



Working together for a community based, non-profit child care system that is high quality, affordable, accessible, publicly funded and accountable.

Our Starting Place ¹

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (CCCABC) is an inclusive, feminist, membership-based organization comprised of individuals and groups including parents, grandparents, child care providers, community organizations, academics and unions. Through research, public education and mobilization, we work collectively to achieve a high-quality, affordable, accessible child care system that serves the public interest.

We are proud partners in broader feminist and social justice movements where, with many allies, we fight for a better world in which equity means inclusion, opportunity and accessibility for all.

We are the leading provincial organization for whom child care is the key lens through which we advance this better world. We advocate for quality, affordable, inclusive and accessible child care because we believe it is the right thing to do – for children, women, families, communities, the economy and our environment. Not surprisingly, evidence and lived experience from a broad range of perspectives overwhelmingly support this belief.

We believe that the current child care chaos is a reflection of power imbalances that exist in our society.

Through our child care lens, a key power imbalance stems from patriarchal values. What has traditionally been viewed as women's work of caring is not respected nor seen as essential for the wellbeing of us all.

Another key power imbalance stems from the deep and lasting impact that colonialism has and continues to have on individuals, families, and communities.

And, a power imbalance stems from a reliance on failed market approaches that treat child care as a commodity to be bought and sold rather than a public good.

¹ We want to acknowledge and thank a number of organizations whose thoughts and words are reflected in this Statement: BC Aboriginal Child Care Society; Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women; Ishtar Transition Housing Society; United Way of the Lower Mainland. This statement also draws on previous publications by the CCCABC and some of its individual Board members.

The result of these and other power imbalances is discrimination against women as mothers and caregivers, discrimination against children and discrimination against families who face particular barriers and challenges.

Child care is also our key lens because we believe that child care is a **transformative issue at the core of redressing power imbalances so that we can build a better world.**

It is transformative for mothers because, when they have access to child care that reflects and respects their needs and beliefs, it helps create gender equity.

It is transformative for children because it offers an inclusive and nurturing start to life that, in partnership with families, recognizes children as individuals with rights.

It is transformative for society because it moves the emotional and educational work of caring that women have done in the home into the collective, social realm.

It is transformative for our environment because it relies on human rather than non-renewable resources, it creates green 'caring' jobs and it supports local economies and sustainability.

And, it is transformative for us all because the paradigm shift that emerges as a result of respecting young children and those who care for them is key to ensuring a better and more equitable world.

We are confident that there are solutions to the current child care chaos and focus our energy on advancing these solutions.

We strive to advance our agenda in ways that reflect the values and culture of the system we are fighting for. We recognize that we have a responsibility to initiate decolonizing transformations in non-Indigenous communities.

Like the child care system we seek, we believe that everyone has a right to be heard and respected; that minds and hearts matter; that relationships are key and that sharing and caring can and will change the world.

We also strive to be open to new ideas, new perspectives and new energy so that our understanding of power, privilege, rights, inclusion and diversity is always evolving.

We know that there are a range of perspectives, experiences and practices within the child care, feminist and social justice movements. Within this diversity, we will work to build the broadest possible base of support for our work. We know that we will not always agree with some policies and practices of those who support our child care agenda. We encourage constructive dialogue to resolve such differences while retaining our fundamental commitment to rights and inclusion.

The cultural and political shifts needed to build the better world we envision require change from everyone. It will be hard and it will take time. We will strive to bring positive energy, generosity of spirit, vigilance and an openness to learn from practice through the process.