

negatively affected a child's performance, the plan focuses more on meeting curriculum goals than overall well-being.

Curriculum goals are a perfect example of outcome-based thinking, as students will be placed under [potentially stressful examinations](#) that are based on their performance of skills that prepare them for the workplace instead of meeting children where they are and ensuring that they're safe and healthy.

The concern for children's academic performance over their health and fears places children and their families at risk for both COVID-19 infection and mental health issues.

Return-to-school discussions not only address children's future work-related abilities, but are also focused [on getting parents back to work as soon as possible](#). Having children at home, particularly young children, might prevent parents from working. With [recent outbreaks of COVID-19 in daycares](#), traditional forms of child care may not be an option.

Getting parents back into the economy therefore is a top priority, and school provides a form of free child care. That means economic stability is apparently the primary reason for returning to school, not concerns about children. Financial gain is taking centre stage over children's care, their right to safety and security, and potentially, their lives.

## Children left out of decisions

Throughout the reopening plans in Ontario, the government has consistently said parents can choose if their child will return to class. But because children are seen as less capable than adults, they may have largely been left out of these decisions.

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**[Read more: COVID-19: Provinces must respect children's rights to education whether or not schools reopen in September](#)**

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However, under the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), children have a right to information and expression about matters that concern them. Children have already [expressed concerns](#) about the virus, but may be forced to face COVID-19 head-on due to economic circumstances beyond their control.

In the case of parents who cannot elect to stay home from work, families are forced to choose between placing themselves at risk of COVID-19 or losing out on wages. [Considering the Canadian Emergency Relief Benefit is not available for those who can work but choose not to](#), low-income families may be forced to choose between sickness and destitution. Parents must make decisions that do not include their child's opinions or best interests.

All of these underlying motivations for reopening schools deny children their right to participate in matters that concern them and their rights to safety and security, as outlined by the [UN convention](#).

Considering that children are capable of learning and contributing to the world around them, they should be given the opportunity to digest information regarding