

AFL calls for a fair start for children and child care workers ^[1]

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The Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) is calling on the government to raise the bar for early child care in Alberta.

The second phase of the AFL's Fair Start campaign focuses on recognizing early child-care workers with higher wages, better training and a secure retirement.

Siobhan Vipond, secretary-treasurer of the AFL, said on the Alberta Morning News on Saturday that the Alberta government's announcement of a \$25-per-day child-care program is a step in the right direction.

"It is exciting news that this is on the agenda and that they're finally addressing what has been a need for families in Canada, and it's really been shorted," Vipond said.

"We just hope that this is all a framework around having quality care given by quality staff in settings that are affordable and accessible."

Vipond also said the government needs to ensure that child care is readily accessible, not just affordable.

"It means accessible, not only in terms of how much you pay, but accessible in terms of what times are they open and are they close to where people work," Vipond said. "Are they also equipped to handle all children, because all children don't have the same needs when it comes to early education."

Vipond added it's important the government ensures child-care workers are properly trained.

"We need to raise the bar and allow people to be recognized for the training that they do have," she said.

"Also, [we need to] raise the floor, to ensure that people do have training.

"We're not talking about babysitting here, we're talking about early childhood education."

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