

A universal system for every child in BC

The *Child Care - Let's Make It Happen!* campaign supports the right of every child and family in BC to access quality child care in their own community.

We believe this can only be delivered if the government commits stable, adequate funds to build a universal, high quality child care system.

Government has created a child care crisis:

- Parent fees are going up
- Waitlists are growing
- Low wages are forcing many qualified early childhood educators to leave the field.

A *Child Care Action Plan* is a key part of the solution to this crisis

An effective plan begins with provincial legislation that commits British Columbia to building a publicly-funded child care system based on the following principles:

Principle	What this means in plain language
Access must be universal and inclusive	Every child in BC should have access to child care - no matter their family's economic, cultural or linguistic circumstances, their developmental needs or whether their parents stay at home or work.
Affordable	Parent fees should be capped, reduced, or even eliminated so that cost is not a barrier to child care.
Quality	Regulations and adequate compensation are key ingredients to quality. Regulations promote healthy development of children. Adequate compensation helps recruit and retain qualified workers.
Publicly-funded and not for profit	Public funding is the only way to build a system that is stable, accountable and where decisions are based on the needs of children, families and communities – not the needs of shareholders.
Comprehensive	Any system must provide for a range of child care quality options including full and part time care in centre and family child care programs.
Developmental	Programs must be age-appropriate and responsive to the unique needs of individual children.
Accountable	Public funds must be spent in ways that achieve public goals. Governments and providers must be responsible to parents, children, and the public for the services provided.

Child care - let's make it happen!

Coalition of Child Care Advocates of B.C.
B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union

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Taking action to build the system

Legislation must be backed by concrete action in five key areas to achieve a fully-funded system in which every child age 0-12 has access to quality child care.

Government must:

1. Fund the system
2. Expand the system
3. Develop and support the workforce
4. Meet diverse needs
5. Enhance quality

Some short-term goals and changes will put us on the right track

- ✓ Move the burden of child care funding from user fees to public funding.
- ✓ Set targets and timelines for:
 - lowering and capping parent fees,
 - raising wages to a fair wage,
 - building community-owned spaces to meet the needs of all.
- ✓ Develop community-controlled governing structures to plan, develop and deliver a child care system.
- ✓ Expand Early Childhood Educator (ECE) training.
- ✓ Ensure licensing standards and regulations are maintained, and not weakened in order to provide short cut solutions.

Building a child care system makes sense

Building a child care system meets the needs of children and their families, advances women's rights, supports the economy, and helps build healthy communities

Building a child care system is a sound investment. Quality care promotes healthy development, and investing in children at an early age creates social benefits that far outweigh the costs.

For more information on a workable BC Child Care Action Plan, see www.cccabc.bc.ca/cccabdocs/pdf/cccabccplan.pdf

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