

## **Child Care Month - Nothing to Celebrate!**

May 2003

For the past 20 years, we have taken time in May to honour and celebrate child care. The tradition began in the early 1980's when the BC Daycare Action Coalition asked the City of Vancouver to proclaim Daycare Week. Our first slogan — Good daycare is good for kids — is as relevant today as it was then.

Over time, May has become Child Care Month in BC. Mayors pass proclamations, governments produce posters, child care organizations raise the profile of child care in their communities, advocates push the public policy agenda and all of us take time to celebrate the tireless and remarkable efforts of the caregivers across BC who are there for children, families and communities day in and day out.

**But — this year is different.** This year, we face an unprecedented erosion of the progress we achieved over the last two decades. Here are the facts:

- Over a 3 year period, the province will cut over \$50 million from child care
- Over 10,000 families have lost all or part of their child care subsidy
- Enrolment of children from low and moderate income families in licensed programs is down
- More children are now in unlicensed settings or on their own before and after school
- Wages for many child care providers are being rolled back to 1998 levels
- Programs have closed and more will close in the near future.

**This year — there is NOTHING to celebrate!** So, instead of parties, parades and picnics, we are encouraging you to take action that mourns the losses, highlights the critical nature of the situation and holds our elected leaders to account for their broken promises. Here are some ideas:

- Order copies of the "Nothing to Celebrate" Bumper Sticker at [info@cccabc.bc.ca](mailto:info@cccabc.bc.ca) and post them all over the community (Due to limited numbers of stickers, packages of 25 stickers will be mailed on a first come, first serve basis)
- Hold a mock funeral or a silent vigil outside the local MLA's office
- Wear gray arm bands
- Ask a local reporter to cover the 'real child care stories' in your community
- And once again - write, call, or email the Premier, Lynn Stephens and your MLA to tell them that **because of their actions — there is nothing to celebrate.**

For information on campaigns as they develop, stay tuned to [www.cccabc.bc.ca](http://www.cccabc.bc.ca).

The following organizations join the Coalition of Child Care Advocates in endorsing this message: BC Association of Child Care Services, Early Childhood Educators of BC, School Age Child Care Association of BC and Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre.