



## MINUTES

### **First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition Early Childhood Development Roundtable meeting – June 18, 2009 Held at United Way of the Lower Mainland, Burnaby**

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#### ***In Attendance:***

Alison Bledsoe, United Way of the Lower Mainland;  
Lynn McBride, BC Aboriginal Child Care Society  
Debbie Jackson, BC Assn of Family Resource Programs  
Lesley Richardson, First Call  
Adrienne Montani, First Call  
Sheila Davidson, Early Childhood Educators of BC (Chair)  
Cynthia Low, Britannia Community Services  
Susan Foster, Tri-Cities ECD Community Development  
Julie Renton, Westcoast Family Resources.  
Sabine Tanasiuk, Ray Cam Cooperative Centre  
Sanja Sladojevic, Windows of Opportunity/Open Doors  
Sue Irwin, Vancouver Coastal CCRR  
Tanya Brown, Supported Child Development  
Jean Woodcock, Mt. Pleasant Family Centre  
Sue Irwin, Vancouver Coastal Region CCRR  
Heather Armour, Public Health Agency of Canada  
Rita Chudnovsky, BC Child Care Advocacy Forum

Diane Liscumb, Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre  
Mab Oloman, Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC

#### ***On Phone:***

Joy Wilson, Langley CD Centre  
Moire Porter, Boys and Girls Club, Nanaimo

#### ***Regrets:***

Dana Brynelsen, Provincial Infant Development Program  
Karen de Long, BC Association for Community Living  
Erin Balmer, City of Surrey  
Tami Overbeck, Sea to Sky Community Services  
Jane McNamara, Canadian Federation of University Women

### **1. Welcomes, introductions, regrets**

### **2. DVD series on play - a new resource.**

Julie Renton of Westcoast Family Resources Society presented information about a DVD on the importance of play which the society has produced and which was shown in part to the meeting's participants. This resource is available in English, Cantonese, Farsi, Mandarin, Punjabi, Spanish and Vietnamese. Non-English versions come packaged with an English version. A slight fee may be charged to cover costs. To obtain the video or for more information about it contact Carol Anderson Ph: (604) 254-5457, ext 226  
carol.anderson@westcoastfamily.org

### **3. BC Ministry mandates, new Cabinet and impacts on early childhood development.**

The government's inexplicable ongoing split between early learning and child care and the separation of early childhood development from each was noted and discussed. (Early Learning in the Ministry of Education: Early Childhood Development and Child Care in the Ministry of Children and Family Development) In response participants suggested that a letter might be sent from the ECDRT to the Premier expressing concern about the confusion arising from the use and segregation of the terms "early learning", "early childhood development" and "child care" in government documents and mandates.

Cabinet changes were noted with some participants expressing regret that Linda Reid had

lost her child care portfolio. It was suggested that the ECDRT ask for a meeting with the new Ministers and after some discussion the following was proposed.

*Action: that the new Minister of Children and Family Development, Mary Polak, and the new Minister of Education, Margaret MacDiarmid, be invited to a lunch hosted by the ECDRT. The purpose of the lunch would be to welcome them to their new mandates and to provide them with our related priorities. Details and date to be determined by FC staff and a small working group with a recommendation that the event should be prior to the next sitting of the Legislature. Those interested in participating were to give Lesley their names.*

**4. Ontario Report to the Premier by the Special Advisor on Early Learning.**

There was a brief discussion about the Ontario report proposing full day learning for 4 and 5 year olds. The full report, With Our Best Future in Mind, and related material is available at [http://www.ontario.ca/en/initiatives/early\\_learning/ONT06\\_018876](http://www.ontario.ca/en/initiatives/early_learning/ONT06_018876).

Participants then considered how Ontario's actions might be of influence or not in BC. This conversation focused on the statement from the BC Early Childhood Learning Agency that three factors are delaying the introduction of full day kindergarten for children 5 and under. They are: the current economic circumstances; the need to develop appropriate space; and the time to recruit qualified educators.

It is also understood that through 2009/2010, there will be continued expansion of StrongStart BC early learning programs. This led to a discussion of concerns about recruitment, retention, living wages and other related issues and resulted in two suggestions.

*Action: that it might be useful for a meeting with reps from CUPE and the BCTF to be convened for a discussion of the issues noted above. Details such as who should call the meeting were not determined.*

*Action: that Strong Start should be put as the main agenda item of a Roundtable meeting in the fall.*

**5. New Chair needed for ECD Roundtable**

Sheila Davidson will soon be stepping down from her position of Roundtable Chair. Thank you to Sheila for the commitment and guidance she has provided to the group and for representing the Roundtable on the First Call Coordinating Committee. Those interested in assuming this position should contact Adrienne or Lesley.

**6. Future meetings:**

Next meeting **Thursday September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009, 9:30-12:00.**