

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 Aged Child
Care Association

Westcoast Child
Care Resource
Centre

Western Canada
Family Child Care
Association of BC

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Publicly Funded Child Care Essential for Social and Economic Development

"If Glen Clark's decision to move child care into the new Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security means that his government sees quality child care as a key element in the social and economic development of children, families and communities - then it is good news"

says Darcelle Cottons, President of the B.C. Association of Child Care Services (BCACCS).

While there are some definite challenges for child care in the new Ministry, Cottons, and representatives of 5 other provincial child care organizations working together in the Child Care Advocacy Forum, are cautiously optimistic.

It is essential for child care to stay connected with other community services for children and families. More importantly, government cannot return to the days when child care was narrowly limited to a 'welfare policy' tied to labour force participation of low income parents.

Child care is a unique program that can meet a number of social and economic goals. At its core, quality child care is the most effective early childhood development strategy available to our communities. A strong typical child care system is also essential to meet the needs of children who require additional support. But, child care is equally important as a support to parents in their caregiving role, it enables families to participate in work and study and is part of a strategy to reduce poverty and develop strong communities.

"Government policies that build on this comprehensive vision of child care will make a real difference for children, families and society at large. The case for high quality child care has been well documented by respected leaders from inside and outside of the child care community. Now its time for action."

says Susan Harney, chair of the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of B.C.

The Child Care Advocacy Forum believes that all children are entitled to access quality early childhood experiences and programs. We are convinced that this requires visionary public policy, adequate public funding and a well planned implementation process.

The recently announced National Children's Agenda, provide B.C. with a renewed opportunity to continue to show leadership by making child care a priority in federal/provincial negotiations.

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We trust that Premier Clark and Minister Sihota are committed to supporting and developing a comprehensive system of child care services that can meet the social and economic needs of children, families, and the community. If this is the case, then the organizations in the Child Care Advocacy Forum are ready and willing to 'roll up our sleeves' and work with them to achieve this goal.

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