

A photograph of a woman with blonde hair blowing bubbles. She is wearing a pink hoodie and holding a pink bubble wand. A man in a denim jacket is holding a baby in a colorful striped carrier. The baby is wearing a light blue patterned hat and a pink hoodie. The background is a blurred green outdoor setting.

we need child care to be available in our community

There are only enough regulated child care spaces for around 15% of the children in our province. Waiting lists for child care spaces can be years long.

But there is a solution – we can meet the diverse needs of children and families in our communities. How? With a publicly funded, coordinated child care system.

To find out more, go to www.advocacyforum.bc.ca.

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Smart Solutions for BC Families » Availability

There are over half a million children under the age of 12 in our province, but there are only regulated spaces in group and family child care for around 15% of them. Waiting lists for child care spaces can be years long — even parents who put their name on a waiting list before their child is born can be without child care when their parental leave ends and they go back to work. For parents who work shifts or live in rural communities, finding quality child care for their children is even harder.

This isn't just an issue in BC — lack of availability is a problem families face across Canada. Of 20 comparable countries, Canada's pre-school aged children have the lowest rate of access to early learning and child care. In countries like Belgium, France, Italy and the United Kingdom, nearly 100% of pre-school aged children have access to care.

Why is Canada so far behind? In countries where child care is widely available, governments have invested public funds to build services in communities — something that hasn't happened here.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Every child in BC has the right to attend public school. Now it's time to make sure that every child also has the right to access a high quality, regulated child care space if their family wants or needs it. BC has the financial ability to build a child care system that works for children, families and communities.

A photograph of a woman with long dark hair, smiling warmly, sitting in a field of fallen autumn leaves. She is surrounded by two young boys, one slightly behind her and one in front of her, both also smiling. The background is a soft-focus green and brown landscape.

we need child care to be affordable

Child care costs more than post-secondary education – for some families, more than a monthly mortgage payment. That’s because parents pay about 80% of the cost.

And yet child care workers’ wages often fall below the poverty line.

But there is a solution – we can meet the diverse needs of children and families in our communities. How? With a publicly funded, coordinated child care system.

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Smart Solutions for BC Families » Affordability

Child care costs more than post-secondary education — for some families, more than a monthly mortgage payment. That's because parents pay about 80% of the cost — a far greater percentage than in other countries. And yet child care workers' wages often fall below the poverty line.

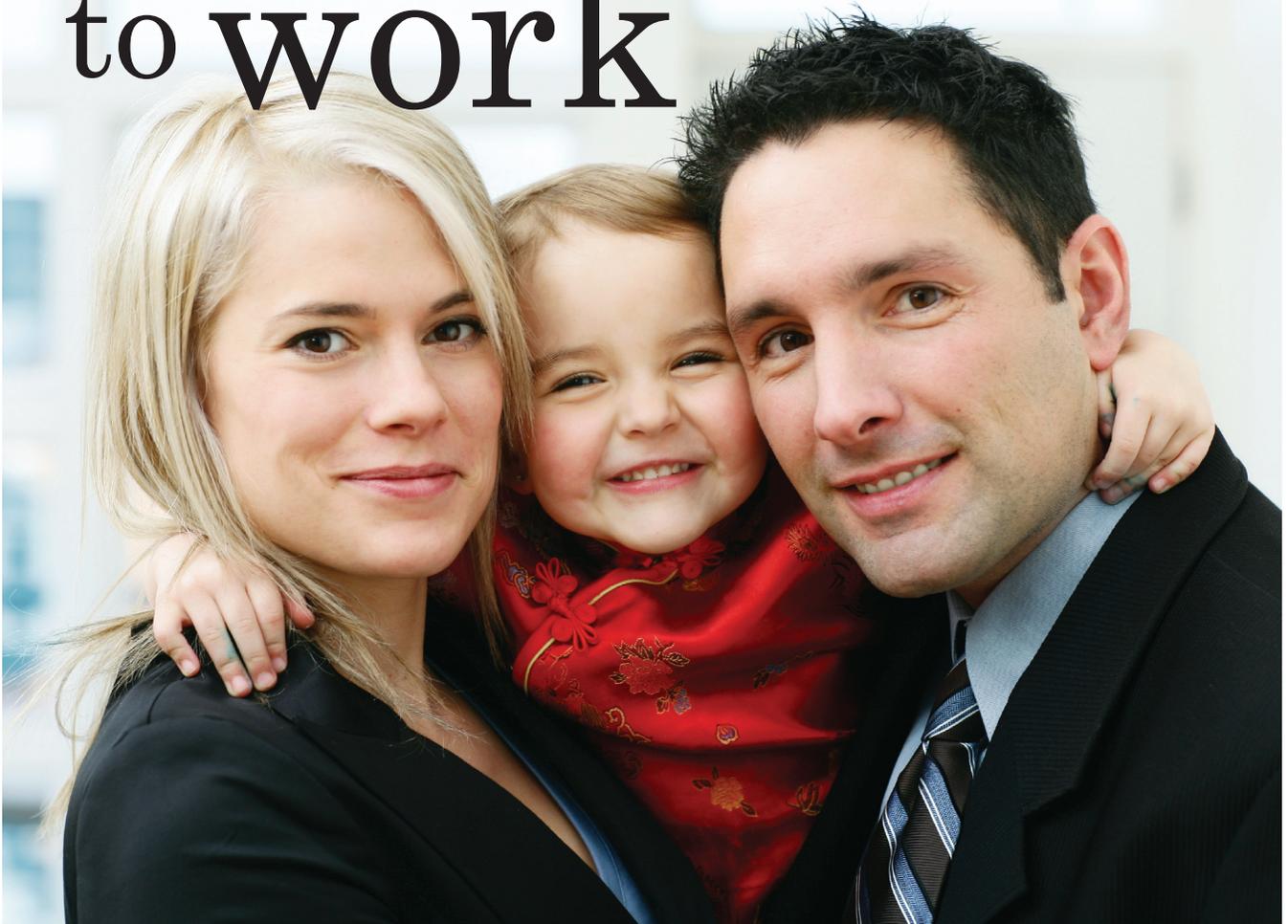
From 2001 to 2006, average annual child care fees for pre-school aged children in BC went up by \$672. For school-aged care, the increase was more than \$800. In the City of Vancouver, child care fees often top \$1000 per month for infants and toddlers.*

But it doesn't have to be this way. With a publicly funded child care system, parent fees could be a fraction of what they are now, and child care workers could earn a living wage. Libraries, schools and roads are built and maintained with public funds through the tax system, because we know that everyone should have access to these services. And the people who work in our libraries, schools, and on our roads are paid a living wage. Why should child care be any different?

BC has the ability to build a child care system that works for children, families and communities.

** Provincial fee increases: see ECEC in Canada, 2001 and 2006.
Vancouver fees: see 2007 fee surveys.*

we need child care to work



Our economy depends on working parents, and working parents depend on child care. But a shortage of quality, affordable child care spaces makes it almost impossible to balance family and work responsibilities.

There is a solution – we can meet the needs of working parents and their children in our communities. How? With a publicly funded, coordinated child care system.

To find out more, go to www.advocacyforum.bc.ca.

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Smart Solutions for BC Families » The Economy

Our economy depends on working parents, and working parents depend on child care. 73% of women with children at home are part of the Canadian workforce.¹ They are our teachers, our nurses and doctors, our postal workers and librarians, our engineers and tradespeople, our cleaners, our child care providers.

More than 77% of parents return to work following a child's birth.² But with regulated spaces for only 15% of the children in BC, going back to work isn't easy. In a 2006 survey, nearly half of parents said that balancing job and family responsibilities was the main source of stress when they returned to work.³ Parents have few options – many work part-time, split shifts, and patch together care for their children.

Demand for child care is also increasing among employers who struggle to fill jobs that are vacant due to the increasing competition for skilled labour.⁴

But it doesn't have to be this way. Every family who wants or needs it should have access to a high quality, affordable child care space. There is no better time to invest in a publicly funded child care system that will provide a return on many levels – to children who benefit from high quality care, to caregivers employed in our communities, to parents who can participate in the labour force. What bank offers that kind of return on investment?

BC has the ability to build a child care system that works for children, families and communities.

1 Women in Canada: Work Chapter Updates. Statistics Canada, 2006.

2 General Social Survey: Navigating family transitions. Statistics Canada, June 2007.

3 General Social Survey: Navigating family transitions. Statistics Canada, June 2007.

4 Report from the Ministerial Advisory Committee on the Government of Canada's Child Care Spaces Initiative. Human Resource and Social Development Canada, 2007.