

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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AN URGENT MESSAGE FROM THE ADVOCACY FORUM Child Care Consultation is on Act Now to Make sure your Voice is Heard! November 2005

The province is now asking for community input into how to spend \$633 million in federal funds BC will receive over the next 5 years for regulated child care for children under the age of 6. There are two consultations underway:

- The Ministry of Education is consulting about how to respond to its new mandate for early learning and literacy. While federal child care funds are 'on the table' at this consultation, there is no public information about how to participate. Contact your local School Board or MLA and ask.
- The Ministry for Children and Family Development (MCFD) is consulting about priorities for Early Learning and Child Care. Information only became public a few days ago and timelines are tight. Public meetings are underway and on-line input needs to be in by the end of November.

Act now to make sure your voice is heard. There are two ways to participate.

1. PROVIDE FEEDBACK ON-LINE.

Go to www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/consult.htm to read MCFD's on-line Discussion Paper and complete their on-line Feedback Form.

The Advocacy Forum is sharing our responses to the on-line Feedback Form at www.cccabc.bc.ca/forum/pdf/questionnaire.doc. Cut and paste or build on these responses by adding your own so that government gets clear and consistent messages.

2. ATTEND A PUBLIC MEETING IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

Public meetings are still coming up in some communities. For information on dates and registration, go to www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/consult.htm.

At the meeting, include 4 key messages in your comments:

1. **Use federal funds to move from a user fee child care system to a publicly funded system.** We need adequate, accountable direct operating funds that are tied to affordability and quality.
2. **Develop an accountable and credible process for child care planning at the community level.** Tie capital funding to the resulting community plans.
3. **End the divide between child care and early learning.** Quality child care IS early learning. Use federal child care funds for regulated child care programs that meet children's developmental needs and the needs of working and studying families.
4. **Restore provincial child care funding to 2001/02 levels and use these funds for affordable, quality school-aged care.** The federal funds are only for regulated child care for children under 6 but we need a child care system for children from birth to 12.