

Child Care Advocacy Forum

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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

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Dear Parents,

Recently, Minister Linda Reid sent you a letter about BC's response to the loss of \$455 million in federal money for child care. While Minister Reid hopes that her letter will reassure you, the real message is that there is a **serious threat** to regulated child care in BC.

As you know, your child care program depends on fees that you and other parents pay. Some of you receive a 'child care subsidy' to help cover part of your fees and at least Minister Reid has promised to maintain current subsidy rates and eligibility levels.

But, your child care program also relies on the **Child Care Operating Fund (CCOF)**. The exact amount your family, group or school age child care program receives depends on who attends. For example, a daycare centre with 25 three to five year olds gets almost \$45,000 a year through CCOF. Without these funds, this centre would have to raise parent fees by \$150 a month per child just to meet current costs. This would consume your new federal \$100 monthly benefit and more.

Clearly child care programs across BC need these operating dollars. **Yet, the best Minister Reid can promise is that BC will 'endeavour' to maintain CCOF until the end of this school year.**

Without some certainty about the future of CCOF, child care programs have to start planning now for how they will manage in a few months.

We don't want to be alarmist but we are not assured and don't think you can be either. **Together, let's tell Minister Reid that this isn't good enough.** Parents and providers need to know that operating funds will be there to next July and beyond. Here's what you can do.

- ✓ Talk with your child care provider and other parents about what the threat to operating funds means for your program.
- ✓ Send the government a strong message that with or without federal child care funds, BC must maintain and improve CCOF.
- ✓ Complete BC's on-line budget survey. 'Q4' is a good place to say that next year's budget **must** protect child care funds. Go to <https://www.leg.bc.ca/budgetconsultations/survey.asp> for details.

Use this message – or better yet – write your own.

***With or without federal dollars, BC families need quality, affordable child care.
The province can and must maintain and enhance operating funds for child care in next year's budget and beyond.***

Send your message to:

Your MLA – MLA contact info at <http://www.leg.bc.ca/mla/3-1-1.htm>

Gordon Campbell, the Premier at premier@gov.bc.ca

Carole Taylor, the Minister of Finance at carole.taylor.mla@leg.bc.ca

Linda Reid, Minister of State for Child Care at linda.reid.mla@leg.bc.ca

Claire Trevena, Opposition Child Care Critic at claire.trevena.mla@leg.bc.ca