



B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union
A component of NUPGE (CLC)

August 6, 2010

Mr. Dave Anderson, President and CEO
WorkSafeBC
PO Box 5350, Stn Terminal
Vancouver, B.C.
V6B 5L5

Dear Mr. Anderson

I am writing to express great concern that the WCB has made the decision to enter into a contract with a commercial child care company, Kids & Company, to provide child care services for WCB staff.

The BCGEU has long been an active advocate for a comprehensive, publicly-funded, community-based child care system that is high quality, affordable and accessible. We have grave concerns that WCB, a public agency, has made the decision to contract with a for-profit child care business.

Quality, affordable child care is an essential part of the work/life equation and we strongly support WCB's desire to ensure employees are able to meet their child care needs. However, contracting with a commercial child care company like Kids & Company does not in any way achieve this goal. For-profit child care centres like Kids & Company are in the business to make a profit. Growing their revenue and keeping costs low are the primary focus. Consequently, parents pay higher fees. At Kids & Company parents fees are \$1350 per month compared to \$745 per month at not-for-profit child care centres in Richmond; child care workers are working for lower wages; and, as substantiated by a significant body of evidence, the quality of care at for-profit centres is not equal to that found in not-for-profit or public child care centres.

To participate in the labour force in a productive way, and with their minds at ease, parents need accessible, affordable, quality child care. Your employee survey indicated that finding good reliable day care is an ongoing struggle. We understand there's a child care crisis at the WCB, as there is across British Columbia, but for-profit child care is not the solution.

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The responsibility lies with the provincial and federal governments and the answer is adequate public funding for existing and new child care services in B.C. There are not-for-profit child care centres in Richmond and other communities around the province that would welcome working with the WCB to develop the solutions that would meet the child care needs of your employees located, not only in Richmond, but at your other locations in the province.

I urge you to reconsider your decision to enter into a contract with Kids & Company.
Instead:

- Call on the provincial government to build and sustain quality, affordable child care services that enable parents who require child care to go to work;
- Work with not-for-profit child care providers and your employees in Richmond and other communities to develop the solutions that meet the needs of your staff, in an affordable way.

I welcome hearing from you on this very important matter.

Sincerely,



Darryl Walker
President

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cc. The Honourable Gordon Campbell, M.L.A.
Premier of British Columbia

Ms. Carole James, M.L.A.
Leader of the Official Opposition

The Honourable Mary Polak, M.L.A.
Minister of Children and Family Development

Ms. Mable Elmore, M.L.A.
Deputy Opposition Critic for Children and Family Development

Mr. Raj Chouhan, M.L.A.
Official Opposition Critic for Labour

Ms. Susan Harney, Chair
Coalition of Child Care Advocates of B.C.

Mr. Jim Sinclair, President
B.C. Federation of Labour

Ms. Sandra Wright, President
Compensation Employees' Union

Mr. George Morfitt, Chair, Board of Directors
WorkSafeBC

Mr. Phillip Legg, Board of Directors
WorkSafeBC

