



ECEBC | early childhood
educators of BC

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

September 4, 2014

Where Are Children Going During the Labour Dispute Between the BC Government and Teachers?

Vancouver –Usually the beginning of September is filled with excitement and anticipation as our children start the new school year. This year, we are in an unfortunate position where families are feeling desperate and the ongoing education dispute amplifies the desperate situation families face to find childcare. In consequence, our sector is trying to meet parents' growing needs in an underfunded childcare system while being constantly undervalued as professionals.

The dispute has also had a significant impact on the many BC licensed to practice early childhood educators who work in BC StongStart Programs, child care programs that are run in public schools and Early Childhood Educators who work as teacher's assistants.

The BC government announced in August that all families with children under 13 years of age could be eligible to receive \$40 per day per child to be used to access child care and/or tutoring services while the education dispute continues. Many families have indicated that this is a welcome relief as they try to balance work, school and the family obligations. ECEBC has long known that financial support continues to be a need for all families wanting to access quality child care services.

Money is only one aspect that needs to be addressed, and as a professional body we are concerned. Not only do families need financial support for child care but the children need to be in healthy and safe environments. Social media postings have recently appeared where many people are offering ad hoc child care that doesn't meet the criteria of the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*, provincial legislation that licensed and registered child care programs are required to uphold. This should be of concern to parents, as it is to ECEBC, as children may be put in a position where their health and safety are compromised.

The *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* states that in British Columbia any facility providing care to three or more children not related by blood or marriage to the caregiver is required by law to have a Community Care Facility Licence. All Licensed Programs are required to meet the requirements of the Child Care Licensing regulation in regards to both physical health and safety, assessment of suitability of the caregiver which includes an educational component, criminal record clearance for persons living in the home of 13 years of age or older, a current First Aid certificate, reference checks, health clearance, and immunization record. Fire and emergency procedures including provision in the event of a major catastrophe must be in place to mitigate any emergency. It is also imperative that there be a record of each child's date of birth, any allergies or health issues, and emergency contact information. Individuals choosing to operate a child care program without a Community Care Facility Licence are putting children at risk.

ECEBC recognizes the education sector as a unique body of professionals. Together, we provide the province's children, families and communities with vital contributions that make BC a thriving and diverse province. We hope for a speedy and fair resolution to the dispute.

The Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia (ECEBC) is the collective voice to advance professional and personal commitment to the value of early care and learning by empowering the sector through education, collaboration and leadership. Early Childhood Educators are educated professionals that have specialized knowledge that has prepared them to work in a variety of settings. ECEBC acknowledges that quality child care is early learning.

- 30 -

For more information, please contact:

Emily Mliczko, Executive Director

executive.director@ecebc.ca