

Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC
Chairperson's report
June 2013

2012/2013 proved to be another busy and productive year for the Coalition. The year held its' share of ups and downs – the enormous success of our \$10/day child care plan within the community, and the disappointment of the provincial election, with what we hoped would be the beginnings of implementation. Through it all the Board remained focused and energetic. Both membership and financial sponsorship for our work increased, acknowledging the important contribution our ideas and projects are making.

A significant amount of our time and energy continues with our partnership with ECEBC and our \$10/day child care plan. More than 18 local governments, many school boards, organizations, businesses, and academics have now endorsed The Plan, bringing our support to well over 1.6 million supporters. Personal endorsements from parents, grandparents and early childhood educators also increased demonstrating the grass roots support for significant change to address the child care crisis in our province. A major financial grant from the United Way of the Lower Mainland, financial and in kind support from Labour and other organizations enabled us to move forward with our work plan. Our Fact Sheet #4 addressed how The Plan would reduce child poverty in BC.

The Plan continues to garner provincial support as well as national and international attention. Sharon Gregson was invited to Toronto where she presented on the Plan. As well we met with members from a delegation from Thailand of child advocates who were interested to learn about the Plan. Increased media attention meant that word of the Plan was being discussed in every community across BC. This year also saw an increase in table presentations at conventions, town hall meetings and other community events.

Over 100,000 post cards were distributed calling for MLA support of The Plan. As well we printed bumper stickers and a new Coalition brochure. For International Women's Day our labour allies along with parents and Early Childhood Educators from UBC Childcare hosted a child care march highlighting the crisis in child care and a demand at the office of Premier Christy Clark to adopt the \$10/day Plan. The Coalition's presence was defined through speeches and numerous members waving placards.

Our corporate child care report was completed and picked up interest from national news agencies. The report shows how investment in corporate, "big box" child care is flawed. A letter to Minister Mary McNeil called on the provincial government to begin a moratorium on new CCOF funds to commercial child care centres. A special thank you to Board Members Mab Oloman and Lynell Anderson for their contributions to this project.

Ruth Bancroft continues to represent BC at the national advocacy table. While the national organizations address issues of restructuring, Ruth has been actively involved through the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada as our representative moving through the complicated issues that restructuring requires.

Our Child Care is a Right project resulted in more than 70 organizations both provincial and national signing on to our Declaration for Child Care. In late September, the UN committee on the Rights of the Child were very strong in its critique on Canada's lack of support for early childhood services including child care. The project has had significant impact in our work, as we move forward with a "Rights based lens". Through our work with the BCCEDAW group I was honoured to participate in our joint written submission to the United Nations Universal Periodic Review highlighting the significant barriers women face, including access to affordable, quality child care.

Members of the Board participated in many other community coalitions including First Call and the Poverty Reduction Coalition. Rita Chudnovsky represented child care in the Poverty Reduction Coalition's successful webinar. We continue to work closely with CCPA-BC and thank Seth Klein for taking the time to present information to our Board about progressive tax options. Members of our Board also participated in a number of events sponsored by Women Transforming Cities which lead to a letter writing event in the Spring. The Coalition was honoured in being awarded recognition as a finalist in the WTC's international awards.

This year, in preparation for the provincial election, we hired consultant Sarah Buchanan to assist in community mobilization and public education. With Sarah's help, the work of the Coalition had a high social media profile and connected with new community organizations that through their support helped to strengthen our messages and inspire new advocates. We sincerely thank Sarah for her hard work and wish her well in relocation to the Toronto area. I would also like to thank Melanie Anderson who patiently helped our Board become more social media savvy.

Our partnerships with labour unions remains strong. I'd like to thank the BCGEU in particular for their ongoing support of child care advocacy.

Sadly, this year we mourned the passing of Dr. Clyde Hertzman, an inspiration and child care advocate whom we lost much too early.

I'd like to thank all the Board members and friends of the Board for their inspiration, endless commitment and dedication to make our province better for children and their families. The child care crisis is not going away and neither are we. We remain steadfast in our resolve to move the \$10/day child care Plan forward so that every parent and every child has the opportunity to access high quality, affordable child care services.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Harney
Chairperson
CCCABC