



## **Joint Statement for May is Child Care Month May 2024**

**BC Aboriginal Child Care Society  
Early Childhood Educators of BC  
Métis Nation BC  
Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC**

**BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS), Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC), Métis Nation BC (MNBC), and the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (CCCABC)** - while different organizations with distinct mandates, we recognize our shared priorities and stand together, with a stronger voice, to advocate for all Early Learning and Child Care professionals across British Columbia.

We begin by offering gratitude for the places where this work is happening, the traditional territories all across this land, and recognition of the inherent rights and jurisdiction of Indigenous governments and governing bodies over the care and education of young children. This gratitude and recognition are critical starting points, as we celebrate May as Child Care Month and acknowledge the significance of quality early learning and child care as a service that is essential to the health and well-being of community.

We honour the individuals and programs who care for and educate children in licensed child care and other quality early childhood programs across the province. Without them there is no early learning and child care system. We recognize and appreciate the work of professionals for all the work they do across the sector, including educators, caregivers, administrators, cooks, drivers, and other professionals who, together, care for children and families. We offer unique recognition of the Elders and language speakers who are engaged in supporting this work in Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities and we extend our gratitude for their roles in supporting culture and healing in this work.

Across British Columbia there are children who are thriving, families who are able to be at work or attend school, and communities that are prospering in a multitude of ways, all

because of access to quality early learning and child care programs and support. Since 2018, there has been notable progress through the advancement of new legislation, policy frameworks, and increased funding. This work has focused on rights, reconciliation, access, quality, and capacity. However, with the recognition of progress must also come acknowledgement that systemic change and transformation are still required. 75% of children in BC still cannot access licensed child care; 45% of child care employers are losing more staff than they can hire. Opportunities remain, under current federal agreements, to build a more equitable system that nurtures and cares for families and professionals alike, while recognizing and honouring Indigenous jurisdictions and distinct worldviews. There is work that remains and the best way to advance this work is to stand together.

In 2024 our pledge for Child Care Month is that we will continue to work and advocate for early learning and child care systems that BC families and communities want, need and deserve. Systems that include and care for all children, that uphold the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, that provide fair compensation and working conditions for professionals, that promote gender equity, and that creates strong communities and a robust economy.

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**BC Aboriginal Child Care Society** acknowledges all Early Learning and Child Care professionals, the Elders supporting these teams, and the Leadership that uplift this work. We recognize the inherent rights of all Indigenous peoples, governments and governing bodies, and we remain committed to supporting First Nations in their rightful jurisdiction over the care and education of young children. We are grateful for the beautiful work happening in communities and are inspired by how this work centres culture, language, traditional teachings, laws, and protocols. This work is foundational to the development of a strong sense of identity, place, and belonging – this work in Early Learning and Child Care is at the heart of Nation-building. We invite all community leaders to take time in the month of May to recognize, celebrate, and honour the work of Early Learning and Child Care.

May is Child Care Month, and the **Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC)** is honoured to celebrate all early childhood educators as the essential foundation to a quality early years system.

In this complex work, educators are called to demonstrate respect for diversity and inclusion, that includes multiple ideas and perspectives. The wisdom of the Code of Ethics affirms and guides us in our collective wisdom.

ECEBC envisions a society where early childhood educators thrive in a supportive community that values childhood and education. We continue our work for the advancement of the \$10aDay Child Care Plan and continue our call that must include fair wages and benefits for the profession. We are dedicated to building respect for early childhood education and educators.

**Métis Nation British Columbia** would like to acknowledge and honour all the remarkable Early Learning and Child Care Professionals who dedicate their time to shaping the future of our youngest generation. The importance of family in the upbringing of children is deeply rooted in our Métis culture. Our ancestors have instilled in us the values of love, respect, and resilience, which are essential elements in raising our children in a good way. We honor all educators who promote holistic development and foster a sense of cultural identity and belonging for both Métis and non -Métis children. You are not only preserving our Métis heritage but also empowering our children to become leaders and ambassadors of our culture.

Louis Riel once said, "True leaders emerge not from power, but from the strength of their beliefs".

**Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC.** Celebrating May as Child Care Month provides the opportunity to recognize that access to high-quality child care, that costs no more than \$10aDay, and where educators are fairly compensated (including a wage grid of at least \$30-\$40/hour), is life-changing for families and has multiple benefits for society. The \$10aDay child care system we envision, and work towards, benefits children, their families, recognizes and respects educators and the child care sector, upholds Indigenous jurisdiction, strengthens public services and communities, and bolsters the economy. Progress is not happening fast enough – yet together we are making a difference. \$10aDay child care is really happening for families across BC and Canada, and public support continues to grow. Recent polls show that the majority of British Columbians not only want governments to deliver on their child care commitments – they want implementation to speed up. Our commitment this month – and every month – is to be relentless in our advocacy for the child care system BC wants and needs.