



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

MAR 23 2007

Ref: 162721

Sheila Davidson
Chairperson
Early Childhood Development Roundtable
First Call, BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition
L416 - 4480 Oak St
Vancouver BC V 6H 3 V 4

Dear Ms. Davidson:

Thank you for your letter of March 2, 2006, addressed to the Honourable Gordon Campbell, Premier, regarding child care in British Columbia. As Minister of State for Child Care, I am pleased to respond on his behalf.

Regarding your comments about the number of children on subsidies in 2005/2006 as compared to the target number for 2007/2008, the decrease is in fact reflective of the restatement of the numbers in 2006/2007 Service Plan. This restatement of the numbers aimed to reflect refinements in the data reporting system, including the elimination of double counting of children.

The Child Care Subsidy Program is a demand-driven program, dependent on applications from families. All eligible families who apply receive funding; however, not all eligible families apply. Until recently, there had been a downward trend in the number of children whose families received subsidy over the last five years. Program enhancements have resulted in an increase in the number of children eligible for subsidy and the amount of subsidy available to children under age six in regulated child care settings.

Government is fighting hard to ensure that British Columbian families have a range of quality, flexible and inclusive child care options. We were the second province to meet with the previous federal Minister and I met with the new federal Minister, the Honourable Monte Solberg, in January 2007. The first part of the federal plan for child care provides direct funding to parents through the \$100 per month Universal Child Care Benefit. The second part of the plan is to build 25,000 child care spaces across Canada. The committee that was struck last fall under the previous federal Minister has now completed its work and I await their report with great interest.

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Ministry of Children
and Family
Development

Minister of State for
Child Care

Mailing Address:
PO Box 9062 Stn Prev Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9E2

Location: Parliament
Buildings Victoria

The Ministry of Children and Family Development will continue working with our partners - including the Ministries of Health, Education, and Employment and Income Assistance - and is committed to building an integrated system of programs and services. We are actively participating in the development of programs, such as StrongStart Centres, to realize improved outcomes for British Columbia's children, youth and their families. Further, we envision a province where vulnerable children and youth are healthy and safe in their families and communities; where children and youth, including those with special needs, are supported to achieve their full potential; and where children, youth and their families are served by accountable and responsive services.

Thank you again for taking the time to write and for bringing your concerns to my attention.

Yours with kindest regards,

(signature)

Linda Reid
Minister of State

pc: Honourable Gordon Campbell