

Child Care Advocacy Forum

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Coalition of Child
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Early Childhood Educators
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School Age Child
Care Association

Westcoast Child Care
Resource Centre

Western Canada Family
Child Care Association of
BC

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News Release

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Provincial Alliance Demands That Liberals Commit to Child Care Program

Vancouver – BC's child care alliance is today insisting that the new Liberal government continue implementing the comprehensive child care program legislated in the Child Care BC Act.

"We are shocked by the Liberals' lack of support for something that has been researched, consulted and delayed to death," says Susan Harney, president of the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC and participant in the Child Care Advocacy Forum. "We worked collaboratively on this program for two years and made excellent progress.

"Our goal during the campaign was to ensure that every candidate committed to the full implementation of the Child Care BC Act," Ms Harney continues. "We are greatly concerned that the Liberals would not make this commitment. By dismantling Child Care BC at this phase, the government will leave the most vulnerable of both children and services in the lurch."

Phase two of Child Care BC includes family child care for school age children and group infant/toddler care, the most expensive and financially at-risk type of child care. With infant/toddler fees approaching \$900 per month and still not covering the full cost of care, both families and service providers face financial burdens in maintaining these programs. Under the legislation, phase two is scheduled to launch in Jan. 2002.

The Liberals' campaign platform indicated that, contrary to the legislated approach and timeframe of Child Care BC, they would "target child care funding to parents who need it most." During the campaign, several Liberal candidates acknowledged that this position would require changes to the Child Care BC Act.

In the coming weeks, the Child Care Advocacy Forum will work with parents, caregivers and others who support quality child care for all children and families, to impress on MLAs that full implementation of the Child Care BC Act is essential for BC communities.

"We will be reminding them that a failure to move forward will leave children, families, services and communities at risk," says Ms Harney. "As always, our first choice is to work constructively with government to build a publicly funded child care system. But we will not let child care's progress be unraveled without making our opposition heard and felt."