

Child Care Advocacy Forum

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Participating Organizations:

BC Association of
Child Care Services

Coalition of Child Care
Advocates of BC

Early Childhood
Educators of BC

School Age Child Care
Association of BC

Westcoast Child Care
Resource Centre

Western Canada Family
Child Care Association
of BC

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VANCOUVER
FOUNDATION

ADVOCACY FORUM RESPONDS TO PROPOSED CHANGES TO SUPPORTED CHILD CARE PROGRAM October 2003

Recently, the Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD) released a Discussion Paper outlining proposed changes to Supported Child Care (SCC). The paper recommends replacing SCC with a new program, the Child Development Program. MCFD says that the new program is designed to be more focused on 'child development' than the current SCC program that supports the inclusion of children with special needs in child care programs chosen by their families.

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC, a member organization of the Child Care Advocacy Forum, has published a detailed analysis of the proposed changes. (Go to http://www.cccabc.bc.ca/res/pdf/SCC_Refocus_Response.pdf)

The other organizational members of the Advocacy Forum concur with the Coalition's analysis that the proposed changes:

- are not supported by a clear rationale.
- are not supported by a comprehensive budgetary analysis.
- reflect a false separation between child care and child development.
- will further reduce access to quality, inclusive child care.
- will further entrench a two-tiered child care system.

Regrettably, the Advocacy Forum shares the Coalition's conclusion that the proposed changes will not lead to improved opportunities for social inclusion or increased access to quality, inclusive child care for all.

The Advocacy Forum therefore endorses the Coalition's recommendations that the provincial government:

1. Immediately restore provincial funding for licensed and regulated child care and children with special needs to 2001 levels.
2. Develop and implement a five year plan for a high quality, inclusive, comprehensive child care system that meets the needs of all BC children, including those with disabilities.
3. As part of this plan, provide SCC agencies across BC with sufficient resources to support the inclusion of children in a full range of regulated child care settings, and in a range of other community activities as chosen by their families.
4. End the dangerous separation between child care and early childhood development by ensuring that policy and program decisions are driven by a holistic approach to children and family needs.

MCFD is currently seeking feedback on the Discussion Paper. It is important that they hear a strong and consistent message about the problems with the proposed changes to SCC. The Forum encourages you to:

- ✓ endorse these recommendations
- ✓ send your comments and recommendations to the SCC Refocus Working Group. For Working Group Membership and contact information go to:

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/supported_childcare/refocus_working_group.htm