

# Thorne says child care funding doesn't make up for cuts [CA-BC]

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## EXCERPTS

Wednesday's announcement of \$8.1 million in funding for child care providers -- which includes a grant to the Port Coquitlam-based Step by Step Child Development Society -- doesn't make up for previous cuts, according to Coquitlam-Maillardville MLA Diane Thorne, the NDP's child care critic.

"My initial reaction was I was glad that they were putting any money into the system because it's desperately needed, but \$7 million is this one-time operational money -- and they've cut \$12 million from the operations budget in the last budget year," Thorne said in an interview.

She is also concerned that B.C. has not yet signed a five-year child care agreement with the federal government -- something six other provinces have done.

Wednesday's announcement, made by Minister of State for Child Care Linda Reid, includes \$1.1 million in one-time payments to 11 organizations throughout the province.

The one-time payments will support the creation of 236 new licensed group child care spaces, and help the recipients retain or enhance 161 existing spaces.

Step by Step will receive the smallest payment -- \$6,008.79 -- to create 25 before- and after-school-care spaces in a classroom at Millside Elementary in Coquitlam.

The society, which already operates a 25-space day-care program at another location, provides services both to children with special needs and to those without.

Besides the grants, Wednesday's announcement includes \$7 million in one-time operating funds to help more than 4,000 licensed child care providers during the summer, when day-care revenues tend to be lower.

"This investment will help improve the quality, capacity and accessibility of child care in British Columbia in the immediate term," Reid said in a news release. "By supporting construction, renovation and expansion projects, we are ensuring even more B.C. families have access to quality child care."

But Thorne said another concern for the NDP is that there is no line item in this year's budget for child care.

The budget -- which still needs to be debated because the government halted the debate before the election -- includes line items for early childhood development and supports to children with special needs.

Thorne said that raises the issue of whether, by lumping child care in with those other two items, the province plans to put federal money -- which it won't receive until it signs a five-year agreement -- toward something other than child care.

"This is going to be a huge item when this agreement does get signed," she said, "... this government is good at using the money where they want to use it, rather than where the feds meant for it to be used, so we'll see."

- reprinted from Coquitlam Now

**Region:** Canada [2]

British Columbia [3]

**Tags:** funding [4]

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/05/08/thorne-says-child-care-funding-doesnt-make-cuts-ca-bc> [2]  
<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7860> [4]  
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