

# The here and now: Reimagining early childhoods in urgent times

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ISSUE 3: A just transition to a publicly funded system

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## Excerpted from article

On January 26th, 2022, Minister Katrina Chen hosted an online discussion with Dr. Bonnie Henry and a panel of public health experts in response to pushback by early childhood educators and operators against a lack of government and public health guidance and support for the sector during the peak of the latest Omicron pandemic wave. BC early childhood educators, childcare centre managers and owners are not alone in expressing outrage at what they feel has been a lack of respect for their position, working with the only segment of society (young children) who remain ineligible for vaccines in an already over-stretched and under-paid field. Frustration has been growing across Canada, and the United States, with an increasing number of early childhood professionals speaking out against the failure of a patchwork, market-driven system built on the backs of a largely feminized and undervalued sector of society.

It is within this political climate that the BC Government is asking for input on the critical considerations for creating a universal early learning and care system. Recognizing this moment as unprecedented in terms of political will and positive momentum at all levels - thanks in large part to ongoing work by advocates who have been pushing for an accessible, affordable, well-supported system of early childhood education and child care for years, here we offer an additional response to the BC Government's call for input.

Previously, we proposed questions in response to the government's goal to make early childhood education more inclusive and culturally safe and inclusive for all children. In this edition of the Here & Now, we respond to growing discontent in the field by unpacking the issue of recruitment and retention in early childhood education in reference to justice. To do so in a meaningful way requires us to rephrase the question from asking how to address recruitment and retention, to considering what educators, researchers and advocates know intimately and experience on an everyday basis as the reasons behind recruitment and retention.

**Region:** British Columbia [3]

**Tags:** pedagogy [4]

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