



PROVINCIAL ELECTION · MAY 17, 2005

FOR THE RECORD

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**MARCH
2005**

a series of pre-election child care advocacy tools from the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC

AN ELECTION LIKE NO OTHER

On May 17, 2005 British Columbians go to the polls to elect a new provincial government. For over two decades, the Coalition of Child Care Advocates has worked to make child care a key issue in every federal, provincial and municipal election.

Yet, for child care, the coming election is like no other. The stakes are higher, the dangers more grave and the opportunities for progress more real than ever. Here's why:

- ✗ Since coming to power in 2001, this provincial government has done more damage to child care in BC than ever thought possible. While progress on child care has always been slow, for the first time – things have actually moved backwards. Massive funding cuts denied thousands of children access to quality care, forced many programs to close their doors, reduced options for low and moderate income women and families, and rolled back the already inadequate wages of caregivers. Ill founded provincial policies created a dangerous split between child care and early childhood development, moved more child care into the underground economy, and eroded the quality of care that caregivers struggle to provide. Parents and advocates worked hard just to slow down the dismantling of services that took decades to build. BC children, families and quality child care services cannot survive another four years of this.
- ✓ Shockingly, over the same period, public funds available to build the child care system have actually increased. Federal dollars for child care are on the table. And, the province has a surplus that the public wants spent on social programs. If the province restores its own child care funding to 2001/02 levels and uses the federal money appropriately – BC will have more than \$350 million to spend on child care next year. This is enough to begin to make a real difference and way too much to waste on ideologically driven initiatives that fly in the face of research. With political will and a comprehensive plan to build a publicly funded, universal, quality, accessible, not-for-profit child care system, BC children, families and quality child care services can thrive.

Over the next two months, the Coalition will work hard to:

- ✓ get everyone who knows and cares about child care registered and out to vote on May 17.
- ✓ provide advocates with timely child care election tools and materials.
- ✓ strengthen our links with other social justice partners.

Together, we can elect a government that will build the child care system BC children and families need and deserve.

Check the Provincial Election page on our website regularly at www.cccabc.bc.ca/act/bcvotes

COALITION OF CHILD CARE ADVOCATES OF BC

Working for a publicly funded, non-profit child care system that is high quality, affordable, accessible and accountable.
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