

#### **PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS**

BC Association of  
Child Care Employers

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

Financial and in-kind support is  
provided by Vancouver Foundation,  
Vancity Community Foundation  
and the member organizations  
of the Advocacy Forum.



### **INCENTIVES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS**

In late 2007, the BC government announced two pilot programs which they say can help support the recruitment and retention of early childhood educators.

- A Student Loan Assistance program for Early Childhood Educators (ECE) who graduate in 2007 or 2008 and work in licensed child care for 2 years. They will receive up to \$1250 in each of 2 years to help pay back student loans.
- An Incentive Program for Early Childhood Educators who have not worked in licensed child care for at least 2 years. The first '100 returning' ECEs who apply can receive up to \$2500 at the end of each of their first 2 years of re-employment in licensed child care.

#### **To set the record straight:**

- In a 2007 survey of BC child care centres, 75% of respondents report that **low wages** and **lack of benefits** are the main reasons why it's hard to hire and keep staff.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2001, one of the first acts of the newly elected provincial government was to **cut funds** that went directly into the wages of Early Childhood Educators. There has been little if any gain since 2001.<sup>2</sup>
- In 2006, the median gross hourly wage for BC's college-trained caregivers in group child care centres was \$12.58.<sup>3</sup> Contrast this with the average hourly wage of \$20.39 for all BC workers 15 and over in the same year.<sup>4</sup>
- Since 2002, all Canadian provinces **other than BC** invested additional funds specifically to improve child care wages and benefits.
- BC's latest provincial 'pilots' **do nothing to improve wages or benefits for early childhood educators**. They also do nothing for the dedicated ECEs who have stayed in the field in spite of the low wages.
- **Government's acknowledgement of the province wide recruitment and retention crisis in child care is long overdue. But, to really make a difference, they need to dedicate funds to raise the wages and improve benefits for BC's new and experienced early childhood educators.**

<sup>1</sup> Results of Early Childhood Education Staffing Survey: October/November 2007, First Call BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition

<sup>2</sup> While BC's reporting makes a direct comparison difficult, in 2001, the median gross hourly wage for a broader group of BC ECE 'teachers' was \$13.28. (Beach and Friendly, Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada, 2001.)

<sup>3</sup> Beach and Friendly, Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada, 2006

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada. Retrieved from <http://www40.statcan.ca/l01/cst01/labr69k.htm>