

# Stroller brigades aim to put child care on federal agenda <sup>[1]</sup>

Child care advocate says parents and caregivers are mobilizing across B.C., and she hopes Tri-City parents will get on board, to get political parties to make affordable, quality child care a priority

**Author:** Strandberg, Diane

**Source:** Tri-City News

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 20 Sep 2019

## AVAILABILITY

Access online <sup>[2]</sup>

## EXCERPTS

Affordable, quality child care is a bread-and-butter issue that most Coquitlam families want addressed yet political parties are taking their time to roll out their plans as bigger, sexier issues take centre stage, says a B.C. child care advocate.

But in recent days, the federal Liberal, Conservative, Green and NDP parties have made promises that Sharon Gregson hopes voters will compare before casting a ballot Oct. 21.

Gregson, whose Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC is promoting \$10-a-day, universal child care, says the parties offer different visions, and while she wouldn't state a preference for a particular platform, she said some more closely match the aims of her coalition than others.

For example, both the Greens and NDP promise to commit an amount equivalent to at least 1% of gross domestic product annually on child care, a standard recommended by UNICEF and supported by her coalition.

"Canada fares quite badly on that list; we don't have a history of investing in young children until they start kindergarten," Gregson said.

She said the Liberals and the Conservatives have committed to continuing an 11-year bilateral agreement that, in B.C., injects \$51 million a year into child care, including paying for a \$10-a-day pilot, which currently covers 2,500 children and will be reviewed next spring.

The Liberals have promised to boost funds to before- and after-school child care and both they and the Conservatives have promised an array of tax breaks and credits for families.

But Gregson is more inclined to support actual money going into child care because the funds can be used to create more daycare spaces, increase wages and education for early childhood educators, and reduce costs for parents, something the Greens and NDP plan for and a \$1 billion injection would pay for.

"What we have seen over the last week is we have gone from none to seeing parties actually have a child care platform — it looked initially like that wasn't going to happen," Gregson said. "As people start to go door knocking and politicians realize what the electorate is looking for, they put forward a child care plan."

The push comes as the cities of Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and Port Moody are surveying parents about their child care needs for an action plan to be developed in cooperation with School District 43, an initiative Gregson supports because it will encourage collaboration on a much-needed plan for how to go about providing more child care.

Among the issues locally, Gregson said, are the lack of quality licensed child care, which has led to waiting lists, and evening, weekend and other non-traditional care.

She said she hopes Tri-Cities parents will get involved in the federal election by organizing a Stroller Brigade Oct. 5 to encourage politicians to make child care funding a priority.

"Communities are coming out together to make sure child care is an election issue," Gregson said, "There are more communities stepping forward every day."

**Region:** British Columbia <sup>[3]</sup>

**Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/19/09/stroller-brigades-aim-put-child-care-federal-agenda>  
**Links**

<sup>[1]</sup> <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/19/09/stroller-brigades-aim-put-child-care-federal-agenda> <sup>[2]</sup>

<https://www.tricitynews.com/federal-election-2019/stroller-brigades-aim-to-put-child-care-on-federal-agenda-1.23952080> <sup>[3]</sup>

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7860>