

Oct. 19, 2016

\$10/day child care

Child care in British Columbia:

After housing, child care is the second highest cost facing B.C. families and a key contributor to the affordability crisis in this province.

- Median rates for fees are almost \$800/month for preschoolers to over \$1,000/month for younger children (2012 – Coalition for child care). In Vancouver, the median full-time monthly rate for toddlers in licensed group child care has increased to \$1,290. (CEDAW Report Card 2016)
- At about \$10,000 a year, four years of child care can add up to more than the cost of a university degree (CCPA July 2015)
- There are too few regulated spaces. B.C. continues to have regulated child care spaces for less than one in five children under the age of 12 (CEDAW Report Card 2016). Wait lists are too long and many families have no choice but to use illegal care, or unregulated care that's not monitored for health and safety.
- Lack of affordable quality child care prevents parents being part of the labour force - BC mothers' participation rates are second lowest in Canada, almost 40% of families report that a parent had to remain away from work following the end of parental leave because child care was unavailable. (2012 – Coalition for child care).
- On October 18, 2016 Westcoast LEAF gave the Clark government a D- for its lack of action on child care:
 - “Despite calls from multiple sectors for B.C. to adopt the \$10 a Day Plan, more formally called the Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning, and despite three consecutive budget consultation recommendations that BC fund and support the development and implementation of an affordable child care plan, patchwork child care services in BC continue to leave many families in crisis.” (CEDAW Report Card 2016)
- According to the CEDAW 2016 report card:
 - “Over 80 per cent of lone parent families in BC are headed by single mothers, many of whom struggle to cover the cost of child care on one income.”
 - “In dual parent families, women tend to take on more child care responsibilities ...and are 19 times more likely to cite caring for children as the reason for choosing part-time work. Thus, the lack of affordable child care forces women into precarious work arrangements and further entrenches them in poverty.”

Christy Clark government and B.C. Liberal record on child care:

The B.C. Liberal government has failed to fund childcare programs adequately and have failed to ensure quality child care is available and affordable.

- In 2001, as one of its first acts, the new B.C. Liberal government and then-Deputy Premier Christy Clark cancelled the NDP government's universal childcare initiative launched in 2000 in partnership with the federal government.
- In the 2002 budget, the Liberal government gutted remaining child care programs and over their time in government has underfunded child care in every budget.
- Budget 2016 continued the pattern of ignoring the child care affordability crisis. Although there is a slight increase to support child care centres, it will only create a small number of new spaces, and is not nearly enough to keep pace with population growth. There's no guarantee these spaces will be affordable, either.
- Instead of providing affordable, accessible, quality childcare that a broad range of municipal, labour, social and economic organizations – including boards of trade and the BC Chamber of Commerce - have called for, the BC Liberals approach has been one of token, inadequate measures, including most recently, producing an online map that shows so people can see just how few spaces there really are.
- In 2013, Christy Clark rejected a call from the Surrey Board of Trade for \$10 a child care – saying it was too expensive, and “this isn't the year”. (Surrey Now Feb. 21/13)
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