

B.C. TIMELINES

To give you some perspective here is a brief chronology of how we got from there to here:

- 1960's - 1980's
 - Grassroots advocacy and six provincial child care organizations formed.
- 1990's
 - Child care included in community social services sector.
- March 1999
 - The Child Care Advocacy Forum formed - the six provincial organizations came together to speak with a common voice.
- May-June 1999
 - Community social services strike included child care workers - the group Parents For Child Care formed.
- July 1999
 - Vancouver Board of Trade releases a paper on child care which recommends "that public policy make investment in early childhood development for children aged 0-6 a spending priority".
- October 1999
 - Moe Sihota releases a discussion paper called "Building a Better Future for BC's Kids" which received an unheard of 10,000 responses of which 90% call for provincial and federal governments to make a commitment to a publicly funded child care system. Advocates worked hard.
- March 2000
 - All candidates, led by Corky Evans, in the NDP leadership race make a commitment to move on child care.
 - The Provincial throne speech includes a commitment to begin building, with parents and care providers, a publicly funded child care system.
 - The Provincial budget commits \$14 million for before and after school child care funding for 2000-01 (annualized to \$30 million) which is \$7 per day for parents. Advocates applaud this as an important first step.
- Sept. 2000
 - Premier Dosanjh announces the inclusion of kindergarten children in the school-age funding plan.
- January 2001
 - The School Aged program begins and makes over 15,000 school aged child care spaces available at a maximum fee of \$7 a day for before and after school care and \$14 a day for full day care and kindercare. Parent fees are reduced by an average of \$100 a month.

- March 2001

 - The Child Care BC Act is proclaimed. It includes a four year plan to extend public funding to family child care, group child care for infants/toddlers and 3 - 5 year olds and pre-schools. BC is now the second jurisdiction in North America with a publicly funded child care system.

- May 2001

 - The Liberal Party wins a large majority in the provincial election. Their child care election platform calls for targeting funds to parents who need it most and increasing child care choices by encouraging the expansion of safe, affordable child care spaces.
 - Child care not in Ministry of Early Childhood Development as expected but rather put in with Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services.

- July 2001

 - Gary Collins, Finance Minister announces in his fiscal update the elimination of the publicly funded child care plan. Joy MacPhail highlights this in the Legislature.

- August 2001

 - The new Liberal Government repeals the four year implementation plan in the Child Care BC Act. The Minister responsible for child care announces a limited consultation process to guide the development of a sustainable child care plan.

- Sept-Oct 2001

 - Minister of State Lynn Stephens embarks on some limited consultation around the province and releases a survey with short-timelines and difficult questions.

- February 2002

 - The provincial budget and three year Service Plans for provincial Ministry are released. Eligibility for the child care subsidy program will be reduced. Child Care Resource and Referral Programs, One Stop Access sites and the provincial services of Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre will lose their provincial funding on April 1, 2004. Existing child care grants will be combined into one operating grant in 2003/04.

- March 2002

 - Child care advocates join thousands of others concerned with social justice to march through downtown Victoria to call on the provincial government to stop the cuts to health, education and social programs.
 - The Child Care Advocacy Forum reaffirms its commitment to work together to advance our Common Vision and Agenda for Child Care Services in BC.

- The Coalition sends an open letter to Premier Campbell expressing shock and anger over the cross-ministerial assault on child care.
- April 2002

 - The Ministry of Human Resources implements cuts to the child care subsidy program which, in the next 3 months, negatively affect 10,500 BC families.
- May 2002

 - During Child Care Month, advocates add their voice to the thousands of others demanding that cuts to services must be halted in a huge rally in downtown Vancouver.
 - The Child Care Advocacy Forum asks families to tell government what the cuts to child care subsidy mean for them and thousands respond.
- June 2002

 - The provincial government terminates the highly successful Funding Assistance Program (FAP) for school-aged care and replaces it with a 'Transition Grant' that cuts funds by about 50% and removes the requirement that programs receiving the grant cap parent fees at \$7 a day.
 - The Child Care Advocacy Forum responds to the impact of school closures and changes to school calendars on school-aged child care programs and on other child care programs located in or on school property.
- August 2002

 - The Coalition sponsors a two day strategy session with advocates from across the province. The Session concludes that the child care advocacy movement needs to use a wide range of diverse tactics. Participants reaffirm the Coalition's leadership role in holding onto a long-term vision and in holding up the advocacy – activism- resistance end of the strategic continuum.
 - The Ministry of Health announces a review of licensing regulations effecting child care facilities and the Child Care Advocacy Forum encourages advocates to send a clear message that standards protecting quality child care must be maintained and strengthened.
- October 2002

 - The federal speech from the throne renews Ottawa's commitment to "work with its partners to increase access to...quality child care". Advocates respond with cautious optimism.

- Advocates participate in the federal government's review of the Social Union Framework Agreement (SUFA), highlighting the failure of the Agreement on Early Childhood Development to address child care needs and calling on the federal government to make a substantial investment and commit to a 5 year action plan to develop a comprehensive child care system.
 - The Child Care Advocacy Forum undertakes a survey of caregivers across BC to assess the impact of changes in government policies and cuts to funding.
- November 2002
- The Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services (MCAWS) announces reduced funding for new child care operating grant to replace Munroe, CCP, and FAP. Advocates across the province speak out against the funding formula saying that it will lead to a two-tiered system. Many centres look at closing their doors due to reduced funding.
 - Federal Liberal MP's release a report calling for a National Child Care Strategy which outlines principles and objectives, mechanisms (the architecture) for working with provinces and territories and a recommendation of a federal commitment of \$10.9 billion over 4 years.
 - The Coalition calls on child care advocates to "Vote Child Care" in Municipal and School Board elections.
 - BC Women's Centres speak out against cuts to child care.
- December 2002
- The Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada calls on advocates to send a "Memo to John Manley" the federal Finance Minister calling on him to make child care a priority in the upcoming federal budget.
- Jan 2003
- A poll conducted by the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada and the Canadian Child Care Federation shows that 90% of Canadians support a national child care plan and 88% want a publicly funded system.
 - The Coalition holds a very successful AGM – with Christine McLean, the Chair of the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada as the key note speaker.
 - Parents from child care programs in Burnaby rally to save their centres. They initiate a 'Diaper Campaign' and hold a successful rally.

- The Coalition calls on advocates to send a “Communiqué to Collins” the provincial Finance Minister calling on him to make child care a priority in the upcoming provincial budget.
- February 2003
- The Child Care Advocacy Forum releases the results of its Caregiver Survey – “**Where are the children?**” Based on responses from over 700 caregivers across BC, the report paints a troubling picture of the damage done by provincial cuts.
 - The federal budget includes additional funds for ‘regulated child care’ while BC’s provincial budget continues to cut and dismantle regulated child care. Advocates call on the province to restore child care funding levels and to provide adequate funding for a 5 year plan that entitles all children access to quality regulated child care. They call on the federal government to ensure that dedicated federal funds for quality regulated child care are not used to replace provincial cuts.
 - BC Parent Voices expands its Diaper Campaign province wide and parents from across BC send clean diapers and a message to the Premier, Finance Minister, and MLAs which feature the impact of the funding cuts to their child care programs and children.
- March 2003
- The federal government, 9 provinces and 3 territories sign the *Multilateral Framework on Early Childhood Learning and Child Care* which provides \$900 million over 5 years to provinces and territories for regulated child care that meets quality standards established and monitored by provincial/ territorial governments and \$35 million for aboriginal child care. Advocates renew calls for more federal funding and for accountability measures that require provinces to use the funds to supplement, not replace provincial funding.
- April 2003
- The provincial government introduces a new Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) Program with an overall budget that is \$14.6 million less than the province spent on licensed care in 2001. CCOF is based on enrolment so programs that are full, because they serve more affluent communities, receive more funds than those who have vacancies because parents can’t afford full fees.
- May 2003
- The Coalition and other advocates adopt a “Nothing To Celebrate”
 - Campaign for Child Care Month highlighting that BC has made or plans to make cuts of over \$50 million to child care.

- BC Parent Voices launches its province-wide handprint campaign and highlights the impact of cuts on families with this year's "Nothing to Celebrate" theme during child care month.
 - We held another successful "Student Advocacy Forum" in May which brought together over 100 students currently enrolled in early childhood education programs. As a result of this initiative, the Coalition has received requests from Early Childhood Education Training Programs in other provinces about our work in supporting student advocacy skills.
- June 2003
- The Child Care Advocacy Forum releases "Anything But Child Care", explaining how BC claims to support early childhood development but ignores that child care is a cornerstone of Early Childhood Development.
 - The Child Care Advocacy Forum releases "Publicly Funded Child Care – What Does it Mean?", a popularized explanation of the need to move child care from a user fee arrangement to a publicly funded system.
- July 2003
- The Coalition formalizes its relationships with members across the province by launching a Regional Activists Network.
 - Child care advocates speak to Vancouver City Council in support of additional city funding for inner-city child care programs that are facing closure due to provincial funding cuts.
- August 2003
- The Child Care Advocacy Forum releases "They Can Afford It", demonstrating that the provincial government can indeed afford to reverse the cuts to child care.
 - The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC sends a letter of solidarity, in both official languages, to Quebec advocates as they fight to retain their publicly funded child care system.
- September 2003
- The Coalition of Child Care Advocates presents to the federal Standing Committee on Finance, recommending that the federal government commit 1% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to a publicly funded regulated child care system, as recommended by the European Union, and require that provinces/territories use the funds specifically for publicly-funded, regulated, high quality, not-for-profit, accessible and affordable child care services.

- The Coalition of Child Care Advocates releases a strong critique of the provincial government's plan to 'refocus' the Supported Child Care program away from child care. Community organizations respond positively to the Coalition's analysis.
- BC Parent Vocies submits a written brief to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance. Over 200 individuals and organizations from 32 BC communities endorse the brief.

October 2003

- The Coalition of Child Care Advocates and other advocates present at the BC Select Standing Committee on Finance. Advocates send a strong message to the provincial government that child care funding must be restored to 2001/02 levels, that BC must have a 5 year plan for child care and that federal dollars must be spent to complement, not replace, provincial spending.
- The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC and the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada distribute information at the national conference of the Canadian Association for Community Living and BC Association for Community Living and participate in a panel on "Inclusive Child Care - Creating a Local-to-National Strategy".
- BC Parent Voices submits a written brief, endorsed by over 400 individuals from 24 communities across BC, and urges the provincial government to make spending on licensed quality care a provincial budget priority.

November 2003

- The Coalition of Child Care Advocates supports the Vancouver School Board (VSB) motion urging the provincial government to rescind laws imposing income-assistance time limits and reducing benefits, and to restore the board's inner-city funding.
- The Coalition of Child Care Advocates and the BC Government and Services Employees' Union co-sponsor an historic event that brings child care and labour activists together to develop joint strategies for building a publicly funded child care system.
- Child Care advocates across BC raise the importance of child care during the NDP Leadership campaign and at the Leadership convention.

December 2003

- In anticipation of the next federal and provincial elections, the Child Care Advocacy Forum calls on organizations, businesses & sole proprietors, municipal and regional councils, school boards, group and family child care programs, labour unions, band councils and other groups to endorse its updated Common Vision and Agenda.

January 2004

- The Coalition of Child Care Advocates holds a successful AGM with over 100 attendees. Key note speaker Carole James, leader of the BC New Democratic Party, speaks about child care, and four of the Coalition Regional Activists inform the crowd about what is happening with child care in communities across the province.
- The Coalition submits a brief to the Federal Finance Minister's 2004 Pre Budget Consultation reiterating the recommendations it made to the Federal Finance Committee in October, 2003.
- BC Parent Voices submits a pre budget consultation brief to the newly appointed federal finance minister.

February 2004

- The Coalition responds with harsh disappointment to the Provincial Budget highlighting that **over the last three years, a total of \$843 million has been cut** from the three Ministries with responsibilities for child care, children, women, and families – the Ministry of Community Aboriginal and Women's Services (MCAWS), the Ministry of Human Resources, and the Ministry of Children and Family Development.
- The Federal Throne Speech promises to accelerate initiatives under the existing Multilateral Framework for Early Learning and Child Care for more quality child care more quickly. The Advocacy Forum responds with an analysis showing that in spite of having received \$90 million from the federal government over two years, BC has spent \$18 million less on child care!
- BC Parent Voices encourages parents to write and tell the new minister responsible for child care that BC CAN afford to give children the best start. Parents call on the government to be a champion for children, women and quality child care in BC – to reverse the cuts and start rebuilding a publicly funded, high quality child care system.