

Child care program will get funding restored [CA-BC] ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

The B.C. government is restoring funding to a child-care referral program, avoiding a move that critics say would have hindered families across the province from finding daycare spaces.

Linda Reid, Minister of State for Child Care, wrote in a letter to child-care providers that she is changing her decision to cut the Child Care Resource and Referral Program, which assists families in their search for child care. The program also helps child-care providers with the B.C. child-care subsidy application process.

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Ms. Reid's decision comes six weeks after child-care providers were told their annual budget was going to be reduced to \$9-million from \$14-million, and then further cut to \$3-million by October, causing uproar from the child-care community.

The minister said the budget will be partly restored, to an annual \$9-million, as of April 1.

"We will carry the program this year, next year and the year after," she said.

The opposition NDP says the backlash among child-care providers forced the government to retreat.

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Ms. Reid insists her decision was not a result of opposition pressure. The decision was based on the province's overall child-care budget and the needs of child-care providers throughout the province, she said.

The child-care community is only cautiously embracing the news, since there is still a \$5-million budget cut.

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- reprinted from the Globe and Mail

Region: Canada ^[2]

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