

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 Aged
Child Care
Association

Westcoast Child
Care Resource
Centre

Western Canada
Family Child
Care Association
of BC

99-11-30

Dear Member,

The campaign to respond to the discussion paper - "Building a Better Future for B.C. Kids" is off to a great start - but our work is far from done!

While many of you have told Minister Sihota that you expect action, we still do not have a firm commitment from him and his government that they will act. In fact, daily we hear that the budget is being frozen and that no decisions can be made before the NDP leadership convention.

It is time for us to turn up the heat - so we ask you to take the following steps:

1. **Keep those letters coming!** Our letter campaign to Minister Sihota is going well. Thanks to all of you who responded. He has received over 2000 letters so far but we can't stop until we reach our target of 30,000 letters. We also need more individualized letters - so, even though Nov. 19 has come and gone - **keep 'em coming.**
2. **Meet with your MLA!** Our next big push is to meet face-to-face with NDP MLAs in their own constituencies. This is the way to make child care a top priority. Put together a small delegation and make an appointment before the Holiday Break. Try to include some parents. If your MLA is not in the NDP, meet with them and ask them what they will do if their party forms government. We have included a suggested agenda for the meeting and a 1 page 'position' that you can leave with them. **Make an appointment today!**
3. **Make child care an issue in the NDP leadership race!** While all of our organizations are non-partisan, it is clear that many decisions are on hold until the NDP elects a new leader. Regardless of our personal political beliefs, we need to make sure that all of the leadership candidates are committed to moving forward on child care. We have attached the schedule for leadership forums - these are open to the public. Attend the meeting in your area and ask each candidate what they will do for child care if elected. **Book the date now!**

The government has said they will receive comments on the discussion paper until Jan. 31, 2000. But, we know that the provincial budget is being developed now. So far, our message has been positive and supportive - but if there is no firm commitment of dollars and direction so - it will be time to 'get a little nasty' again.

Call us at our new phone numbers (including a toll free line) and let us know how it's going in your community.