



## Cuts to Child Care: Impacts & Actions

### Background Information

Since requesting information from communities, child care providers and child care resource and referral program operators about the impacts of the announced cuts to child care, First Call has been inundated with passionate pleas and valuable information. Read First Call's [news release here](#).

First Call writes to [Finance Minister Carole Taylor](#) and to [Premier Gordon Campbell](#).

First Call issues a [statement](#) of response to all coalition partners on **February 9, 2007**.

View [Child Care Resource and Referral Program Outcomes 2004-2005](#).

View the [East Kootenay Child Care Report January 2007](#).

### Calls to action and news from our partner organizations and communities

\* BC Healthy Child Development Alliance wrote a [letter to Premier Campbell](#) in January 2007 calling for a reinstatement of and increase to child care funding and requesting to meet with the government. Minister of State for Child Care [Linda Reid responded](#) in May 2007 stating that only "sustainable" child care programs and services are a wise investment, and that she was too busy to meet with the Alliance.

\* Information and action session **Thursday April 12<sup>th</sup> 6:30pm, Heritage Hall, Vancouver**. To download poster: [http://www.bcgeu.ca/files/Apr12\\_Mtg\\_0.pdf](http://www.bcgeu.ca/files/Apr12_Mtg_0.pdf)

\* Take Action with the [Code Blue Campaign](#)! Prime Minister Harper gets a failing grade for providing universal child care, helping parents balance life and work, and honouring agreements. Please **SIGN** and **ADD your own comments** to these online report cards before Federal Budget Day, **March 19, 2007**.

\* Collect signatures for the [BC Child Care Petition](#) and send it to your local MLA.

\* Write letters to your elected officials:

- Minister Linda Reid and Premier Gordon Campbell to advocate for child care: <http://www.bcgeu.bc.ca/files/ParentLtr.pdf>
- Monte Solberg, [Federal Minister for Resources and Development](#)
- To find your local MP: <http://www.parl.gc.ca/information/about/people/house/PostalCode.asp?Language=E>
- To find your local MLA: <http://www.leg.bc.ca/mla/3-1-1.htm>
- [Parents for Child Care Petition](#)
- [Dads for Child Care Petition](#)
- [Parents for Child Care Sample Letter 1](#)
- [Parents for Child Care Sample Letter 2](#)

\* For Minister of State for Child Care Linda Reid to resign her cabinet post and for the provincial government to restore the cuts and build a child care system (See <http://www.cccabc.bc.ca/> and [http://www.ecebc.ca/branch\\_bulletin.html](http://www.ecebc.ca/branch_bulletin.html))

\* Many testimonials, press releases, open letters to government and sample letters for people to use to inform their elected representatives (federal, provincial and municipal) about the impacts the announced cuts will have on children, families, child care providers and communities.

\* A financial fact sheet from HELP's Early Learning and Child Care Research Unit [http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/documents/2007/Financial\\_FS\\_Jan\\_07\\_Final\\_2.pdf](http://www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/documents/2007/Financial_FS_Jan_07_Final_2.pdf)

\* Open letter to Minister Reid from the Child Care Advocacy Forum with a breakdown of BC's budget reflecting the government's failure to invest in child care <http://www.advocacyforum.bc.ca/pdf/OpenLetterToMinisterReid.pdf>

\* Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre provides updates on its services reflecting the impacts of the provincial child care funding cuts: <http://www.wstcoast.org/pdf/crisis/cuts-westcoast.pdf>

\* BC Association of Social Workers' media release on Linda Reid's performance: <http://www.bcasw.org/Content/News%20and%20Media/News%20Archive.asp?ItemID=30937>)

\* Announcements of service closures.

\* Other creative advocacy ideas to make the point that **the evidence on the importance of building a high quality, universally accessible, affordable, and inclusive child care system is being ignored by the provincial government.**

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[Fact Sheet on Impact of CCRR & CCOF Cuts](#)

[Letter from Claire Trevena](#)

[From 100 Mile House](#)

[From a Young Parent Program in the Lower Mainland](#)

[Closure of Richmond Child Care Resource & Referral Centre on 31](#)

[March 07](#)

[Pentiction & District Child Care Resource and Referral](#)

[\*What it means to You.... Why should You care\*](#)

[What can You do.....](#)

[Here is a letter from a family child care provider in Port Alberni](#)

[Government Cuts Stop Daycare Expansion in Kimberley](#)

[Letter from Dr. Carrie Fitzsimons to Minister Reid](#)

[Letter from Maurine Karagianis](#)



January, 2007

## **BC's Child Care Cuts Ignore the Evidence**

First Call is asking why no one in the provincial government is championing the creation of a child care system for BC's children and families? Why is government announcing cuts to child care operating funding and resource and referral programs that will throw parents and child care providers into crisis yet again? Why is the government so adverse to supporting working families?

The importance of the early years for the growth and development of children, with lasting impacts throughout their lives, is well-known and undisputed. The benefits to society as a whole of supporting young children's development is also accepted as a given. Key national and international business leaders are convinced and the evidence from academic research and community experience is overwhelming: early childhood development is one of the most cost effective investments any society can make.

The December 2006 report of the BC Progress Board advised government, "The first step is to ensure that low income children in particular benefit from quality care" and warned that the lack of a provincial commitment to additional child care funding would lead to cuts in operating grants for care providers, putting low income children at risk.

In her report on Healthy Early Childhood Development Child and Youth Officer for BC Jane Morley noted, "Child care services are accessed by more children than any other early childhood development program... it follows that a child care strategy must be a cornerstone of an effective early childhood development strategy"(2005, p. 18).

Premier Campbell is on record saying, "We know that quality, affordable and accessible child care services are important to families in British Columbia and we believe that a good start in life for our children means a healthier society down the road" (letter to First Call Early Childhood Development Roundtable, 2004).

BC has a budget surplus that runs into the billions of dollars. Whether the federal government child care funding is reinstated or not, BC can clearly afford to maintain the current level of support for child care. These cuts are unnecessary and fly in the face of all the evidence and expert opinion. They should be rescinded immediately.

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# First Call Message to All Partners

February 9, 2007

Across BC, communities are mobilizing to protest our provincial government's mean-spirited cuts to child care services. First Call, with its coalition of over 75 partner organizations, stands proudly with the thousands of British Columbians who are saying ***enough is enough!*** With over \$2 billion in provincial surpluses available, we will not stand silent while children and families are forced to make do with even fewer child care services and supports in their communities.

Let's be clear – these cuts have little to do with the cancellation of the federal child care agreements, and everything to do with undermining equality rights for working women and their families, and fundamental human rights for their children's care and education. How else could one explain new investments in universal, free early learning programs for the children of at-home parents at the same time as funding for children in BC's patchwork of under funded child care services is chopped?

Partners and friends, we must not allow provincial funding decisions to divide children, families and communities. Our lived experience tells us, and the evidence confirms that all children and families need access to a range of high quality, affordable and inclusive early learning and child care programs in their communities in order to thrive.

**Therefore, First Call is undertaking the following three immediate actions to protest these cuts and the lack of provincial progress on child care:**

- 1. We're writing to the Premier and BC's Representative for Children and Youth to express our concern about child care and in particular our concern about vulnerable children and families.**
- 2. We're writing to the Minister of Finance and the Auditor General to raise serious questions about BC's management of federal transfers for child care.**
- 3. We're requesting your unequivocal support and voice no matter who receives 'one-time-only' funds.**

- 1. Concerns about child care and in particular our concern about vulnerable children and families**

We will start by reminding the Premier, yet again, why he needs to build a universal, high quality, affordable child care system in BC. But, given the current cuts to child care, we cannot stop there. Our province has the highest child poverty rate in Canada, at 23.5%, yet Minister Reid is condoning child care fee increases for all families, including those with lower incomes. We must express our deep concern about the Minister of State's assertion that by preserving the province's minimal child care funding contribution she is in fact protecting vulnerable children and those who need additional supports. Where is the evidence to support this assertion, and what mechanisms are being put in place to ensure it is monitored appropriately? Surely this government has learned from the tragedies inflicted by its previous cuts to services for children and families.

## 2. 2. **Serious questions about BC's management of federal transfers for child care**

We will bring forward the questions and concerns we are hearing from you about:

- Why the BC government advised the child care community that the federal child care transfers cannot carry forward into next year to protect services, whereas this is not the case in other provinces;
- How the 2006/07 federal child care transfers are being spent, and how that information is publicly shared (e.g. closure costs for recently-expanded child care resource and referral programs? Transfers to education?);
- What steps the province is taking to secure ongoing dedicated federal transfers for child care.

We expect to have both of these open letters available for you shortly.

## 3. 3. **Requesting your unequivocal support and voice no matter who receives 'one-time-only' funds**

As we near the end of this fiscal year, we expect that government will again announce one-time-only grants or contracts. These announcements will be funded through unspent federal child care transfer payments but will be spent in ways that don't build and support the on-going operations of high quality, affordable and accessible child care services in communities.

Countless research reports and community consultations tell us that the province needs to prioritize increased and ongoing investments in child care operating funds that are accountable for reducing parent fees, enhancing quality through improved caregiver compensation and a comprehensive training strategy, and building more child care spaces.

Yet, we anticipate that one or more of our partners or friends will be approached by government to receive substantial one-time-only funding that doesn't address these investment priorities and in fact may be only marginally related to child care. These partners will face a difficult ethical dilemma.

On the one hand, everyone is struggling to provide quality services for children and families, with minimal resources in comparison to other industrialized countries. Knowing the unmet needs within their service priorities, some partner organizations may decide to accept these funds.

On the other hand, by accepting these funds, our partners will be helping this provincial government – knowingly or unknowingly – attempt to divert public attention from our growing child care crisis.

Let's remember the funds for "one time only expenditures" come from the hands and hearts of the parents and social justice groups who worked tirelessly for more than 20 years to secure provincial investment in a **child care system** that meets the needs of children and families across BC.

**That's why we call on everyone to stand up and be counted at this critical time. Especially** if you have chosen to accept "one-time-only" funds, we call on you to publicly declare ***enough is enough!*** Let everyone know that you do not condone funding increases for the children in your services at the expense of others, and that your signature on the funding contract will not ensure your silence on this critical issue. **First Call partners and friends stand by the BC child care community at this dark time, adding our voices in the news, on the streets and at the Legislature on February 13<sup>th</sup>.**

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## Impact of CCRR & CCOF Cuts

### CCRR:

- **No** Family Child Care Training Courses offered in communities. This will impact the quality of care, and certainly the License Not Required (LNR) child care sector.
- **No** registering of LNRs. This will have an impact in number of regulated child care spaces available, quality of care, work load on child care licensing officers, and the likely elimination of the **“enhanced child care subsidy rate” that eligible families receive when a provider is registered with a CCRR.**
- **No** workshops for parents, child care providers, and professional colleagues. Impacts quality, isolation issues, and supports.
- **No** partnering to deliver workshops and training in CCRR space. This impacts such things as workshop through Health such as “Do Bugs Need Drugs”, etc.
- **No** information referrals. This impacts all aspects of community service. Families and child care providers **will not be linked** to such things as Supported Child Care, Health nurses, local schools, recreation centers, food & housing programs, etc.
- **No** child care referrals. This highly utilized service that provides families with child care options, that meet their individual needs (ex: a child care provider who drops children off at a specific school) in their community will be lost. Last fiscal CCRR programs across BC completed 31,634 referrals. A central website or call in line will not contain all options of child care and will not contain specific details.
- **No** education on how to choose quality care and what to look for. CCRR program consultants give verbal and written information and how to choose a quality child care program.
- **No** assistance with child care subsidy. This will impact heavily on our communities. Access to applications, personal face to face assistance in filling out the application, guarantor signature, and photocopying & faxing services, will all be lost. It has been determined that in the past a website process or 1-800 number does not increase or assist in access to many of our families.
- **No** lending libraries. This will impact quality of programming, ability to offer child care, supports to everyone in our communities, and supports to other programs such as drop-ins, ECE college students, Women’s Resource Centres, etc.
- **No** drop-in programs. This will impact early learning programs in communities that are accessible and free for families and child care providers.
- **No** newsletters. The recipient of CCRR newsletter is vast across BC. Among other things, this spreads information, shares updates, and contains important notices about up and coming events in each community.
- **No** CCRR budget will impact host agencies and co-location partners.

### CCOF Cuts & new “Cap”:

- Will **discourage** new child care spaces to be created.
- Will **discourage** individuals from becoming Early Childhood Educators
- Will **force** child care providers to find those dollars elsewhere, likely parent fees or staff wages.
- Will **increase parent fees** in some cases.
- Will **negatively impact the quality** of the child care program.

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## Claire Trevena

North Island  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria BC V8V 1X4  
Phone (250) 387-3655  
Fax (250) 387-4680

Constituency Office  
908 Island Hwy  
Campbell River BC V9W 2C3  
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January 17, 2007

Honourable Linda Reid  
Minister of State for Childcare  
Room 29  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Reid,

I am appalled by the recent announcement of cuts made by you as Minister to the already under resourced child care sector. At a time when the Province has a budget surplus, is faced with labour shortages - and when the Premier's own Progress Board has highlighted the need for government to invest in child care - your ministry attacks it.

This is yet another example of the BC Liberal government failing BC families. When the federal government eliminated the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) agreement, Premier Campbell was silent. Now, instead of providing leadership and helping families, your government has decided to move backward to pre-ELCC funding levels and pass on the cuts to parents.

As a result of your government's decision to cut childcare funding, centres are threatened with closure, while others are forced to raise their fees. And instead of providing leadership, you are on record as Minister of State for Childcare suggesting that parents should save money to make up for these funding cuts.

This new increase in costs will leave many parents in a position of having to take their children out of quality childcare and resorting to makeshift arrangements, including creating latch-key kids. Or some parents will inevitably leave the workforce because they will spend more on their child care than they receive as income.

The claim that the Province cannot afford to make up the shortfall left by the lack of federal funding is baseless and misleading. Not only does the Province have a budget surplus, but money invested in childcare is money invested in the economy. Quality, accessible and affordable childcare makes it possible for parents to participate in the workforce, and this is especially important at times of high labour shortages such as BC is now experiencing.

And at the same time as parents are forced to pay higher fees, your government is also cutting funding to Child Care Referral and Resource centres to such an extent that most believe they will have to close. These are the centres which parents rely on to find childcare and get help with subsidies and that also support all forms of childcare programs; provide training for childcare workers, organize resource libraries, and perform the important role of monitoring childcare provisions.

In fact, your government has relied heavily on these centres to extend and improve unregulated childcare in BC. It was only little more than a year ago that your ministry was encouraging these CCRRs to expand, to move into storefront locations, and increase their outreach.

With this encouragement from your government, many centres did expand - with a financial cost, but with great success; the CCRR's annual report for last year shows a 56 percent increase in consultations with parents, thousands of parents received information and training, and there was a substantial increase in the use of the resources these centres provide. They further provide training and monitoring for thousands of childcare workers and centres, and resources to ensure that those centres can run well.

Yet after expanding these centres, your ministry is now cutting their funding, and telling them that it will buy out leases on offices, vehicles, cover severance pay, and reclaim capital equipment. In effect, the ministry responsible for childcare is paying for a crucial part of childcare work to stop.

Investing in child care is not a luxury. If we want to have the healthiest, most literate and educated province we need to make sure that BC's children get a good start and as all the research shows, quality, affordable and accessible childcare is a key component in ensuring that strong start. If we want to have a healthy economy, we need to make sure quality childcare is in place.

Unfortunately Minister, it seems that all that you have been doing for the last year is undermining what should be one of our province's economic and social foundations. It is no doubt because of your government's appalling record on childcare, and your own lack of leadership as Minister that the childcare community is now calling for your resignation.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By

Claire Trevena, MLA  
North Island  
New Democrat Childcare Critic

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## **From 100 Mile House:**

"... just this morning, I have received information from a Licensed Family Child Care Provider in our community that she has decided to close her facility. Whether or not this is as a result of these cuts, she did indicate that this is a financial decision for her and her family, so it is obvious that the loss of funding from the Child Care Operating Funding was at least one factor.

I can assure that lack of enrollment was not a concern for this child care provider, as she is located in the village of 100 Mile House, and every facility in town is full and maintaining a wait list. There continues to be a huge need for quality child care here, as there is across the province. Of course, this also means that there will be more parents calling the CCRR for referrals, and the result is that they will be put onto the existing wait lists.

What these parents will choose to do without child care is anyone's guess, but the options are limited, to say the least."

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## **From a Young Parent Program in the Lower Mainland**

A Young Parent Program in the Lower Mainland says the cuts will be devastating to the service they provide. Many of the parents in this program are living in poverty and must use the \$100.00 per month 'universal childcare' money to pay for rent and food. Since the parents and children in this program are some of the most vulnerable children in our province, it is critical to provide them with a quality childcare and education system. This program will suffer a cut of approximately \$18,000 dollars in the next school year. This will be devastating to the parents and children of this program.

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## **Closure of Richmond CCRR on 31 March 2007**

IMPORTANT NOTICE from VRIS

To: Richmond Child Care Providers

From: Volunteer Richmond Information Services (VRIS)

Closure of Richmond Child Care Resource & Referral Centre on March 31, 2007

Volunteer Richmond Information Services (VRIS) regrets to announce the closure of the Richmond Child Care Resource & Referral Centre, effective March 31, 2007. The Board of Volunteer Richmond Information Services made the decision following the announcement on January 5, 2007 by the Minister of State for Child Care, Linda Reid, on

behalf of the BC Provincial Government, that dramatic funding cuts were imminent.

The Richmond Child Care Resource & Referral Centre has served the Richmond community for over 15 years and makes 6000+ parent and caregiver referrals a year to child care centres in Richmond. The Resource Centre provides training, professional development, consultation, resources and equipment to hundreds of child care providers in our city. The closure of this centre represents the loss of 15 years worth of progress in important child care advocacy in addition to significant resource and invested expertise in our community.

No plans were announced by the Ministry to replace these services for families and child care providers.

The government cuts to child care will also result in increases in child care fees for families, effective July, 2007. The government strategy now is to focus on vulnerable children and their families. For a full version of the announcement, please refer to [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare)

These cuts will result in the loss of employment by both full and part time Richmond Child Care Resource & Referral Centre staff.

Volunteer Richmond Information Services and the Richmond Child Care Resource & Referral Centre thank child care providers, staff, volunteers, clients and associates for many years of successful work in the child care community.

Elizabeth Specht  
Executive Director  
Volunteer Richmond Information Services

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## **Penticton & District Child Care Resource & Referral**

1203 Main St.  
Penticton, BC  
V2A 5E9

250-492-2926  
FAX 250-492-2799

On Friday, January 5, 2007, an announcement was made by Linda Reid, Minister of State for Child Care, that funding for Child Care Resource & Referral (CCRR) programs in BC will be reduced as of April 1, 2007, to “pre-Early Learning and Child Care Agreement” levels. This represents a 35% cut in current funding for the program, and obviously a significant reduction in services.

In addition, the provincial CCRR program funding will be further reduced by October 2007.

***As of October 1, 2007 every CCRR in the province will be closed.***

As you may know, Child Care Resource & Referral programs provide training, information, support and information to child care providers and to parents seeking quality child care. By providing training and access to liability insurance for caregivers, as well as toy & equipment lending, information about Child Care Subsidy, low cost art supplies, drop in playgroups in several communities and ongoing consultation to both parents and caregivers, the CCRR improves the quality and availability of child care in our community.

If these services are valuable to you and to your community, I urge you to send your comments in writing to your local elected representatives in government:

- Bill Barisoff, MLA for Penticton – Okanagan Valley,
- Rick Thorpe, MLA for Okanagan-Westside,
- Harry Lali, MLA for Yale-Lillooet,
- Stockwell Day, Conservative MP for Okanagan-Coquihalla.

In addition, I encourage you to send your comments to:

- Linda Reid, Minister of State for Child Care;
- Tom Christensen, Minister of Children and Family Development;
- Hon. Gordon Campbell, Premier of BC;
- Right Honourable Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada;
- Monte Solberg, Minister of Resources & Development Canada;

- Jack Layton, Leader of the NDP;
- Gilles Duceppe, Leader of the Bloc Quebecois;
- Honourable Stephan Dion, Official Leader of the Opposition.

The contact information for each of these representatives is included below.

If you would like letters to be faxed, please bring them to the CCRR office and we will do that for you at no cost, or you can email each of them directly.

Without tremendous support from child care providers and parents, this decision will go ahead. The budget will be presented in early February, and if there are any changes to funding agreements, they need to be done prior to the budget.

I am also including [a form letter](#) for those people who prefer this to writing a letter, and you can add your personal comments as well.

Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,  
Marisa Munday  
Senior Consultant

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## **Penticton & District Child Care Resource & Referral**

1203 Main St.  
Penticton, BC  
V2A 5E9

250-492-2926  
FAX 250-492-2799

### **Breakdown of the Federal Early Learning & Child Care Agreement Elimination**

#### ***What it means to You.... Why should You care.....***

As of March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007 the Federal Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Agreement, established by the previous government will expire. In its place the Universal Child Care Benefit (UCCB) was created. The benefit is available to families with children birth to 6 years of age and is allocated at \$100 per month before taxes. This benefit has been established to support a variety of costs incurred by families and is not strictly designated to child care. Nor will the benefit (only \$80 after taxes) address the real cost of purchasing quality child care.

The Province of BC has chosen to make a number of changes to enhancements that were made with the federal funding. The changes come in the form of funding cuts to several key pieces in child care which are interrelated and support one another. The following is a breakdown of programs that will be maintained and/or changes will be made.

Further information can be found on the provincial website [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare).

#### **Child Care Subsidy Program**

- Enhancements that occurred in October of 2005 will be maintained at current levels for the long term.

*What it means to you: Parents will continue to receive the same subsidy rates for child care that they are today. Child care providers will continue to receive subsidy payments for children in their care that are a part of the Child Care Subsidy Program. CCRR's have been the primary contacts in assisting families applying for subsidy as was mandated to them in 2006/07. Access to subsidy applications will be reduced.*

#### **Supported Child Development Program (SCDP)**

- Over the last two years new funding was made available to the Supported Child Development Program. These enhancements will be maintained over the long term.  
*What it means to you: Parents will continue to find support for children with developmental delays when placing children in a child care facility. Child care providers will continue to receive support from the SCDP when supporting children with developmental delays within their child care facilities. Families will face challenges in trying to find affordable child care spaces.*

### **Child Care Operating Funding Program (CCOF)**

- Present funding under the CCOF will be maintained through to the end of June 2007. As of July 1, 2007, CCOF funding rates will return to pre-ELCC levels. The average rate reduction will be \$2.00/enrolled child/day or approximately \$40.00/month.  
- Effective immediately there will be a program intake cap of CCOF funding. Any new facilities that may open will only be by attrition (if one facility closes, a new facility will take its place). This will be done on a regional basis.  
*What it means to you: Parents may find that child care fees will increase. Child care providers will see a reduction in income from the CCOF and may find themselves in a position of having to increase child care fees. Providing child care will be less viable and therefore more vulnerable to closures.*

### **Provincial Major and Minor Capital Funding Program**

- Effective immediately provincial major capital funding will not be available.  
- Provincial minor capital funding will be continued and details are available at [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/capital.htm#minor](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/capital.htm#minor)  
*What this means to you: Parents may have fewer child care options as new facilities may be unable to open without the support of the Major Capital Funding Program. New child care facilities will be unable to request funding to support the opening of new facilities to increase child care spaces. Child care facilities will continue to apply for minor capital funding grants, which support only emergency repair/replacement of equipment within an existing child care facility.*

### **Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) Programs**

- Effective April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007, the provincial budget for the CCRR Programs will revert to pre-ELCC levels, meaning a reduction from 14 million dollars to 9 million dollars provincially.  
- Effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 a further reduction of CCRR funding will go from 9 million dollars to 3 million dollars provincially. The 3 million dollar budget will go towards a “new” program that has yet to be determined.  
- CCRR programs as they exist today will all be closed by September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
*What this means to you: Parents and child care providers will no longer receive the services that are currently in place. Changes to these services will begin April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 and continue until September 30, 2007. Effective October 1, 2007 CCRR programs will not exist.*

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# **Sample Letter to the Federal Minister of Resources and Development**

**Monte Solberg  
Minister of Resources and Development  
Room 107, Confederation Building, House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6**

**RE: Early Learning and Child Care Agreement and Child Care Resource & Referral programs in BC**

January 2007

Dear Mr. Solberg,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the announcement made on Friday, January 5, 2007 by Linda Reid, Minister of State for Child Care in BC.

This announcement stated that as a result of the cancellation of the federal Early Learning and Child Care agreement, the funding for Child Care Resource & Referral programs across BC will be reduced to “pre-ELCC” funding levels as of April 1, 2007, and will be further reduced in the months following.

**As I understand, this will result in the closure of every CCRR program in the Province of BC by October 1, 2007.**

Child Care Resource & Referral programs are a vital service to parents and child care providers. By providing support and training to child care providers, as well as toy & equipment lending, access to art supplies, referrals to quality child care, information and assistance with Child Care Subsidy, drop in playgroup programs and ongoing consultation with both parents and caregivers, the CCRR improves the quality and availability of child care in every community.

Especially in smaller, rural areas of the province, the CCRR is a community resource for a wide variety of partners, including Success by 6, and Make Children First, School District, Literacy programs, and Library and Recreational programs, in addition to parents and caregivers.

In the service area for the Penticton & District CCRR program, the estimated number of children and families who have benefited from the CCRR services over the past three months are:



**Jack Layton, MP, Leader of the New Democratic Party**  
**Gilles Duceppe, MP, Leader of the Bloc Quebecois**  
**Stockwell Day, MP for Okanagan-Coquihalla**  
**Bill Barisoff, MLA for Penticton – Okanagan Valley**

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# Parents for Child Care

Fax To: Premier Gordon Campbell  
1-604-660-5488

Dear Premier Campbell:

As a British Columbia voter I would like to inform you that I am unhappy with the direction the BC government is taking with regard to child care. We need a child care system that meets the needs of working families.

Your recent child care cuts are an attack on BC's working families.

This fax is to let you know that I support a major provincial financial investment into a child care system that:

- includes funding for child care operations;
- addresses the wage and benefit inequity for child care providers and;
- reinstates funding for the Child Care Resource & Referral programs.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Community: \_\_\_\_\_

# Parents for Child Care

Fax To: Prime Minister Stephen Harper  
1-613-941-6900

Dear Prime Minister Harper

As a Canadian voter I would like to inform you that I support a major financial investment by the Canadian government into a child care plan that meets the needs of working families.

Your \$100 per month child care allowance does not do that!

Nor have you created one child care space, despite your election promise to create 125,000. These spaces are needed today, not several years from now.

This fax is to let you know that I support the reinstatement and enhancement of the Early Learning and Child Care Agreements with the provincial governments.

It is time for Canada to show leadership on this matter.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Community: \_\_\_\_\_

## Here is a letter from a family child care provider in Port Alberni:

To Whom It May Concern;

I would like to add my voice to the protest against the cuts to child care in BC. I am a Family Child Care Provider and these cuts will affect my business in a huge way. First of all the subsidy I receive has the following impact on my business:

- it improves the number and quality of opportunities I am able to provide to the children in my care,
- it improves the nutritional value of meals and snacks I am able to afford to provide the children in my care,
- it allows me to purchase higher quality and a larger variety of craft supplies, toys and educational projects for the children,
- it is huge in offsetting my operating expenses such as licenses, insurance, operating permits in addition to regular supplies such as food, toys, craft materials, books etc.
- it encourages me to stay in this field because otherwise we earn a low income for the hours we work.

I have been told I will lose \$2 per child per day which will affect all of the above areas that have helped me and especially the children in my care. I am planning on raising my rates and am not sure how parents will react. Some may find that child care is too expensive, especially if they have more than one child in care and I expect some will have to reconsider whether or not they continue working.

I would like to also add that reductions to the child care resource and referral program will also have a huge impact on parents and care givers like myself. Aside from word of mouth referrals I rely totally on referrals from the child care resource and referral program. They provide me with cheaper insurance as they purchase it with a group rate and they provide ongoing education for child care providers by providing workshops throughout the year. Without them my costs will rise tremendously. I have a friend who pays \$1200 per year for a small ad in the phone book. I would have to install a business line which is very expensive in order to list my business in the phone book and run an ad which I cannot afford. I would also have to advertise in newspapers and other sources all adding to my expenses which I currently do not have. As for keeping my skills updated and expanding my education I will be cut off from affordable and accessible educational opportunities in my area. My liability insurance will increase by hundreds of dollars. Even increasing my fees will not offset these new expenses.

To parents that now rely on the Child Care Resource and Referral program like Pacific Care they will have an invaluable resource removed or diminished until those services are almost nonexistent or ineffective. The referral program helps parent make quality child care decisions for their children and helps them find child care spaces. Cuts to the program will be a huge step backwards for child care. How many child care providers will eventually decide to close because they can no longer cover their expenses and earn an income that can support their own families?

I feel these cuts could ultimately lead to the closure of my business as I now expect to have to cover so many additional costs to compensate for the loss of the referral program and cuts to the subsidy I receive to help with operating costs. How many child care spaces will be lost in BC? No doubt more will be lost than created.

Sincerely,

Anne Cappus  
Crafty Kids Family Child Care

2551 14th Ave  
Port Alberni, BC  
V9Y 2X8  
(250) 724-0355

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# Summit Community Services Society

## PRESS RELEASE

Contact:  
C.A. Pasemko  
Executive Director  
(250) 489-3114 Local 225

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

### **GOVERNMENT CUTS STOP DAYCARE EXPANSION IN KIMBERLEY**

Summit Community Services Society has announced that plans for a new Daycare Centre for children aged three to five children in Kimberley BC have been stopped effective January 10, 2007. The Federal Government has eliminated the Early Learning and Child Care agreement with the BC Provincial Government effective March 31, 2007 resulting in a loss to the province of \$455 million dollars over the next three years. The Provincial Government has responded by reducing funding rates back to pre-agreement levels. These cuts have effectively ended any possibility of the non-profit society being able to open and operate a new facility.

Several Kimberley parents had approached Summit Community Services Society in August 2006 asking for an Ages 3-5 Daycare and an After-School Program for their children. The Society was able to establish a licensed After School Program located at the Marysville Elementary in December of 2006 and was working on the establishment

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of an Ages 3-5 Daycare for September of 2007. Summit Community Services Society is a non-profit society that has been in operation in Cranbrook and Kimberley since 1973. Primarily a social services sector organization the Society currently operates four not-for-profit licensed daycares: New Horizons Infant Toddler in Cranbrook, First Steps Infant Toddler in Kimberley, Kootenay Orchards After-School in Cranbrook and the newly opened Marysville Elementary After-School in Kimberley. The Provincial Government Child Care Operating Funding Program (CCOF) is instrumental in keeping the daycare facilities open. “This grant makes the difference in whether we break even or have to close our daycares,” said Mike Carey, founding member and a current Director of the Society. “Daycare Staff need to be paid a liveable wage and parents certainly cannot

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afford to pay more for daycare services.” The Province will be reducing the grant by approximately \$40.00 a day for each enrolled student. In a letter addressed to the “members of the Child Care Community” from Linda Reid Minister of State for Child Care, Ms Reid writes “at the same time, the Universal Child Care Benefit is providing \$100 per month to parents.” The implication being that Daycare Providers should raise their rates accordingly. However, only parents with children under the age of six are eligible for this benefit. “Outrageous,” stated Jeanie Miller, current President of the Summit Community Services Society, “parents can’t afford this. Most parents need to

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work and need affordable daycare. Without this, the risk increases for children to be left unsupervised.” What happens if a child is injured or worse in a situation like this?”

The Provincial Government had cut their start-up grants for new daycares in the summer of 2006. With the additional cut to the Child Care Operating Funding Program and the announced intake cap meaning that new programs would be eligible for the reduced grant only by attrition, (if one facility in a region closes another facility may be eligible for the grant if it is in the same region) non-profit organizations such as Summit Community Services Society are just not in a position to be able to assist their communities with much needed new Daycare Services

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## **Letter from Dr. Carrie Fitzsimons to Minister Reid**

24 January 2007

The Honourable Linda Reid  
Minister of State of Childcare  
Room 29 Parliament Building  
Victoria BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Reid:

I am shocked to hear of more cuts to our childcare services. I am a working paediatrician and mother. I am hearing from our community the shock and dismay that your announcement has caused.

In June of 2000, the millennium year, I attended the Canadian Paediatric Society Meeting in Ottawa. Many of your fellow politicians were involved in the meeting and were speaking on the "National Child Agenda". I have yet to see the fallout from all those promises.

What I have seen as a working paediatrician and what I understand as a working mother, is that childcare services are in a state of disaster. Our childcare workers are paid a mere pittance for their important work. These are people doing critical work for probably the most important years in child development.

I have seen children's daycares in our area close and buildings sold. There is a severe shortage of positions for children of families who choose licensed daycare. The federal \$100.00 cheque per month covers practically nothing in terms of the expense incurred for childcare for most families.

In this time of fiscal surplus I really don't understand why childcare is not a priority. It may well be convenient to blame the federal government but what I see and hear from the boasts of the BC Liberal government is all about the surplus and the success of this booming province.

It is safe to say that both the BC provincial and federal governments have appalling track records in supporting childcare. It is time to stop devastating a critical service for our children and our families in this province.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Carrie Fitzsimons M.D. F.R.C.P.(C)

CF/mdb

cc: Corky Evans, MLA

cc: Kim Adamson [adamson@telus.net](mailto:adamson@telus.net)

cc: John Dooley, Mayor of Nelson

cc: Dr. Tom Warshawski, Chair BC Paediatric Society