



Child Care Facts and Fairytales

Fairytale *Quality child care is only a benefit for parents who have young children.*

Fact Quality child care provides generations of benefits to the community at large. Research indicates that the type of care received during a child's first years influences their emotional, social, intellectual and physical health in later years. Numerous studies show that high quality child care results in:

- ✓ early identification of special needs;
- ✓ improved development and academic achievement;
- ✓ more social skills and less problem behaviours;
- ✓ higher likelihood of completing high school and higher education;
- ✓ higher likelihood of being gainfully employed as adults;
- ✓ less likelihood of committing crimes;
- ✓ less likelihood of requiring public assistance.

Fairytale *There is no benefit for me if my taxes pay for someone else's child care.*

Fact A University of Toronto study in 1998 showed that spending on early learning and child care programs is a social investment that returns \$2 for every \$1 invested. Research has established that children who receive high quality child care need less public funds for employment, education, and social programs.

Providing quality child care also increases the commitment of mothers to the labour force, which leads to increased long-term economic security for women, and greater tax revenues.

Even the Vancouver Board of Trade supports publicly funded child care for its economic benefits.

Fairytale *If we want the federal Conservatives' taxable family allowance, we have to trade it for the federal-provincial child care funding program.*

Fact This is not an either/or decision. We can and should have both. A taxable family allowance will help some Canadian families financially. However, the allowance does not address the critical need for ongoing funding to ensure child care centres stay open, that fees are affordable, or that desperately-needed new spaces are created.

In a recent survey, an amazing 90% of British Columbians polled say that even if they don't personally need child care, they support affordable, accessible child care for families who do need it.
~ Ipsos Reid survey, April 2006

Fairytale *The federal Conservative plan includes tax incentives for Canadian businesses to create new child care spaces for their employees. This will create the needed child care spaces.*

Fact The Conservative plan is not an effective way to create new spaces, and does nothing to fund the operating costs of existing or new spaces. Even the head of the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses agrees that this plan won't work:

Catherine Swift says tax incentives won't be enough to convince small- and medium-sized companies... "It's just not practical," she said. "Seventy-five percent of businesses in this country have less than five employees." ...A child care space must meet a daunting range of safety and design specifics—with good reason, Swift says. ("Businesses Won't be Lured into Providing Child Care" ~The Province, April 11, 2006)

Fairytale If the federal child care funding is cut in 2007, the child care situation in B.C. will stay the same. People will still be on long waitlists but we won't be any worse off.

Fact All recent increases in child care spending in B.C. have been paid for with federal child care funds. It includes increases to the Child Care Operating Fund (CCOF) that many child care centres rely on to keep their doors open, keep parent fees affordable, subsidize child care workers' wages, and upgrade equipment and facilities. B.C. stands to lose \$455 million in child care funding if the federal commitment is abandoned.

Almost 80% of British Columbians surveyed agree that it is time for the province to invest more in the children of working families.

~ Ipsos Reid survey, April 2006

The provincial government has cut \$40 million annually from child care funding since 2002. Further, this government made no commitment in their new budget to address the shortfall that will occur in early 2007, when the new Conservative government has indicated it will cut off federal child care funding.

Unless the B.C. government is prepared to pick up the costs, child care centres across our province will have to make up the difference by :

- ↓ raising parent fees
- ↓ laying off workers and reducing child care spaces
- ↓ cutting programs
- ↓ closing their doors

This is no time for fairytales.

The reality is that our communities need affordable, accessible, publicly funded, quality non-profit child care now.

Ask your elected government representatives to do the right thing. Ask them to work with our communities to:

- ↑ get the federal government to honour the federal-provincial child care funding agreement; *and*
- ↑ ensure the B.C. government commits new money to child care.

Child care: let's make it happen!

Coalition of Child Care Advocates of B.C.
www.cccabc.bc.ca

B.C. Government and Service
Employees' Union
www.bcgeu.ca

