



Working together for a community based, non-profit child care system that is high quality, affordable, accessible, publicly funded and accountable.

Media Release

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24% hike on already high child care fees

Kids & Company co-founder in Vancouver Tuesday April 17 to meet unhappy parents

VANCOUVER – Victoria Sopik, co-founder of the commercial child care chain Kids & Company, will meet with desperate and unhappy parents on Tuesday April 17 at 5 p.m. at her 910 West 6th Avenue location in an attempt to justify a 24% hike on already high fees, says the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (CCCABC). Sopik is raising parent fees - from \$1,550 a month to \$1,915 per month, by September.

“Parents are shocked and frustrated,” says Giselle, a mum with a toddler enrolled at the centre. “Our daycare costs, for one child, will be more expensive than our housing costs!”

And yet, waiting lists at other centres are so long that parents have nowhere else to turn, says Sharon Gregson, CCCABC spokesperson.

In an interview on CBC radio Sopik claimed she has lost \$150,000 on the 6th Avenue Kids and Company childcare centre. Why? Should parents be held responsible for her business decisions? Should profit be the bottom line?

UBC, Vancouver Coastal Health and other employers have paid membership fees to Kids and Company so that their employees have access to this service. Do they think their employees should be slapped with a 24% increase in the cost of child care in less than a year?

“Parents need to work and want to work but are stuck without options to find safe quality affordable child care in Vancouver,” says Gregson and she stated that the CCCABC believes there is a better way.

“Evidence from around the world shows that a publicly funded child care system that increases spaces, reduces parent fees and improves staff training and wages will pay for itself - as it does in Quebec - through increased payroll and consumption taxes paid by more working parents. Business also benefits and GDP improves when workers have access to an affordable, quality child care system.”

Gregson says BC urgently needs the Community Plan (www.cccabc.bc.ca/plan) that will:

- Substantially increases the number of spaces available,
- Reduces parent fees to \$10 /day, with no fees for families who earn less than \$40,000/year,
- Improves the wages and education of early childhood educators

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For more information see www.cccabc.bc.ca/plan

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