

Child Care in BC: A Recent Timeline

- 1991 Release of Showing We Care: A Child Care Strategy for the 90's report of the Task Force on Child Care which recommends salary enhancement grants to raise child care workers' salaries to a level reflective of their training and responsibility
- 1992 March--Judi Korbin appointed Commissioner of the Inquiry into the Public Service and Public Sector to propose a framework for human resources management that fosters an efficient, effective workforce in the six public service sectors (health, education, crown corporations, colleges and institutes, universities, community social services)
- 1993 Government adopts the recommendations made in the Korbin Commission Report:
1. That a Public Sector Employers' Council (PSEC) be created to link public sector employers and managers with government funders
 2. That employers' associations be created for each sector to coordinate human resource and labour relations among the employers in each sector
 3. That child care be included in the Social Services Sector
- Creation of PSEC and the Community Social Services Employers' Association (CSSEA) and its Child Care Division; community social services organizations receiving \$100,000+ in provincial government funding must join CSSEA (currently, organizations receiving \$100,000 and over 50% of their funding from the provincial government are mandated to join); CSSEA is a member of PSEC
- 1994 January--BC government, through the Ministry for Women's Equality under PSEC guidelines, introduces the Wage Supplement Initiative (WSI) providing low wage redress retroactively from October 1, 1993 and the Infant-Toddler Grant (ITIG) to subsidize higher costs of infant/toddler care
- March--BC Association of Child Care Services is formed to liaise between child care employers, government and CSSEA, and to provide networking opportunities for child care employers
- 1998 MCF collapses the WSI and I-T programs into the Compensation Contribution Program (CCP), which supports the wages of approximately 6,000 child care workers
- March 31--Contracts expire for about 10,000 workers from 4 unions (BC Government Services Employees' Union, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Hospital Employees' Union and Health Services Association) and employed by 140 CSSEA members, including 18 Child Care agencies
- July--Child care employers are invited to the CSSEA/union bargaining table and bargaining begins on a divisional basis; the divisions are eventually consolidated and "big table" bargaining begins on behalf of all 140 employers and the employees
- 1999 Child Care is CSSEA's third-largest division, with a membership of 144
- Ministry for Children and Families (MCF) offers a 3-year contract with the 0%-0%-2% steps agreed to in other public sectors, with additional funds for the lowest paid employees, to recognize the discrepancy between their wages and those of staff doing similar work in the health or education sector

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March 8--Unionized employees involved in “big table” bargaining begin rotating strikes after there is little movement in negotiations

Late April--For the first time, MCF and PSEC take the public stance that child care will not be funded for settlements reached in “big table” bargaining and that, because it is not funded on a contract for service basis and most of its revenues come through fees, child care is not part of the public sector

May 3--Unionized employees move to a full-scale strike in response to child care’s exclusion from government-funded settlements and for lack of parity with peers in the health sector

May 14--Complaint lodged by the BCGEU with the BC Labour Relations Board against PSEC and CSSEA, charging that they have bargained in bad faith

May 28--Government settles with striking community social services sector workers. While government agrees to fund wage increases for the 18 striking child care agencies, it proposes to do so under a “separate but comparable” arrangement. The government further commits to using the settlement as a template with all other agencies in the sector, except child care

Mid June--PSEC announces its intentions to change CSSEA membership criteria to remove the CSSEA’s Child Care Division, to raise the minimum funding requirement for mandatory membership in CSSEA, and to eliminate voluntary membership in CSSEA for agencies receiving lower amounts in government funding, all in contravention of CSSEA’s Constitution and By-laws

July 22--Government announces the formation of a new ministry, Social Development and Economic Security, and child care’s transfer into it from MCF

July 1999

Developed by the Child Care Advocacy Forum, an alliance of the following child care organizations: BC Association of Child Care Services, Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC, Early Childhood Educators of BC, School Age Child Care Association, Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre and Western Canada Family Child Care Association of BC. For further details, please call the Advocacy Forum at (604) 709-5661.