

'Needs to be a top priority': Advocates urge province to increase \$10-a-day child-care funding ^[1]

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Excerpts

Advocates and families across B.C. are concerned the province is falling behind on its promise to implement universal \$10-a-day child-care spots.

This comes after the provincial budget contained a minimal increase to the program.

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The ongoing funding is good news, but the Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC is concerned with the program's expansion pace.

Sharon Gregson, with the coalition's \$10-a-day child-care campaign, said the province currently has enough licensed child-care spots for 24 per cent of children.

"Which means children zero to 12, 75 per cent of them don't have any access to licensed child care. Of the child care we do have, only about 10 per cent of it is an actual \$10 a day site," Gregson said.

Victoria resident Eric Swanson has two children in \$10-a-day child-care spots.

He said receiving this affordable daycare has been life-changing for his family because previously, either he or his wife had to stay home to take care of the kids because they couldn't afford child care.

"It means my wife and I can both work without having to worry about paying another mortgage-sized payment on child-care spots," Swanson explained.

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"Knowing that child care is such an economic engine for the province that there would be more speed, more scale and more scope in building the \$10 a day system more quickly."

She said the B.C. isn't expanding the program as quickly, with provincial dollars, as the situation calls for.

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