

Child Care Advocacy Forum

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BC Association of
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Coalition of Child
Care Advocates of BC

Early Childhood
Educators of BC

School Age Child
Care Association

Westcoast Child Care
Resource Centre

Western Canada Family
Child Care Association
of BC

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Advocates of BC

November 23, 2001.

Premier Gordon Campbell
Minister Coell
Minister Hogg,
Minister of State Stephens
Minister of State Reid

The Child Care Advocacy Forum is a coalition of six provincial organizations representing 4,000 members and child care programs. We have been monitoring with great concern the recent announcements from the Ministry of Human Resources regarding the recent decision to change the definition of employability for single parents. Like many other organizations, we opposed these changes on many levels, not the least of which is the lack of affordability and accessibility of infant/toddler spaces in our province. As you know, your government chose not to proceed with the schedule outlined in Child Care BC that would have provided the opportunity to make infant/toddler care more affordable to parents. Those of us who have been in the child care field for many years, also realized that Child Care BC would have increased the number of infant/toddler spaces based on the financial security it would have provided to child care programs.

That said, we were heartened to hear that Minister Coell has since clarified his position. "Human Resource Minister Murraray Coell said ...single parents won't be cut off social assistance unless care is available for their young children" (The Vancouver Sun, Nov. 15, 2001)

Our letter is to stress to Cabinet the importance of such decisions being made through inter-ministerial consultation. We have argued for many years that child care (that is available and affordable) is an integral component of a healthy economy. Clearly, research shows us that investing in young children through quality early childhood programs increases school readiness, positive social development and will ultimately save dollars through holistic early intervention. We strongly believe that information about and understanding how child care plays a critical role in the development of healthy communities is vital for all Cabinet Ministers when developing significant social policy. We are confident that Minister of State Stephens can provide a wealth of information to her colleagues concerning the crisis in child care. As well, we look forward to a speedy announcement of how your government will move the child care agenda forward in our province in order to best support children and families, business and education.

Once again, we urge an increase in effective inter-Ministerial communications before these kinds of policies are developed.

Sincerely,

Susan Harney
On behalf of the Child Care Advocacy Forum