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PRESS RELEASE
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Early Childhood Educators of BC says children, families and early childhood educators can't wait until 2009

The announcement in Tuesday's Throne Speech regarding developing all day early learning programs for three to five year olds could be good news, but the crisis in child care needs to be addressed right now. "First, we need to see an immediate funding increase in next week's provincial budget", said Toni Hoyland, President. "The lack of access to quality, affordable early learning and care programs is affecting children and families today – they can't wait until 2009".

Early childhood educators look forward to working with education in developing an effective system for young children and their families, and building a bridge between community based programs and schools that ensures all families have access to universally available, developmentally appropriate services that meet the needs of both working and at-home parents.

It will be important to address a seamless day for our young children and that will require paying attention to both children's early learning and care needs. It can be done. We have the evidence and know that other countries have been successful. New Zealand has developed a similar system which could really assist our government in meeting the goals they are establishing.

"Early childhood educators look forward to sharing their expertise on children's developmental ages and stages and know that comprehensive programs that address children's whole development set the stage for life-long health and learning" states Sheila Davidson, Executive Director. "As the experts in early childhood development and care we stand ready and able to work with government as they address this all important need for our communities".

We encourage government to look at existing studies and costing models; we have the evidence to move forward to implementation very quickly. We know that families and communities will be eagerly awaiting next week's provincial budget to ascertain government's commitment to our youngest children.

Further information: www.ecebc.ca