

Greater Victoria Regional Child Care Council
123 Simcoe Street
Victoria, BC V8V 1K5

October 26, 2009

Dear Dr. David Turpin,

We understand that University of Victoria is facing a child care crisis—this is a crisis throughout our region. The Regional Child Care Council has been monitoring and reporting on the child care situation in Victoria for the past ten years. Last year we did a report on the cost of implementing a system of child care for our region. An affordable, accessible and high quality system of child care would benefit our community economically and socially. As members of the Greater Victoria community we are writing to express our concern that *Kids and Company*, a corporate child care company, might be invited to solve the child care problems of the University. While they may appear to offer a facile solution to your problem of child care we would urge you to consider alternative solutions.

Both academic research and experience in other countries has shown that corporate child care does **not** provide quality child care and in the long run may prove more expensive to communities; we can provide you with this data*. As a member of our community the University should be a model for thoughtful and careful child care planning. Consultation within the University community and the Greater Victoria community can provide direction and guidance for an optimal solution that will meet the unique needs of our families.

Throughout the research literature one finds that non-profit child care delivers care of a higher caliber than child care that must make a profit. Wages are the largest portion of any child care budget and cutting corners on wages or benefits results in a less stable and consistent workforce. Hiring less qualified staff in order to pay lower wages is another way to keep the wage cost down and having poorly qualified staff will not result in a quality situation for children or their families.

Corporate child care's focus is profit and return to shareholders. Community-based child care's focus is on children and families. Your university is educating people to work with young children, with families and with the community. What model will

you be presenting to the students of your own community by bringing in corporate child care? The University can set an example of high standards that reflect the knowledge and understanding that resides within its community. The Child Care Council does not believe that the University is demonstrating community responsibility when it endorses a solution that research has shown to be a poor answer for the care of children

I can assure you that *Kids and Company* corporate child care will not be a model that early childhood educators in this community will support or endorse. We would urge you to spend the time and effort to carefully study, consult and reflect on this situation. We believe that the University can be a leader in supporting the development of affordable, accessible child care of a high quality

The University community is embedded in the Victoria community and the Regional Child Care Council would like to offer our support and help to find a solution to this problem that will be positive for children, families, the child care community and the University. We would like to raise our voice with yours to encourage the federal and provincial governments that now is the time for a publicly funded system of accessible and affordable child care that benefits all children and families.

Thank you,

Enid Elliot, PhD

Regional Child Care Council, Chair

Cc: Mr. Ray Protti, Chair of University of Victoria Board of Governors

Premier Gordon Campbell

Carol James, Leader of the Opposition

Colin Hanson, Minister of Finance and Deputy Premier

Mable Elmore, Deputy Opposition Critic

Maurine Karaganis, Opposition Critic

Mary Polak, Minister of Children and Family Development

Margaret MacDiarmid, Minister of Education, Early Learning and Literacy

*Brennan, D and Oloman, M. "Child Care in Australia: A market failure and spectacular public policy disaster", *Our Schools, Our Selves*,