



## CHILD CARE IS A <sup>WOMEN'S</sup> ISSUE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2009

On International Women's Day 2009, the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC stands proudly with mothers, child care workers and all Canadian women in our struggle for equality.

Women's right to fully participate in the economic, social and political life of our communities and our right to access a publicly funded child care system are inextricably linked. In fact, when the women's movement was young – we were certain that our ability to do one was dependent on the availability of the other.

As mothers joined the labour force in unprecedented numbers we were sure that a child care system would follow. But, even though women contribute about \$60 billion a year to Canada's tax base, ***we are still waiting.***

As mothers, we have patched together child care arrangements. As child care workers, we have accepted poverty level wages so others could have care. And, some of us have let the federal government off the hook by employing, and too often exploiting, foreign live in caregivers who left their own children to care for ours.

For close to 30 years – women have spoken out about the need for child care and about governments' failed child care policies. We have done the research proving the value of quality child care for children, women, families, communities and the economy. And, we have developed concrete, doable solutions.

But, as is the case too often – those in power have not listened. Their unwillingness to act, in spite of the evidence, is rooted in patriarchal values. Values that still don't respect women's work of caring and, if the truth be told, still believe things would be better if women just all went home.

It doesn't have to be this way. Other developed countries have early care and learning systems that meet the needs of children, mothers and caregivers. But, according to the OECD, out of 14 developed countries, Canada ranks last in our spending on and access to quality child care services.

***Women will wait no longer.***

It is now clearer than ever – the struggle for a universal, publicly funded child care system in Canada and the struggle for women's equality are one and the same. Canada cannot have one without the other.

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**COALITION OF CHILD CARE ADVOCATES OF BC**

Working together for a community based, non-profit child care system that is high quality, affordable, accessible, publicly funded and accountable.

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