



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.

Tessa Graham
Provincial Office for the Early Years
Ministry of Children and Family Development
4th floor – 765 Broughton Street
Victoria BC V8W 9S2

Dear Tessa:

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (Coalition) is pleased to submit the following response to the Provincial Office for the Early Years (EYO) in regards to the 'Help us Plan to Plan' request for input (June 15, 2015).

The Coalition is a voluntary organization of interested citizens, groups and organizations that support the development of a comprehensive, accessible and affordable community based non-profit child care system in BC and across Canada. Our proposed \$10aDay Child Care Plan, developed in partnership with the Early Childhood Educators of BC, is currently supported by 45 local governments, 30 school districts, labour groups, a growing number of businesses, hundreds of community organizations and thousands of individuals.

In addition, and in support of our child care goals, we collaborate with a range of groups to broadly advance the rights of children, women and families. Of particular relevance to this submission is our partnership with First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition and specifically our active participation at First Call's ECD Roundtable.

Working together, across the sector, the ECD Roundtable recently completed a review of current research, policies, actions and outcomes related to families with young children. The results are summarized in *Make BC's Young Children and Families a Priority: A Call to Action* (January, 2015). Essentially, our analysis confirms the EYO's assertion that "while the current investment and approach to local early years planning across B.C. has generated a great deal of momentum around the importance of the early years, ultimately, it has not had significant impact on improving outcomes for children."

However, the solution is not – as the EYO review document proposes - to help you plan do more planning. The scope of this review (and the mandate of the EYO) is far too limited, given the scale of the problem.

The ongoing child care crisis highlights this fact. Child care in Canada, including BC, consistently ranks among the weakest in the industrialized world, as measured by public investment, access and quality. Yet, at the September 16 ECD Roundtable meeting, the EYO representative confirmed that the planning review will not address this reality.

Our *Call to Action* concludes:

"As research about the importance of the early years continues to grow, the ongoing policy and investment shortcomings in our province and Canada as a whole remain very troubling. Child poverty and early vulnerability rates are still high, access to quality, affordable child care remains out of sight for most families, and long wait times for early intervention services pose serious challenges for families with children who require additional supports.

Many communities have taken leadership and are working hard to respond to the well-documented needs. While their initiatives are valued and necessary, communities cannot do it alone. And, while governments now acknowledge the need for action, their response to date has been relatively small public investment delivered in an ad hoc manner.

This is not enough. In BC and Canada, significant changes to public policy and substantial investments are required to advance healthy child development and to address the scale and scope of the socioeconomic realities confronting the majority of families with young children today, particularly those who face additional barriers."

Collectively we will continue to work toward this goal and to implement the \$10aDay Child Care Plan, we urge all British Columbians to join us.

Sincerely,



Susan Harney
Chairperson
info@cccabc.bc.ca