., Halfon, S., Beach, J. & Forer, B. (2013). Early childhood education and care in Canada 2012. Toronto: Childcare Resource and Research Unit. Retrieved from: childcarecanada.org/sites/.../CRRU_ECEC_2012_revised_dec2013.pdf
- Fuller, S., & Vosko, L. F. (2008). Temporary employment and social inequality in Canada: Exploring intersections of gender, race and immigration status. *Social indicators research*, 88(1), 31-50.
- Gallagher, A. (2013). The Politics of Childcare Provisioning: A Geographical Perspective. *Geography Compass*, 7 (2), 161-171.
- Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre (2015) Active Atlas Projects: Pilot Atlas of the Risk of Homelessness .Retrieved from: <https://gcrcc.carleton.ca/confluence/display/GCRCWEB/Atlases>
- Gilbert, M. R., & Masucci, M. (2006). The implications of including women's daily lives in a feminist GIScience. *Transactions in GIS*, 10(5), 751-761.
- Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: psychological theory and women's development*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge.
- Good Gingrich, L. (2010). Single mothers, work (fare), and managed precariousness. *Journal of Progressive Human Services*, 21(2), 107-135.
- Goodchild, M.F. (2000). The current status of GIS and spatial analysis. *Journal of Geographical Systems* 2, 5-10.
- Government of Canada, Department on Finance (2009). *Federal Support For Childcare*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fin.gc.ca/fedprov/fsc-eng.asp>.
- Government of Canada, Department on Finance (2011). *Canada Social Transfer*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fin.gc.ca/fedprov/cst-eng.asp>.

- Government of Ontario, Consultants Report. (2013). *Review of the Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*. Retrieved from: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/new/2013/ECEARReviewReport.pdf>.
- Government of Canada, Service Canada (2014). *Employment Insurance Maternity and Paternity Benefits*. Retrieved from: <http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/sc/ei/benefits/maternityparental.shtml>.
- Halsema, A. (2007) *The Gift of Recognition: Self and Other in the Multicultural Situation*. In H. Fielding (Eds), *The Other: feminist reflections in ethics*. Palgrave MacMillan: New York.
- Harvey, D. (2005) *A brief history of neoliberalism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hayes, A., Pulsifer, P. L., Fiset, J. P., & Taylor, D. F. (2008). An open source development framework in support of cartographic integration. In *International Perspectives on Maps and the Internet* (pp. 165-185). Springer Berlin Heidelberg.
- Held, V. (2005). *The ethics of care: Personal, political, and global*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Hiltmann, G. (2007) Introduction: Accounting for the Other: Towards an Ethics of Thinking. In H. Fielding (Eds), *The Other: feminist reflections in ethics*. Palgrave MacMillan: New York.
- Howlett, M. (2009). Policy analytical capacity and evidence-based policy-making: Lessons from Canada. *Canadian public administration*, 52(2), 153-175.
- Johnson, P.A. & Sieber, R. E. (2013) Situating the Adoption of VGI by Government. In D. Sui, M. Goodchild, & S. Elwood (Eds.), *Crowdsourcing Geographic Knowledge: Volunteered Geographic Information (VGI) in Theory and Practice* (pp. 65-81). Springer Science & Business Media.
- Jonas, A. E. (2006). Pro scale: further reflections on the 'scale debate' in human geography. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 31(3), 399-406.
- Kindon, S. (2010). Participatory Action Research. In I. Hay (Ed.), *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography* (pp. 259-277). Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Katz, C. (2001). Vagabond capitalism and the necessity of social reproduction. *Antipode*, 33(4), 709-728.
- Kitchen, R. & Dodge, M. (2007). Rethinking Maps. *Progress in Human Geography*, 31(3), 331-344.

- Klodawsky, F. (2007). 'Choosing' participatory research: partnerships in space-time. *Environment and Planning*, 39, 2845-2860.
- Knox, P.L., Marston, S.A., Imort, M., & Nash, A.E. (2013). *Human Geography: Places and Regions in Global Context*. Toronto: Pearson Canada.
- Koggel, C., & Orme, J. (2011). Care Ethics: New Theories and Applications—Part II. *Ethics and Social Welfare*, 5(2), 107-109.
- Kohlberg, L. (1981). *The philosophy of moral development moral stages and the idea of justice*. Harper & Row: San Francisco.
- Kwan, M. (2002) Feminist Visualization: Re-envisioning GIS as a Method in Feminist Geographic Research. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 92(4), 645-661.
- Lafferty, S. (2002) Mapping Women's Worlds: knowledge, power and the bounds of GIS, *Gender Place and Culture*, 9(3), 263-269.
- Lawson, V. (2007). Geographies of Care and Responsibility. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 97 (1), 1-11.
- Lawson, V. (2009). Instead of Radical Geography, How About Caring Geography? *Antipode*, 41 (1), 210-213.
- Lynch, M. (2000). Against Reflexivity as an Academic Virtue and Source of Privileged Knowledge. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 17(3), 26-54.
- Bill 10 Child Care Modernization Act*. (2014). Royal Assent received Chapter Number: S.O. 2014 C.11. Retrieved from website of Legislative Assembly of Ontario:
http://www.ontla.on.ca/web/bills/bills_detail.do?locale=en&BillID=3002
- Macdonald, D. (2014). Income Splitting in Canada, Inequality by Design. *Prepared for the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives*. Retrieved from:
https://www.policyalternatives.ca/.../Income_Splitting_in_Canada.pdf
- Macdonald, D. & Friendly, M. (2014). *The Parent Trap*. Retrieved from:
https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/.../Parent_Trap.pdf
- Macdonald, D. & Friendly, M. () The Path to Better Child Care in Ontario
- Mahon, R. (2006). *Of scalar hierarchies and welfare redesign: child care in three Canadian cities*. Journal compilation: Royal Geographical Society.

- Mahon, R. (2008). Varieties of Liberalism: Canadian Social Policy from the 'Golden Age' to the Present. *Social Policy & Administration*, 42 (4), 342-361
- Mahon, R., & Brennan, D. (2013). Federalism and the "new politics" of welfare development: Childcare and parental leave in Australia and Canada. *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, 43(1), 90-108.
- Marshall, K. (2009). The family work week. *Perspectives*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-001-X. p. 5-13. Retrieved from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/75-001-x/2009104/article/10837-eng.htm>.
- Marston, S. A., Jones, J. P., & Woodward, K. (2005). Human geography without scale. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 30(4), 416-432.
- Martinez, E. & Carmen Reyes, M. (2006) Cybercartography and Society. In Taylor, D. R. F., & Lauriault, T. (Eds.), *Cybercartography: Theory and practice* (Vol. 5, pp. 99-121). Elsevier, Amsterdam.
- McEwan, C. & Goodman, K. (2010). Place Geography and the Ethics of Care, Introductory Remarks on the Geography of Ethics, Responsibility and Care. *Ethics, Place and Environment*, 13(2), 103-112.
- McKeen, W. (2006). Diminishing the concept of social policy: The shifting conceptual ground of social policy debate in Canada. *Critical Social Policy*, 26(4), 865-887.
- McKeen, W. (2007), The National Children's Agenda: A Neoliberal Wolf in Lamb's Clothing. *Studies in Political Economy*, 80, 151-173.
- Meagher, G. & Parton, N. (2004) Modernising Social Work and the Ethics of Care. *Social Work & Society*, 2(1), 10-27.
- Ministry of Children and Youth Services (2007). Early Learning Framework. *Early Learning for Every Child Today: A Framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings*. Retrieved from: http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/topics/earlychildhood/early_learning_for_every_child_today.aspx
- Murray, S. B. (2003). A spy, a shill, a go-between, or a sociologist: unveiling the 'observer' in participant observer. *Qualitative Research*, 3(3), 377-395.
- O'Farrell, C. (2006). Foucault and Post Modernism. *The Sydney Papers* 18 (3-4), 182-194.

Ontario Ministry of Education (2012). *Modernizing Child Care in Ontario: Sharing Conversations, Strengthening Partnerships, Working Together*. Queens Printer for Ontario: Ottawa. Retrieved from: www.ontario.ca/edu.

Ontario Ministry of Education (June 22, 2012). *Full Day Kindergarten. What Happens Before and After School?* Retrieved from: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/kindergarten/whathappensbeforeandafterschool.html>

Ontario Ministry of Education, Child Care Funding. (December 2012). *Child Care Funding Formula Technical Paper 2013*. Retrieved from: https://www.google.ca/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd...per_-_December_18.pdf&usg=AFQjCNGvB55NrT6JdJswlfeFM9vMuBI83w.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2013). *Ontario Early Years Policy Framework*. Queens Printer for Ontario. Retrieved from: www.ontario.ca/edu.

Ontario Ministry of Education, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services Administration Boards. (July, 2013) *Ontario Child Care Service Management and Funding Guideline*. Retrieved from: <http://faab.edu.gov.on.ca/Memos/CC2013/Ontario%20Child%20Care%20Service%20Management%20and%20Funding%20Guideline-%20July%202013.pdf>.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2014). *Ontario Early Years Centres*. Retrieved February 27, 2015, from <http://www.oeyc.edu.gov.on.ca/questions/index.aspx#what>

Ornstein, M., & Stalker, G.J. (2013). Canadian Families' Strategies for Employment and Care for Preschool Children. *Journal of Family Issues*, 34(1), 53-84.

Pain, R. (2004). Social geography: participatory research. *Progress in Human Geography*, 28 (5), 652-663.

Parliament of Canada, Political and Social Affairs Division (2007) *Child Care in Canada: The Federal Role*. Retrieved from: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/content/lop/researchpublications/prb0420-e.htm>

Parton, N. (2003). Rethinking Professional Practice: The Contributions of social Constructionism and the Feminist "Ethics of Care" *British Journal of Social Work*, 33 1-16.

Pascale, C. E. (n.d.). With Our Best Future in Mind: Implementing Early Learning in Ontario. *Report to the Premier by the Special Advisor on Early Learning*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ontario.ca/document/our-best-future-mind-implementing-early-learning-ontario>.

- Pillow, W. (2003). Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16(2), 175-196.
- Popke, J. (2003). Poststructuralist ethics: subjectivity, responsibility and the space of community. *Progress in Human Geography*, 27(3), 298-316.
- Popke, J. (2006). Geography and Ethics: everyday mediations through care and consumption. *Progress in Human Geography*, 30(4), 504-512.
- Prentice, S. (2006). Childcare, co-production and the third sector in Canada. *Public Management Review*, 8(4), 521-536.
- Prentice, S. (2009). High stakes: The “investable” child and the economic reframing of childcare. *Signs*, 40(1).
- Rice, J. J., & Prince, M. J. (2013). *Changing politics of Canadian social policy*. University of Toronto Press.
- Rose, G. (1997). Situated knowledges: positionality reflexivities and other tactics. *Progress in Human Geography*, 21(3), 305-320.
- Sieber, R. (2006). Public Participation Geographic Information Systems: A Literature Review and Framework. *Annals of the Association of American Geographer*, 96(3), 491-507.
- Skelton, I. (1996). Child Care Services in Ontario. In K. England (Ed.), *Who will mind the baby?* (pp. 62-74). London: Routledge.
- Staeheli, L., & Brown, M. (2003). Guest Editorial: Where has welfare gone? Introductory remarks on the geographies of care and welfare. *Environment and Planning A*, 35, 771-777.
- Statistics Canada. (January 1, 2013). Table 1 Distribution (number and percentage) and percentage change of census families by family structure, Canada, 2001 to 2011
Retrieved from <http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2011/as-sa/98-312-x/2011001/tbl/tbl1-eng.cfm>
- Saint-Martin, D. (2007). From the welfare state to the social investment state: A new paradigm for Canadian social policy? In M. Orsini & M. Smith (Eds.), *Critical Policy Studies* (pp. 279-298). Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Smith N. (2000). Scale. In Johnston R. J, Gregory D, Pratt G and Watts M (Eds.) *The dictionary of human geography* (pp. 724-727) Blackwell: Oxford.

- Smith N. (2004). Scale bending and the fate of the national. In E. Sheppard & R. B. McMaster (Eds.) *Scale and geo- graphic inquiry* (pp. 192-212). Blackwell: Malden MA.
- Sui, D., Goodchild, M. & Elwood, S. (2013). Volunteered Geographic Information, the Exaflood, and the Growing Digital Divide. In D. Sui, M. Goodchild, & S. Elwood (Eds.), *Crowdsourcing Geographic Knowledge: Volunteered Geographic Information (VGI) in Theory and Practice* (pp. 1-12). Springer Science & Business Media.
- Swyngedouw E. (1997). Neither global nor local: 'glocaliza- tion' and the politics of scale In K. Cox (Ed), *Spaces of globalization: reasserting the power of the local* (pp. 137–166). Guilford: New York.
- Talen, E. (2000). Bottom-Up GIS: A New Tool for Individual and Group Expression in Participatory Planning. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 66(3), 279-294.
- Taylor, D. R. F. (2005). *Cybercartography: Theory and Practice*. Elsevier, Amsterdam.
- Taylor, D. R. F. (2009). Some new applications in the theory and practice of cybercartography: mapping with indigenous people in Canada's North. In *Proceedings of the 24th International Cartographic Conference*.
- Taylor, D. R. F. & Pyne S. (2010). The History and Development of the Theory and Practice of Cybercartography. *International Journal of Digital Earth*, 3(1), 1-14.
- Taylor, D. R. F. (2013). Fifty Years of Cartography: Some Personal Reflections. *The Cartographic Journal*, 50(2), 187-191.
- Talyor, D.R.F. & Lauriault, T. (2014). *Developments in the theory and practice of cybercartography: applications and indigenous mapping*. Elsevier, Amsterdam.
- Taylor, D. R. F. (2014) Some Recent Developments in the Theory and Practice of Cybercartography: Applications in Indigenous Mapping: An Introduction. In D.R.F. Taylor (Ed.) & T. Lauriault (Assoc. Ed.) *Developments in the theory and practice of cybercartography: applications and indigenous mapping*. Elsevier, Amsterdam.
- Tronto, J. C. (2013). *Caring democracy: markets, equality, and justice*. New York University Press, New York.

- Turnbull, D. (2007). Maps Narrative and Trails: Performativity Hodology and Distributed Knowledges in Complex Adaptive Systems – an Approach to Emergent Mapping. *Geographical Research*, 45(2) 140-149.
- Undurraga, R. (2012). Interviewing women in Latin America: some reflections on feminist research practice. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 31 (5/6), 418-434.
- Vanderlee, M., Youmans, S. & Eastabrook, J. (2012). *Final Report: Evaluation of the Implementation of the Ontario Full-Day Kindergarten Program*. Retrieved from: https://www.edu.gov.on.ca/kindergarten/FDELK_ReportFall2012.pdf.
- Vosko L.F. & Clarke M. (2009), Gendered precariousness and social reproduction. In L.F. Vosko, M. MacDonald & L. Campbell (Eds.), *Gender and the contours of precarious employment*, Routledge, New York.
- Warner, M. & Prentice, S. (2012). Regional Economic Development and Child Care: Toward Social Rights. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 35 (2), 195-217.
- Weir, A. (1996). *Sacrificial logics: Feminist theory and the critique of identity*. Routledge: New York.
- White, L. (2002). Ideas and the welfare state: Explaining child care policy development in Canada and the United States. *Comparative Political Studies*, 35(6), 713–743.
- White, L. (2004). Trends in Child Care/Early Childhood Education/Early Childhood Development Policy in Canada and the United States. *American Review of Canadian Studies* 34(4), 665–687.
- Whisnant, R., & DesAutels, P. (Eds.). (2007). *Global Feminist Ethics*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Wickens Pearce, M. (2008). Framing the Days: Place and Narrative in Cartography. *Cartography and Geographic Information Science*, 35(1), 17-32.
- Wilkinson, S. (1998, February). Focus groups in feminist research: Power, interaction, and the co-construction of meaning. *Women's studies international forum*, 21 (1), 111-125.
- Williams, F. (2001). In and beyond New Labour: towards a new political ethics of care. *Critical Social Policy*, 21(4), 467-493.
- Williams, F. (2010). Claiming and Framing in the Making of Care Policies: The Recognition and Redistribution of Care. *United Nations Research Institute for Social Development*, Gender and Development Programme Paper Number 13.

Wood, D., & Fels, J. (2008). The natures of maps: cartographic constructions of the natural world. *Cartographica: The International Journal for Geographic Information and Geovisualization*, 43(3), 189-202.

Wood, D. (2013). The Canada Social Transfer and the Deconstruction of Pan-Canadian Social Policy. *Prepared for Vibrant Communities Calgary*.

Wright, M.W. (2008). Gender and geography: knowledge and activism across the intimately global. *Progress in Human Geography* 33(3), 379-386.

Wylie, J. W. (2006). Poststructuralist Theories, Critical Methods and Experimentation. In S. Aitken & Gill Valentine (Eds.), *Approaches to Human Geography*. (pp. 298-310). London: Sage.

Appendix A: Recruitment Letter



Letter of Invitation

Title: Mapping and connecting childcare experiences and childcare policies.

Date of ethics clearance: June 5, 2014-08-15

Ethics Clearance for the Collection of Data Expires: May 31, 2015

August 15, 2014

Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Tara McWhinney and I am a Master's student in the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Carleton University. I am working on a research project under the supervision of Prof. Fran Klodawsky & Prof. Fraser Taylor.

I am writing to invite you to participate in a study on childcare experiences and the links to Canadian childcare policies. This study aims to create an online childcare tool capable of connecting parents' experiences of childcare to the experiences of other parents and to current childcare policies.

Your participation in this study involves one 90 minute long focus group where you will be provided with an opportunity to discuss your own childcare needs and concerns with other parents in somewhat similar circumstances. With your consent, focus groups will be audio-recorded. Once the recording has been transcribed, the audio-recording will be destroyed.

Your identity will remain anonymous in all presentations of findings and research reports. However, during the focus group your responses will not be anonymous, as your information will be shared with other focus group participants. Everyone participating in the focus groups will be asked to keep information shared during the focus group confidential, **but this confidentiality cannot be assured.** The findings of the study will be presented in a thesis paper and will also serve to guide the structure of the online tool. You will be provided with an opportunity to test the online tool upon completion, but participation with this aspect of the research project is not a requirement.

You have the right to end your participation in the study at any time, for any reason, up until completion of the focus group. You can withdraw by phoning or emailing the researcher or the research supervisor. If you withdraw from the study **the information you have provided will not be used in the reporting of study results.**

Childcare will be provided free of charge during the focus groups and parking costs and bus tickets will be available on an as needed basis. As a token of appreciation, you will receive a \$5 Giant Tiger gift card. This is yours to keep, even if you withdraw from the study.

All research data, including audio-recordings and any notes, will be password-protected. Any hard copies of data (including any handwritten notes or USB keys) will be kept in a locked cabinet. Research data will only be accessible by the researcher and the research supervisors. Once the project is completed, all research data will be destroyed.

This project was reviewed by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board, which provided clearance to carry out the research. Should you have questions or concerns related to your involvement in this research, please contact:

REB contact information:

Professor Andy Adler, Chair
Professor Louise Heslop, Vice-Chair
Research Ethics Board
Carleton University
1325 Dunton Tower
1125 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6
Tel: 613-520-2517
ethics@carleton.ca

If you would like to participate in this research project, or have any questions, please contact me at [REDACTED] or tara.mcwhinney@carleton.ca.

Sincerely,

Tara McWhinney

Appendix B: Consent Form



Title: Mapping and connecting childcare experiences and childcare policies.

Date of ethics clearance: June 5, 2014

Ethics Clearance for the Collection of Data Expires: May 31, 2015

I _____, choose to participate in a study on childcare experiences. This study aims to explore parents' experiences of childcare and how policies might affect this care. **The researcher for this study is Tara McWhinney in the Geography and Environmental Studies Department at Carleton University.**

She is working under the supervision of Prof. Fran Klodawsky and Prof. Fraser Taylor in the Geography Department at Carleton University.

Your participation in this study involves one 90-minute focus group. With your consent, focus groups will be audio-recorded. Once the recording has been transcribed, the audio-recording will be destroyed.

Your identity will remain anonymous in all presentations of findings and research reports. During the focus groups your responses will not be anonymous, as your information will be shared with other focus group participants. **All** participants in the focus groups will be asked to keep information shared within the groups confidential and to not share this information with anyone else once the focus group is completed, **but this confidentiality cannot be assured.**

The findings of the study will be presented in a thesis paper and will also serve to guide the structure of the online childcare tool. You will be provided with an opportunity to test the online tool upon completion, but participation with this aspect of the research project is not a requirement.

You have the right to end your participation in the study at any time, for any reason, up until completion of the focus group. If you withdraw from the study **the information you have provided will not be used in the reporting of study results.** You can withdraw by phoning or emailing the researcher or the research supervisor.

Childcare will be provided during the focus groups and parking costs and bus tickets will be available on an as needed basis. As a token of appreciation, you will receive a \$5 Giant Tiger gift card. This is yours to keep, even if you withdraw from the study.

All research data, including audio-recordings and any notes will be password-protected. Any hard copies of data (including any handwritten notes or USB keys) will be kept in a locked cabinet at Carleton University. Research data will only be accessible by the researcher and the research supervisors. Once the project is completed, all research data will be destroyed.

If you would like a copy of the finished research project, you are invited to contact the researcher to request an electronic copy, which will be provided to you.

This project was reviewed by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board, which provided clearance to carry out the research. Should you have questions or concerns related to your involvement in this research, please contact:

REB contact information:

Professor Andy Adler, Chair
Professor Louise Heslop, Vice-Chair
Research Ethics Board
Carleton University
1325 Dunton Tower
1125 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6
Tel: 613-520-2517
ethics@carleton.ca

Researcher contact information:

Tara McWhinney
Department of Geography
Carleton University
Tel: [REDACTED]
Email: tara.mcwhinney@carleton.ca

Supervisor contact information:

Fran Klodawsky & Fraser Taylor
Department of Geography
Carleton University
Tel: 613-520-2600 x 8689 & x 8232
Email: fran_klodawsky@carleton.ca
& fraser_taylor@carleton.ca

Do you agree to be audio-recorded: Yes No

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of researcher

Date



Participate in a focus group on Childcare!

To participate in this study, you must be:

- A parent or guardian with childcare needs
 - Employed
 - At least 18 years old
- Comfortable in the English language

The focus group will run for 1.5 hours. You will be asked to share your experiences of arranging and using childcare and exploring how policies might affect your childcare needs.

Childcare will be provided free of charge during the focus group for those who participate. Bus tickets and compensation for parking will also be provided on an as needed basis.

Participants will be compensated with a \$5 Giant Tiger gift card.

This project has been reviewed and cleared by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board at 613-520-2517 or ethics@carleton.ca. Please contact the researcher, Tara McWhinney, for more details on this study at tara.mcwhinney@carleton.ca

Appendix D: Focus Group Questions

Timeframe 60mins

Appendix D: Focus Group Questions

Question Sequence	Theme	Question	Time
Moderator Greeting	Welcome and Guidelines	-Review purpose of research and signing of confidentiality -No right or wrong answers -Audio-recorded -Speak one at a time -No obligation to answer if you are not comfortable with the question -Moderator will guide conversation, goal is to have discussion between participants	7 mins
Opening Question:	Childcare	Please introduce yourself, by first name, and tell us: What are the first words that come to mind when you think of childcare?	3 mins
Introduction Questions:	Positive personal experiences of childcare	Please share with us a positive experience you have had in regards to childcare. What helped to make this a good experience?	8 mins
	Negative personal experiences of childcare	Please share with us a negative experience you have had in regards to childcare. What could have made this experience better?	8 mins
Transitioning Questions:	Childcare Policy Regime	[Participants will be given a list of childcare policies and programs in the Ottawa area] Please place a checkmark beside each childcare	20 mins

