

# Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC

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

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## **Where are our daycare spaces?**

What is Linda Reid, BC's Minister of State for Child Care saying to her federal counterparts about their proposed Child Care Space Initiative? When will she let BC families and communities know how she is representing their interests?

The Federal government has committed \$250 million per year for 5 years starting in 2007, for an Initiative that will provide employers and non-profit organizations with incentives valued at \$10,000 towards the capital expenditures for each child care space that they 'create'. The federal government says this will create up to 25,000 new spaces a year but has provided few details to support this claim.

"Officials from Human Resources and Social Development Canada are in BC this week to consult about this Child Care Space Initiative. Ontario has been very public about the weaknesses of this plan," says Susan Harney, Chair of the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC "but once again, BC is silent."

Journalist Laurie Monsebraaten reports that Ontario Children's Minister Mary Anne Chambers has told Diane Finley, the federal Minister responsible for this proposed initiative "that previous provincial efforts to create child care by offering tax incentives to businesses failed miserably. And \$10,000 per space falls far short of actual costs." (Toronto Star, Fri 01 Sep 2006 Page: A06)

British Columbians share her concerns. "Capital dollars for new spaces can only work if they come with an on-going commitment to operating funds. But the federal government has cancelled its agreement with BC that would have provided \$455 million over the next 3 years to build a quality child care system that is affordable and accessible." says Maryann Bird, former Executive Director of the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada and current Saltspring Island grandmother. "BC promised to release its Child Care Action Plan on January 31, 2006 but there is still no plan. BC families and communities are still waiting to hear how BC intends to handle the impact of a loss of \$455 million in federal transfer payments for child care. And now, we don't know what our province is saying about an ill conceived initiative that is unlikely to create sustainable child care spaces that communities needs."

"Its time the media and the opposition held Ministers Reid and Christensen, the new Minister for Children and Family Development, accountable for their government's inaction on child care" concludes Stephanie Seaman, a front line child care worker in Vancouver. "Families and child care workers have a right to know where our provincial government stands."

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