

*(handout)*

## **How B.C. school boards can help support quality child care:**

We are seeking the support of school boards across the province to support child care advocates in our attempt to stop child care funding from being cut by the federal government - by passing resolutions like those passed by the Vancouver School Board on Oct 17, 2005 (*supporting federal child care funding to be used only for child care in B.C.*) and on March 8, 2006 (*supporting the reinstatement of the full five year federal child care funding plan*).

We are asking school boards to send a copy of their own resolutions to:

- Prime Minister Stephen Harper
- Federal Minister of Human Resources and Social Development Diane Finley
- Premier Gordon Campbell
- Provincial Minister of State for Child Care Linda Reid
- Provincial Minister of Child and Family Development Stan Hagen
- The local MP and MLA.

***Thank you for your support!***

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# **Child care - let's make it happen!**

Coalition of Child Care Advocates of B.C.  
B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union

[www.cccabc.bc.ca](http://www.cccabc.bc.ca)  
[www.begeu.ca](http://www.begeu.ca)

## What is quality child care?

All of the research indicates that to ensure sustainable gains for children, parents and the public, early childhood care and early learning must be of “high quality.” Studies have described the elements of quality child care that give us these positive results as:

- licensed, non-profit and government regulated programs with stable funding
- high adult to child ratios
- small group sizes
- stable consistent child care staff
- caregivers trained in early childhood education
- adequate health, safety and physical environment precautions
- good wages and working conditions for staff and good workplace morale

## Quality child care means a better educational experience for our children

Research indicates that the type of care received during a child’s early years influences their emotional, social, intellectual and physical health in later years. Quality child care can significantly improve a child’s educational experience.

Numerous studies have shown that high quality child care results in:

- ✓ early identification of special needs;
- ✓ improved development and academic achievement;
- ✓ more social skills and less problem behaviours;
- ✓ higher likelihood of completing high school and higher education;
- ✓ higher likelihood of being gainfully employed as adults;
- ✓ less likelihood of committing crimes;
- ✓ less likelihood of requiring public assistance.

## Economic benefits of quality child care

Quality child care provides generations of benefits to the community at large.

- A University of Toronto study in 1998 showed that spending on early learning and child care programs is a social investment that returns \$2 for every \$1 invested.
- Research has established that children who receive high quality child care need less public funds for employment, education, and social programs.
- Providing quality child care also increases the commitment of mothers to the labour force, which leads to increased long-term economic security for women, and greater tax revenues.
- The Vancouver Board of Trade supports publicly funded child care for its economic benefits.

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## **The child care situation in Canada is urgent!**

- In 2005, the federal government committed \$5 billion to be spent over the next five years to build a national child care system, and signed agreements with the provinces to confirm this commitment.
- In January 2006, the federal Conservatives were elected as a new minority government. They soon announced they would not honour the signed federal-provincial child care funding agreements.
- They intend to cut the federal child care funding in early 2007, and will implement a taxable family allowance of \$1200/year (only for every child under 6) that parents can choose to use for child care.
- While any contribution to support families is welcome, parents know this taxable allowance does not come close to covering the real cost of child care.
- Because the allowance is taxable, it amounts to less than \$100/month per child and does not address after-school care for children 6 and older.
- The subsidy does nothing to create the child care spaces that are so desperately needed.

## **What do we stand to lose in B.C.?**

The B.C. government has made significant cuts to child care in recent years:

- by 2004 they had cut the child care funding in B.C. by \$40 million;
- cut subsidies for lower income families;
- and drastically cut the wages and benefits of quality child care workers, (some of whom agreed to have their wages and benefits cut severely, just to keep their centres open.)
  
- The national initiative would have provided \$455 million for additional child care spaces, over the remaining three years of the agreement.
- All recent increases in child care spending in BC have been paid for with federal child care funds. This includes increases to the Child Care Operating Fund (CCOF) that many child care centres rely on to: keep their doors open, keep parent fees affordable, subsidize child care workers wages, upgrade equipment and facilities to ensure child safety
- Unless the province is prepared to pick up the costs, child care centres will have to make up the difference by:
  - Raising parent fees
  - Laying off workers
  - Cutting programs
  - Closing their doors

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***The time to act is now!***

With the loss of federal child care funding in early 2007, the closure of many B.C. child care centres is inevitable. We need to urge our MLAs and the provincial government to stand up and speak out to ensure this federal commitment is followed through with, and to commit itself to increased child care funding. We must also pressure our MPs to ensure they commit to working for the reinstatement of federal child care funding.

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