

BC Budget 2018: First Steps on \$10aDay Child Care

COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BC GOVERNMENT'S FIRST STEPS TOWARD A PUBLIC SYSTEM OF INTEGRATED EARLY CARE AND LEARNING

In BC's 2017 provincial election, a majority voted for action on child care. Both the BC NDP and BC Greens made substantial child care commitments. Both parties made child care the largest area of new spending in their platforms. In its subsequent Throne Speech, the BC Liberals also made a commitment to significant new child care investment.

With all three major political parties now publicly committed to new child care funding, British Columbia's families with young children can finally look forward to meaningful progress on solving the current child care chaos.

The \$10aDay Plan is the comprehensive, evidence-based solution to this chaos.

The Plan is grounded in public policy and funding proposals that address the affordability issue for all families with (or hoping to have) young children, and is central to an effective poverty reduction plan. British Columbians are calling on government to implement it.

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC and Early Childhood Educators of BC propose concrete, balanced, actions that allow government to begin fulfilling their child care commitment in Budget 2018.

These actions support existing BC child care services to participate in building the effective system that BC parents, grandparents, and employers have been waiting for.

Implementing these first steps require the BC government to confirm the multi-lateral and bi-lateral child care agreements with the federal government, and to conclude child care discussions with the BC Green Caucus. These first steps to reduce today's child care chaos in BC are consistent with the election platforms of both the BC NDP and BC Greens.

That is why the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC and the Early Childhood Educators of BC recommend the following 'first steps' for BC's Budget 2018.

1 DELIVER IMMEDIATE TANGIBLE BENEFITS TO FAMILIES

- **CAP AND REDUCE PARENT FEES** in all licensed infant & toddler programs by \$500 per month, with funding delivered directly to programs through the Child Care Operating Fund.
- **ELIMINATE PARENT FEES** in licensed programs for families with annual incomes of less than \$40,000, with funding delivered through the Child Care Operating Fund.
- **CREATE 22,500 NEW LICENSED SPACES** in three years. Working collaboratively with municipalities, boards of education, early years planning tables and the child care community, government will carry

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out an immediate review of all planned and existing public and community spaces across BC, assessing the potential for, and prioritizing, opportunities to re-purpose, retrofit or modify existing space and to add child care to proposed building plans.

2

INVEST IN THE WORKFORCE

- **SUPPORT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS** (ECEs) with a certificate-to-practice and working in licensed child care programs, by increasing their wages by \$1 per hour.
- **INVEST IN CAREGIVERS** without a certificate-to-practice, including unlicensed providers, through an increase in bursary funds to help them become early childhood educators.
- **RECRUIT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS** who have left the child care sector, by initiating an intensive recruitment and re-entrance strategy.

3

DEVELOP A DETAILED THREE-YEAR PLAN

These short term actions to reduce fees, raise ECE wages and education levels, and create new spaces, all in licensed child care, should start in 2018 and be expanded in years 2 and 3 of the 2018 Budget.

A three-year detailed plan for achieving measurable progress on child care affordability, quality and access – on the road to achieving a fully universal system of quality, licensed child care – should include:

- **AN INCREMENTAL INCREASE** to funding for licensed child care over the budget planning period (2018/19 to 2020/21), starting with \$225 million in year 1 (which includes approximately \$50 million in new annual federal funding) and reaching \$450 million in year 3.
- **AN AFFORDABILITY STRATEGY** for reducing all parent fees in licensed child care over time, toward achieving the goal of \$10aDay for full-time care, \$7 per day for part-time care, and no user fee for families with an annual income of less than \$40,000.
- **A WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY** that addresses ECE compensation and education to recruit and retain respected, valued, well-educated and appropriately-compensated professionals. The strategy will include a plan to educate sufficient ECEs as outlined in the \$10aDay Plan, including bursaries and other supports for caregivers committed to transitioning from unlicensed to licensed child care.
- **AN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY** to ensure that effective supports and oversight functions – including, but not limited to, Child Care Resource & Referral services, Supported Child Development, Community Care Licensing, planning & evaluation, etc. – are appropriately staffed and resourced, and to plan for and implement the transition of child care from the Ministry of Children and Family Development to the Ministry of Education.



COALITION OF
**child care
advocates**
OF BC

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC and the Early Childhood Educators of BC advance the \$10aDay Plan in ways that are consistent with their respective mandates and applicable regulatory requirements. Both organizations individually and jointly provide public education about the Plan. As a registered charity, ECEBC also engages

in a limited amount of permitted non-partisan advocacy which is directly connected to its charitable public education work. As a registered non-profit society, CCCABC advances the Plan through its advocacy campaign, and at www.10aDay.ca.