

A few child care facts

Quality, licensed and affordable child care:

- promotes early learning and healthy child development;
- supports parents/families in parenting;
- advances women's equality;
- builds communities; and
- strengthens our economy.

An overwhelming majority of mothers in Canada with young children are in the paid labour force. **Did you know:**

- 86% of mothers are back in the workforce within a year of having given birth and their children are in some form of non-parental care.
- In 2003 there were 357,900 BC mothers of children from infants to 12 years in the paid labour force.
- Economists estimate that if all mothers with children under the age of 6 were to leave the labour force, the cost to the Canadian economy would be about \$83 billion per year.

Where are the children?

Many BC families cannot access a licensed child care space. There are not enough licensed child care spaces to accommodate all families wanting to access child care in BC:

- In 2004 there were only enough regulated spaces for 13.7 % of BC's children.

If you can access a space, what about the costs?

- Child care is not publicly funded like other public services e.g., education, libraries, fire and ambulance services. Parents must pay a monthly user fee.
- Because of chronic underfunding, current monthly fees are not affordable for the majority of families and the child care workforce is poorly paid.

What do Canadians say?

Did you know that a 2003 poll reported that 86% of Canadians agree "that there can be a publicly funded child care system that makes quality child care accessible to all children."



What are parents and child care advocates saying?

We believe that governments must work together to fund and ensure that communities can meet the child care needs of children from infants to twelve year olds.

A new federal-provincial agreement on early learning and child care

On September 29, 2005 the federal government signed an agreement on early learning and child care that will give BC more federal dollars to improve the quality, affordability, and accessibility of regulated child care services. Over the next 5 years, BC will receive \$633 million from the federal government [only for regulated child care for children under the age of 6].

If the BC government restores the child care funding it has cut over the last four years and spends this new federal money wisely, it is enough to begin building a publicly funded, non-profit, high quality, affordable and accessible child care system that meets the needs of BC's children and their working families.

What you can do? You can add your voices!

- Let your elected representatives know that you expect public funding to be used to build a quality and affordable child care system in Canada.
- Contact the provincial elected reps (MLA's) at:
<http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/mla/3-1-1.htm>
- On January 23, 2006 remember, Steven Harper and his federal Conservatives have launched a full-scale attack on quality, publicly funded child care. A new taxable allowance for young children is **NOT** a substitute for daycare programs and a child care system that meets children's developmental needs and supports the vast majority of Canadian mothers and families who are at work and school.

VOTE for CANDIDATES who defend spending on quality licensed daycare and who will build the child care system that Canadian children and families need and deserve.

For more election information go to www.cccabc.bc.ca.

