



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

**For Immediate Release**

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**NOT A GOOD START TO THE SCHOOL YEAR FOR DAYCARE PARENTS**

Quietly this summer, the Ministry of Children and Family Development announced changes to subsidy eligibility and rates for school-aged child care. Subsidies help low income parents with the cost of child care. While government suggests this is a 'good news' story – the reality for children, families and child care providers is that:

- The new lower income cut-off for full subsidies for families with a kindergarten aged child (from \$33,300 to \$21,480 per year) is completely unacceptable and will make it even more difficult for BC families to afford quality child care so that they can work or study. This contradicts the Premier's recent statements that her Family First agenda begins with 'jobs'.
- The small increases in subsidy rates (\$4.65 - \$9.30 per month) do not come close to covering the actual cost of care, will not create one new space and, as we have seen in the past, will likely spark an increase in fees – leaving parents no better off.

The latest tinkering with the subsidy system won't work because subsidies are not an effective way to build or fund a child care system.

The Executive Director of Jericho Kids' Club, Christine Hibbert, says “instead of assisting working parents they put further limits on eligibility and increase the barriers to accessibility. Although the rates have increased – fewer families will qualify for assistance. This is not an increase in funding but further attempts to limit the overall subsidies for our children and families.”

Susan Harney, Chair of the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC, says “what BC children and families really need is the publicly funded high quality, universal system described in our Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning,” (see [http://www.cccabc.bc.ca/plan/Community\\_Plan\\_ECL.pdf](http://www.cccabc.bc.ca/plan/Community_Plan_ECL.pdf)).

If government implements CCCABC's Plan, child care will cost families \$10 a day for full time care, \$7 a day for part time care and will be free for families with annual incomes under \$40,000. Every child will have the right to participate in quality early care and learning programs and it will be up to families to choose what services work for them. Child care services will receive the operating funds they need to deliver quality programs and Early Childhood Educators will receive the respect and remuneration they deserve.

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