

BC BUDGET 2018: AN HISTORIC BREAKTHROUGH!

Comparing government's Child Care BC commitments with the community's \$10aDay Plan

IN AN HISTORIC BREAKTHROUGH for BC children and families, Budget 2018 commits over \$1 billion in new provincial and federal child care funding. Over three years these funds will be used to begin implementing *Child Care BC* — government's path to universal child care. This level of public investment delivers on key recommendations of the community's \$10aDay Plan.

The new public investments come with a bold strategy to reduce parent fees, work with public and community partners to increase licensed spaces, and support the early childhood educator (ECE) workforce. Clearly, Budget 2018 reflects the shared goals of government's Child Care BC and the community's \$10aDay Plan.

This public investment is essential to turning the corner on the current child care chaos across BC. Although the previous government acknowledged the need to expand access to quality, affordable child care, over the last three years it did not increase actual spending — rather, it consistently underspent the provincial child care budget, by over \$100 million in total.

Thus, the new BC government's child care commitments are a welcome contrast to both the previous government's commitments, and its record¹:

- **Child Care BC** commits to create 24,000 new licensed spaces over the next three years. By comparison, over the last three years of the previous government, only 7,400 new spaces were created. Today, less than 20% of BC children have access to a licensed child care space.
- **Child Care BC** commits to reduce parent fees by up to \$350/month and provides an additional income-tested affordable child care benefit. Over the last three years, parent fee increases outpaced inflation, with median fees increasing by \$60 to \$110/month. At the same time, the average number of children in lower-income families receiving fee subsidies dropped by almost 6,000, or 23%.

¹ MCFD Performance Management reports for 2013/14 through 2016/17 provide most of the data for this analysis.

Clearly, Budget 2018 reflects the shared goals of government's Child Care BC and the community's \$10aDay Plan.

- **Child Care BC** commits to a workforce development strategy that addresses fair compensation for ECEs. Higher ECE wages are essential for achieving quality child care. Over the last three years, the lack of action on ECE wages has led to a crisis in recruitment and retention of qualified staff across the province.

The progress achieved in Budget 2018 is the result of decades of research, public education and advocacy by families, individuals, local governments, Indigenous leadership and communities, labour groups, community organizations and businesses across BC. Now, we are ready, willing and able to work with government and stakeholders to ensure that the first steps on *Child Care BC* build a solid foundation for a fully implemented system of quality, universal child care over the next 10 years. See our current advocacy actions on the back page.

BC Budget 2018: Comparison of community recommendations and government commitments		
Key requirement	\$10aDay	Child Care BC ¹
<i>Increase direct operating funding to licensed child care programs, with accountability to:</i>		
Cap and reduce parent fees for children under 6	Fee reductions of \$500/month for infant/toddler programs starting 2018, with reductions for children aged 3-5 by 2020. No fees for families earning less than \$40,000.	Providers who join the new Fee Reduction Initiative will receive funds to offset parent fee reductions of up to \$350/month for infant/toddler programs and up to \$100/month for children aged 3-5, plus a 10% lift in base funding. Initiative starts April 2018, and limits future fee increases (with an exception process). New affordable child care benefit lowers costs for more families, starting September 2018 with infant/toddler care. Benefit is scaled to income, with families earning less than \$45,000 eligible for full benefit. Families using unlicensed care remain eligible for new benefit, at existing subsidy rates. Plus, funding for prototype projects in communities across BC to inform build out of universal child care.
Invest in the workforce to improve quality	Increase ECE wages, starting at \$1/hour. Expand post-secondary and bursary programs. Develop ECE recruitment and retention strategy.	Expand bursaries and ECE training programs in public post-secondary institutions. Workforce development strategy that addresses ECE recruitment, retention, and compensation. Plus funding for Early Learning Framework update, new training model for family providers, start-up grants to support unlicensed providers to become licensed.

Key requirement	\$10aDay	Child Care BC ¹
Increase spaces, while meeting diverse family needs	Province-wide review and plan to add 22,500 new/modified licensed spaces in three years.	Add 24,000 new licensed spaces province-wide over three years, in partnership with public-sector agencies, local governments, and community organizations, with priority to co-location on school grounds. Plus, funding for planning grants to local communities, additional supports to family child care providers, expanded grants to maintain existing spaces.
Honour diversity and inclusion for all children	New investments advance programs that nurture and respect families in all their diversities.	Funding to reduce waitlists for Supported Child Development (SCD) and Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD). Increase supports for young parents. In 2019, funding to providers offering care for families with non-standard work hours.
Develop infrastructure strategy to ensure effective system function and oversight	Including roles of Child Care Resource & Referral (CCRR), licensing, etc. and child care transition from MCFD to Ministry of Education.	Strengthen laws to support public reporting on illegal child care providers. Enhance licensing capacity. Work closely with CCRRs and Ministry of Education. Enhance data collection to support evidence-informed policy decisions as system unfolds. Ongoing stakeholder engagement and monitoring of investments. Consider system of governance.
¹ For details on Child Care BC, see http://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/childcare/2018_Child_Care_BC.pdf and https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/child-care/child-care-improvements		

Indigenous-led child care

The \$10aDay Plan supports Indigenous rights in Indigenous child care. We will continue to seek appropriate opportunities to support our Indigenous colleagues in assuming their rightful leadership roles in the Indigenous governance of child and family supports.

In addition, as government begins to expand and update ECE training opportunities, we will work to ensure that all ECEs are educated about the history, cultures, and practices of Indigenous peoples (as appropriate) and about colonialism's continuing impacts on them, and can follow these learnings in the programs they develop and provide for all children — as proposed in the \$10aDay Plan.

Specifically regarding BC Budget 2018, Mary Teegee, President of the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society, said:

We look forward to working with the provincial government and First Nations leadership to ensure that new funding for Indigenous child care and learning support will be substantial, and supportive of the self-determination of Indigenous authorities, families and organizations who understand how and where the most impact can be made for their communities.”²

² Further information available at www.acc-society.bc.ca/

The progress achieved in Budget 2018 is the result of decades of research, public education and advocacy by families, individuals, local governments, Indigenous leadership and communities, labour groups, community organizations and businesses across BC.

\$10aDAY PLAN SUPPORTERS ARE CELEBRATING the BC government's commitment to building a quality, universal child care system. Child Care BC acknowledges the importance of a fairly-compensated workforce and a system built on affordability for all families.

We will hold government accountable for its Child Care BC commitments. We also know that multiple stakeholders — including parents, grandparents, child care providers, Indigenous leadership and communities, local governments, school districts, unions, employers, and the federal government — have important roles to play.

As government begins to roll out Child Care BC, our advocacy priorities will focus on encouraging:

1. BC government — \$10aDay supporters urge you to:

- Improve ECE wages in 2018;
- Expand the Fee Reduction Initiative so that the affordable child care benefit can be reduced over time;
- Expand operating funding for providers who offer reduced fees, in order to support quality programming; and
- Ensure that as ECE training programs are updated and expanded they include the history, cultures, and practices of Indigenous peoples, as appropriate, and that these learnings are followed in programs for all children.

2. Local governments, school districts and other public partners — \$10aDay supporters urge you to:

- Work with the BC government to prioritize the child care needs of families with young children in all aspects of planning for your communities.

3. Child care providers — \$10aDay supporters urge you to:

- Join the Fee Reduction Initiative promptly so that you can receive additional funds to reduce parent fees, and contribute to building a system of high quality, affordable child care in BC.

After decades of neglect, the child care chaos will not be solved with just one budget — even a substantive one like this. We will continue to keep our eyes on the prize and works toward a fully implemented system that meets the needs of families with children from birth to age 12, the ECE workforce, and communities.



COALITION OF
**child care
advocates**
OF BC

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC and the Early Childhood Educators of BC advance the \$10aDay Plan in ways that are consistent with their respective mandates and applicable regulatory requirements. Both organizations individually and jointly provide public education about the Plan. As a registered charity, ECEBC also engages

in a limited amount of permitted non-partisan advocacy which is directly connected to its charitable public education work. As a registered non-profit society, CCCABC advances the Plan through its advocacy campaign, and at www.10aDay.ca.