

Parties promise better childcare [GB-WL] ^[1]

Author: BBC News

Source: BBC News

Format: Article

Publication Date: 13 Nov 2006

AVAILABILITY
See text below.

EXCERPTS

Two opposition parties have promised improved childcare in Wales as they begin setting out their policies for next year's assembly election.

Plaid Cymru said it would double funding for childcare and help poor families if it won the election.

Conservatives have promised incentives to businesses offering staff childcare and flexible working arrangements.

Access to affordable childcare is likely to be high on all the parties' agendas for the election next May.

Plaid Cymru claims current provision in Wales is expensive and patchy.

Speaking at Y Gorlan Child Care Centre in Abercynon, Plaid Cymru assembly leader Ieuan Wyn Jones said the party would address that by doubling the current £56m budget over four years and targeting help towards those with the lowest incomes.

...

The Conservatives would offer business rate relief on a sliding scale to businesses providing childcare, depending on how much childcare and flexible working firms offered, and the size of the firms.

...

On Saturday Welsh Labour Party members approved a series of policy ideas, including placing the aim of eradicating child poverty by 2020 at the heart of all its proposals.

Labour also agreed that it would expand free childcare to include two-year-olds.

The Liberal Democrats said childcare would be amongst a "raft of policies" they would be announcing in a couple of weeks time.

- reprinted from BBC Online

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