

## **Budget 2024: What's happening for \$10aDay Child Care in B.C.? Thank goodness for federal \$10aDay child care investments!**

The increasing federal dollars of approx. \$250 million in Budget 2024 are sustaining progress made to date, with relatively minor growth forecast over the next two years.

Meanwhile 75% of children in B.C. still don't have access to a licensed child care program. Of the child care spaces we do have in BC only 14,000 or 10% of them are \$10aDay sites – and they are “life-changing” for families.

“We are surprised government is not increasing provincial investments to more quickly expand the success of \$10aDay child care,” said Sharon Gregson, spokesperson for the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC. “Especially as government has acknowledged that child care progress to date has resulted in significantly more women in the workforce.” Researcher Lynell Anderson, CPA, CGA added, “clearly investments in child care bring strong economic returns.”

“Early childhood educators are still waiting for the long-promised fair provincial wage grid while the recruitment and retention crisis in the sector continues,” said ECEBC Board member Dawn Westlands.

Some lucky families are saving significant dollars each month but thousands of children are on waiting lists across the province. Expansion needs to happen urgently through public planning with school districts, municipalities, Indigenous communities and organizations.

B.C. has the highest population growth since 1994 with 5.52 million people as of July 2023 - up 3% from 2022. But people who arrive with young children or hope to start families will have very little luck accessing child care.

With a provincial election in eight months and voters now expecting \$10aDay child care we continue to call for government to deliver on its commitments and accelerate progress toward a \$10aDay child care system which includes certified early childhood professionals.

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