

## **A Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning in BC**

*A “made-in BC” solution to the child care crisis that incorporates the best of child care and the best of public education*

While BC’s Ministry of Education implements universal, publicly funded full school day Kindergarten for 5-year-olds, and seems ready to announce Junior Kindergarten for 3 and 4-year-olds, the crisis facing BC’s child care services only gets worse. Fees are too high for parents, wages are too low for staff and throughout the province quality regulated spaces are too few.

Child care, from infant and toddler care through to school age care in both group and family settings, plays a central role in supporting families, often so that parents can participate in the paid workforce. Today, BC child care providers interact on a regular basis with the families of close to **65,000** young children. This makes child care **the** largest front line support service for BC families. And yet, because governments have failed to adequately plan for and invest in child care, the crisis gets worse each year.

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC and the Early Childhood Educators of BC recognize that change is here and so to inform and influence the change, rather than simply react to it, we developed a **Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning**.

Our Community Plan builds on research that demonstrates public spending on the early years is a wise social and economic investment and that quality child care IS early learning. It honours children’s and families’ right to quality early care and learning.

The highlights of the Plan include:

- New legislation... a BC Early Care and Learning Act
- A new home for child care in the Ministry of Education
- A new role for Boards of Education
- The development of Early Years Centre Networks
- Enhancing Kindergarten and Grade One
- Strengthening School Age Care and Family Child Care
- Developing the Early Childhood Educators’ workforce

Since the launch of the draft Emerging Plan in 2010, thousands of British Columbians have been engaged by and with the Plan. Now we need those in positions of influence to make a commitment to move the Plan forward so that children, families, communities and our economy are served by a high quality, universal, democratic and accountable system of early care and learning.

Our **Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning** offers a concrete, innovative and ambitious way forward. It provides a framework for significant and lasting change. While it does not yet answer every question, the excitement and interest it has generated continue to grow.

For ways you can endorse and support the Plan to move it forward visit [www.cccabc.ca](http://www.cccabc.ca) or [www.ecebc.ca](http://www.ecebc.ca).