

**Provincial & Regional Partners:**

Aboriginal Women's Council BC/Yukon  
Adoptive Families Association of BC  
Affiliation of Multicultural Societies & Service Agencies  
Alternate Shelter Society  
Association for Community Education BC  
ACT – Autism Community Training Society  
BC Aboriginal Childcare Society  
BC Assoc. for Child Development & Rehabilitation  
BC Association for Community Living  
BC Association for Play Therapy  
BC Association of Child Care Employers  
BC Association of Family Resource Programs  
BC Association of Pregnancy Outreach Programs  
BC Association of Social Workers  
BC Council for Families  
BC Crime Prevention Association  
BC Early Years Alliance ♦ BC Farm Women's Network  
BC Federation of Foster Parents Association  
BC Government & Service Employees' Union  
BC Institute Against Family Violence  
BC Pediatric Society ♦ BC Recreation & Parks Assoc.  
BC School Trustees Association  
BC Teachers' Federation  
BC/Yukon Society of Transition Houses  
Boys & Girls Clubs of BC  
Canadian Association for Young Children  
Canadian Mental Health Association BC Division  
Canadian Red Cross • Capilano Student Union  
Cerebral Palsy Association of BC  
Child & Family Counseling Association  
Child & Youth Care Association of BC  
Child Care Advocacy Forum  
Children's & Women's Health Centre of BC  
Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC  
Council of Parent Participation Preschools BC  
Deaf Children's Society of BC  
Dietitians of Canada, BC Region  
Early Childhood Educators of BC  
East Kootenay Childhood Coalition  
Family Services of Greater Vancouver  
Federated Anti-Poverty Groups  
Federation of BC Youth In Care Networks  
Federation of Child & Family Services of BC  
Fulcrum Project  
Infant Development Program of BC  
International Dyslexia Association, BC Branch  
Justice Institute of BC  
Labour Environmental Alliance Society  
Learning Disabilities Association of BC  
Literacy BC • McCreary Centre Society  
MOSAIC • Nisika Community Services  
National Council of Jewish Women  
Pacific Association of First Nations Women  
Pacific Community Resources Society  
Pacific Legal Education Association /PARCA  
Parent Support Services Society of BC  
Penticton & District Community Resources Society  
Public Health Association of BC  
Self Help Resource Association of BC  
Social Planning & Research Council BC  
Society for Children & Youth of BC  
Society for Public Education of BC  
Society of Special Needs Adoptive Parents  
Sunshine Coast Community Services Society  
United Way of the Lower Mainland  
Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre  
Westcoast Family Resources Society  
Western Canada Family Child Care Association  
Working Group on Poverty  
YWCA of Greater Vancouver

**Community Coalition Partners:** 100 Mile House, Abbotsford, Armstrong, Burnaby, Chilliwack, Delta, Duncan, Fraser North, Golden, Grand Forks, Houston, Kamloops, Kelowna, Langley, Maple Ridge/ Pitt Meadows, Port Alberni, Prince George, Salmon Arm, Smithers, Squamish, Surrey, Terrace, Vancouver, Vancouver Aboriginal Council, Vernon, Victoria, Williams Lake

March 13, 2007

The Honourable Carole Taylor  
Minister of Finance  
Room 153  
Parliament Buildings  
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4

Dear Minister Taylor,

We are seeking clarification of your government's financial policy, and want to alert you to serious questions that have arisen within our communities regarding BC's financial management of, and transparent accountability for federal transfers for early learning and child care (ELCC).

Our specific question to you relates to the termination payment BC received from the federal government in 2006/07 following the cancellation of the 2005 Bilateral Agreement on ELCC.

Federal government staff advise that, while this payment of \$86 million is still intended to fund regulated ELCC programs in keeping with the intent of the original agreement, provinces are welcome to spread this revenue over the next several years to maintain existing services and to support the transition out of the agreement.

In BC, however, cuts to child care services are planned in the coming fiscal year even as the province announces a number of one-time-only ELCC payments and grants in this fiscal year (for example, payments to school districts for StrongStart (\$5 million) and BC School Trustees Association Early Learning grants (\$12 million)). When questioned about the effectiveness of this approach on the January 5 2007 call with Child Care Resource and Referral programs (CCRAs) across the province, government staff advised the community that the federal transfers must be "spent" by March 31 2007. In various communications, MCFD staff have also suggested that this is a requirement of the Auditor General.

Please provide the exact details of the federal government and/or Auditor General ruling that has informed this position, and explain why it differs from the position suggested by the federal government and broadly adopted by other provinces. In your response, please do not

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simply refer to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). While we fully respect GAAP, we know that, on their own, they do not answer this question.

We're sure you can appreciate the importance of a prompt reply to this concern. In fact, it may not be too late to at least partially reverse the damage from the pending cuts to child care. Although it is already mid-March, and although government's process for using federal ELCC transfers to make one-time-only payments is anything but transparent, it may be that some of these payments are still under negotiation.

**Given your Ministry's leadership responsibility for sound fiscal management across government, we also call on you to immediately halt any further negotiations or discussions with groups regarding one-time-only payments for 2006/07 utilizing federal ELCC transfers.** Further discussions should only be resumed if and when two key questions are satisfactorily addressed:

1. Why isn't the termination payment of \$86 million in federal ELCC transfers being used to sustain existing child care funding levels?
2. Some of the substantial one-time-only payments from the federal ELCC transfers are only now moving off provincial Ministry books (MCFD, Min of Ed), so clearly they will not be spent by the intended recipients until 2007/08. Yet government staff advised the community that these same funds could not be used to sustain child care funding in 2007/08. How do you explain this apparent inconsistency?

We want to stress the importance of your prompt reply, as there are serious implications at stake for children, families and child care services in BC. This termination payment could sustain current funding levels for the almost 80,000 licensed child care spaces and 46 CCRR programs across the province for almost four years.

Finally, under separate cover we are also directing detailed questions to Minister Christensen and Minister of State Linda Reid about BC's lack of public accountability and transparency for child care financing and overall lack of planning, leading to chaos and inconsistency. We will keep you informed of our progress in having these concerns met.

Sincerely,

Sheila Davidson  
Chairperson, Early Childhood Development Roundtable

Copies: All BC MLAs  
Lesley du Toit, Deputy Minister  
Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, Representative for Children and Youth