

## **BC child care plans prove Dryden needs to act now to get Child Care right!**

December 2004

In January 2005, federal, provincial and territorial ministers will meet to forge a deal for a national child care system. Parents and advocates across BC are urging our governments to get the building blocks of the new system right from the start.

We are sending 'Building Blocks' for a new child care system to Stan Hagen, BC's Minister of Children and Family Development, and to Ken Dryden the federal Minister of Social Development with the message that Canada's children and families need:

- A Publicly Funded and Sustainable Child Care System
- A Child Care Act that guarantees standards and principles
- Public Accountability tied to concrete provincial and territorial plans
- Money for children, not profits.

Nowhere in Canada is the need for accountability for federal funds more evident than in BC where provincial child care policies fly in the face of the fundamental principles needed to build a new system. The international and national research clearly affirms that legislated standards and enforcement regarding staff training, group size, facilities, and health and safety precautions are key to the quality of child care. But the BC government continues to ignore the research and instead are spending more and more public money on unlicensed care.

Not surprisingly, we are now seeing a flurry of spending announcements from the BC government as they attempt to spend federal dollars by fiscal yearend in order to avoid embarrassment on the national stage. We are outraged that one-time only funding is pouring out of the back door of Victoria with no coherent and coordinated long-term plan to provide a quality child care system for BC's children and families.

We encourage British Columbians to email, fax and mail Minister Stan Hagen and Minister Ken Dryden telling them that children and families need them to build a quality child care system that holds provinces accountable for the funds they receive.