

B.C. families need affordable child-care relief now ^[1]

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Source: Huffington Post

Format: Article

Publication Date: 26 Apr 2017

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EXCERPTS

This election is about big, bold ideas that will make life more affordable for all British Columbians, and nothing embodies that more than John Horgan and the B.C. NDP's \$10-a-day child-care plan. John Horgan and the B.C. NDP's proposal for universal \$10-a-day child care is sensible, fully costed and will provide immediate relief for parents. We also know that providing quality early learning experiences for our children has incredible benefits to them, the school system and communities.

An NDP government will invest \$175 million in child care in the first year of government, which will grow in the second year and third year to \$280 million and \$400 million per year, respectively. This initial \$175-million investment will immediately reduce infant and toddler fees to \$10 a day, and will eliminate fees for families earning less than \$40,000 annually. This will provide immediate relief for families paying some of the highest fees in the country -- not two, three or five years from now, but immediately.

With the NDP's plan, two parents making a combined family income of \$90,000 per year can expect to save \$5,808 annually. That's money that they can put towards saving for their children's university education, renovating their home or even saving up for their first home.

Christy Clark falsely claims that the status-quo approach is working for parents and that we just need to build some new spaces. That is not true. Here's why: demand for child care is not going down. B.C.'s population is growing. The Vancouver area is expected to grow by 2 million people by in 25 years. The pressures on our child-care system will only grow, and therefore Christy Clark's proposal will not create enough spaces. As a result, Christy Clark's plan will only result in more spots, costing parents \$1,430 per month. That is not what parents want. Parents want spots they can afford, and the only way they will get that is with the NDP's sensible \$10-a-day plan.

Christy Clark wrongly asserts that the NDP's \$10-a-day child-care plan will lead to long wait lists like in Quebec. But, unlike Quebec, the B.C. NDP will streamline the process for matching kids with publicly funded child-care spots. One of the reasons Quebec's model suffered from such long wait lists was due to its complex and inefficient system of decentralized wait lists. With a coordinated approach, the NDP's plan will sidestep that problem.

Christy Clark claims that a universal \$10-a-day child-care plan will help those who don't need it -- the rich can afford their own. The rich can also to pay for their own health care, but we in Canada are proud of our universal health-care system. Claiming that universal child care should not be implemented because it might help some people who can afford to pay for child care overlooks one of the key goals of a public system: equality. A universal, publicly funded system is the only way to ensure that all children can get the education and care they need, regardless of how many 0's their parents may have on their paycheques.

The NDP's proposal for a public \$10-a-day child care was created by experts from the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of B.C. and the Early Childhood Educators of B.C. It is supported by economists, businesses, community groups and families.

Under Christy Clark life has become unaffordable. On May 9, a John Horgan B.C. NDP government will change that by implementing a universal \$10-a-day child-care system.

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