



ELECTION

## CHILD CARE IS AN ISSUE PROVINCIAL ELECTION: MAY 12, 2009

### Child Care Questions for you to ask the Candidates

This year, we encourage BC voters to treat the provincial election as an important 'hiring process'. Remember – the MLAs we elect **work for us**. Let's hire 'the best candidate available' to plan, develop and deliver the child care services that BC children and families need and deserve.

With that in mind, here are some questions to ask candidates who come to your door, call you on the phone or attend all-candidate meetings. Remember – at all-candidates meetings each person will only be allowed to ask 1 question – so plan in advance to get to the microphone and make sure your child care questions get asked.

It's always good to start with a personal story about your connection with child care. Then, ask:

1. **If elected, what will the candidates do immediately to address the child care crisis, stabilize existing spaces and prevent any more child care closures?**

*or*

**If you are a parent looking for a space, ask "What will the candidates do immediately to help my family find a quality child care space?"**

*Here you want to 'hire' a candidate who acknowledges that there is a crisis and has an immediate plan to protect existing services. Expect a sitting government MLA to say that things are going well – so be prepared to share your 'child care story' in response.*

2. **What experience do the candidates have in planning, developing and delivering a publicly funded child care system?**

*Here you want to 'hire' a candidate with a personal and/or political track record on child care. Look past the political spin for concrete, long term commitments and actions.*

3. **If elected, how much will the candidates invest in child care and over what time frame?**

*Here you want to 'hire' a candidate with a 5 year plan to incrementally invest the funds needed to build a universal, quality system. Expect a sitting MLA to say their government is spending more on child care than ever before. While this is technically true, ALL increases in BC child care spending since 2001 come from federal funds. BC is investing LESS provincial funds than in 2001. And, BC still only spends about 0.2% of GDP on child care. Developed countries spend 0.7% of GDP on average – about \$1 billion in BC – and UNICEF recommends that countries invest 1% of GDP in services for young children.*



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**4. What timelines and targets will the candidates commit to, for:**

- Lowering Parent Fees
- Raising Caregiver wages
- Building community owned quality child care spaces?

*Here you want to 'hire' a candidate with clear time lines and targets for achieving these goals and a clear commitment to being accountable for meeting them.*

**5. Do the candidates see public investment in child care as an important way to stimulate BC's economy?**

*Here you want to 'hire' a candidate who knows that investments in child care create jobs for women and men, help families during stressful times and promote healthy child development which reduces social costs down the road.*

**Take note of the answers and let us know about your event –  
we will work to hold those who are elected accountable for their decisions.**