

# Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC

Working for a non-profit child care system that is high quality, affordable, accessible and accountable.

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On November 28, 2002 Lynn Stephens, the Minister of State for Women's Equality released her plans for a new **Child Care Operating Funding Program**. We are attaching the Child Care Advocacy Forum's analysis of the new program – which outlines why the program will not move us forward but will, in fact, lead us towards a two tiered child care system in BC.

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC fully supports the Advocacy Forum's analysis. For us, the new grant is part of a consistent cross-ministerial assault on child care that includes:

- a \$26 million reduction in the child care subsidy program which is putting regulated child care out of reach of low and moderate income families;
- a projected 28% reduction in funding for Supported Child Care which will further reduce the inclusion of children with extra support needs in regulated child care;
- the gutting of the Munroe Agreement, which eliminates the progress achieved by child care workers after a 14 week strike in 1999 during which they set a 'benchmark for the sector';
- the planned defunding of Child Care Resource and Referral Programs, One-Stop Access sites and the provincial services of Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre which will dismantle the infrastructure that has been built over the last ten years.

**In the face of these realities, the operating funding program does nothing to fix the crisis created by government's actions and does nothing to bring fees down or bring wages up!**

We are already hearing from our members across the province about the negative impact the new operating program will have on families and communities. Your 'real stories' clearly contradict government's claims that they are creating new spaces and promoting fairness and equity.

While we can't promise to respond to each and every troubling message we receive, we count on you to keep us informed and we promise that our advocacy messages will reflect your realities.

It is even more important that the decision-makers and public hear directly from you. We know that sometimes it feels pointless to send one more letter or email – but remember that it is part of this government's strategy to promote cynicism and demoralization. **Don't let them get away with it!**

Here's what you can do:

- ✓ Send the Premier an email at [premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:premier@gov.bc.ca). Tell him what's happening in your program and your community. Let him know what the operating grant means concretely for you.
- ✓ Send the same message to Lynn Stephens at [lynn.stephens.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:lynn.stephens.mla@leg.bc.ca) and your MLA.  
To contact your MLA by email go to [www.legis.gov.bc.ca/mla/3-4.asp](http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/mla/3-4.asp)
- ✓ Send a letter or story to your local newspaper and radio station or, better yet, invite a reporter to visit your program and talk with families and caregivers who are directly affected by government's cuts.

Join us in speaking out for a publicly funded child care system that meets the needs of all families.