

Opinion: My career is a result of access to affordable childcare ^[1]

In the 11 years since my daughter was born, I have been able to grow in my career and community involvement as a direct result of having access to daycare.

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AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

EXCERPTS

We know the pandemic is going to change a lot of things in our lives. After a year of this, our “old normal” seems to be a distant memory.

There are things that we miss that we hope to get back, and then there are things that many of us would consider a necessity.

This week, I read an article that discussed how daycare fees are rising and many childcare centres in Canada may close due to repercussions from the pandemic.

My daughter is getting to an age where I won't need to depend on childcare providers much longer, but access to quality, affordable childcare is something that is very close to my heart.

In the 11 years since my daughter was born, I have been able to grow in my career and community involvement as a direct result of having access to daycare.

I've moved up the ladder to be the director at a large provincial non-profit. I've landed the fantastic opportunity to write this column. I have earned a seat on the Victoria-Esquimalt Police Board, and recently became president of the B.C. Association of Police Boards.

I am really proud of what I have been able to achieve. Without daycare, none of this would have happened.

I have raised my daughter on my own since she was a baby and I've always been her sole provider. I do not have any family in this city, or province. I have always had big goals and I never wanted single parenthood to be a hurdle in achieving them.

Being a role model to my daughter was another reason to shoot for lofty goals.

In her early years, I was so grateful to qualify for a daycare subsidy. Without the provincial daycare-subsidy program, I don't know what I would have done.

Childcare costs are always rising. Every year that I have required childcare, it costs more than the year before.

Before we complain about fees, we have to note that fees for nearly every sector rise each year.

I know people who have found a way to work from home and juggle parenting without using daycare since the pandemic hit.

When people can work from home and adjust schedules around their children, it's a privilege, however. We need to acknowledge that not everyone has it.

Not everyone can work from home or create a flexible schedule with their employer. I know that there are many families that depend on childcare. Having access to childcare can allow parents to build a career and better the lives of their children.

We've gotten close to many of the staff at the childcare centres my daughter has attended. They have built trust, taught her life lessons and been pivotal role models to her.

There are people who can choose if they use childcare, and there are people who don't have any other options.

I really hope that a balance can be found to keep childcare centres open and providing care to children and families who need the service.

Region: British Columbia ^[3]

Tags: affordability ^[4]

mother's labour force participation ^[5]

work-life balance ^[6]

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