



COALITION OF

child care advocates

OF BC



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

August 1, 2009

Hon. Mary Polak
Minister of Children and Family Development and Minister Responsible for Child Care
Room 306, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Hon. Mary Polak,

We write to express our support for the children and families at the Phil Bouvier Family Centre in the Strathcona neighbourhood of east Vancouver. The cut to funding for additional staff who make it possible for the Centre to serve all children in the neighbourhood is of deep concern.

We are acutely aware that the situation at the Phil Bouvier Family Centre is indicative of a larger systemic child care crisis across British Columbia. Due to your government's failure to provide adequate, stable operating funds, many child care programs are struggling and are particularly challenged in their ability to provide appropriate services for the children who need extra support.

The situation at the Phil Bouvier Centre flies in the face of your Ministry's commitment to support vulnerable children. In your 2009 – 2011 Service Plan (<http://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2009/sp/pdf/ministry/cfd.pdf>) the Ministry of Children and Family Development outlines the following goals:

Goal 1: Placing a primary focus on preventing vulnerability in children and youth by providing strong supports for individuals, families and communities.

Goal 2: Providing early intervention services to vulnerable children and youth within their families and communities.

Goal 3: Providing intervention services and supports based on the assessment of individual needs.

And further, in the Ministry for Children and Family Development, January 2009 Child Care Report (http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/pdfs/child_care_in_bc_2008_final.pdf), the number one principle of Accessibility states that the Ministry has as a priority action to:

Provide funding for children with special needs to participate in child care programs, and resources to support child care programs that are culturally diverse.

Despite these claims, it is clear that the needs of children in BC, especially those who require extra supports to reach their full potential, are not being adequately met. Therefore, we urge you to ensure

that children with special needs across the province do not fall further behind while they languish on waiting lists, waiting for the funding that provides additional child care staffing and the resources to meet their individual needs.

All of British Columbia's children, families, communities and our economy will benefit from the development and implementation of a community based, non-profit child care system that is high quality, affordable for all families, accessible to all children, publicly funded and accountable.

Sincerely,



Susan Harney
Chairperson