

Premier Gordon Campbell
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Dear Premier,

For some time, I have been really concerned about the state of child care in BC. As a result of provincial funding cuts, children from low and moderate income families have left licensed care, child care programs have closed, Early Childhood Education training programs have been cut and early childhood educators wages have gone down.

So, I was encouraged to hear that your government is now prepared to 'reinvest' in child care. But as the details of your spending plans emerge, my hope has faded.

Your decision to substantially increase child care subsidies for unlicensed care ignores the research about the importance of quality in promoting healthy early childhood development. Your decision to spend over \$5 million on one-time only grants to Child Care Resource and Referral Programs and child care programs will not promote stability.

Families and caregivers need every penny they can get and will use these funds to help them get through a few months. But government has a responsibility to spend public funds effectively. Without a long-term plan for building a quality child care system in BC, much of your child care 'reinvestment' seems to be a desperate attempt to get money out the door before the end of the fiscal year. I certainly didn't expect this from a government that says it is concerned about sustainability and accountability.

I am therefore calling on you to:

Develop a five year plan for moving away from a user fee/subsidy system to a publicly funded system based on the principles of Quality, Universality, Accessibility, Developmental programming and Inclusion.

In order to successfully implement this plan, your government will need to:

- Restore child care to 2001/02 levels.
- Use existing and future federal funds to supplement rather than replace provincial cuts.
- As a first step, begin to provide direct public funding to licensed child care programs with accountability measures tied to quality, affordable parent fees and improved wages and working conditions.

Name (Please print) _____

Signature _____

Address _____

Email address _____