

# Childcare cuts hurt 'working poor' most [CA-BC] <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** Fraser, Keith

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## AVAILABILITY

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### EXCERPTS:

A mom whose childcare subsidy was chopped in half says she may have to quit her job to care for her three-year-old daughter if the little girl loses her family daycare.

Cuts to B.C.'s childcare subsidies by the belt-tightening Liberal government are hampering low-income parents' efforts to achieve financial independence, says Shawn Sanderson.

"I don't know what Gordon Campbell thinks he's doing but he's screwing up everybody," said the 34-year-old Vancouver mom. "There's probably thousands of other parents in the same boat as me, but somebody has got to take the bull by the horns and do something."

Before the cuts were announced, Sanderson was getting \$750 a month for daycare for her daughter Mlaika from the ministries of Human Resources and Children and Families.

A market research supervisor, the single mother of three makes just \$1,000 to \$1,200 a month.

She was initially told that if she agreed to a child-protection risk assessment she might continue to qualify. Now the government has cancelled that assessment.

"They're making it difficult for single parents that are trying to work, but we're getting penalized for it. We are the working poor."

Latchmi Reddy, the daycare operator who cares for Mlaika, says she's already lost four of her seven children due to the cuts.

"It's really difficult," said Reddy, who fears she'll lose her own house and business soon. "The parents are so frustrated."

The YMCA, the Lower Mainland's biggest daycare provider with spaces for 1,200 kids, is working with a city-wide committee to determine the impact of the cuts.

Susan Low, manager of YMCA daycares, says the cuts are already hitting many parents.

"We've got some families who are going to be getting \$120-, \$140-, \$170-a-month less. We've had some calls from parents that are really concerned. They're not sure what they're going to do."

Under the cuts, the income-exemption level that determines a parent's eligibility is now \$285 lower. Up to 40,000 families receive the subsidy, but officials couldn't say how many will be hit by the cuts.

Citing confidentiality, they refused comment on Sanderson's case.

Human Resources Minister Murray Coell said the cuts are part of the government's attempts to bring spending under control.

"We went through a core process in the spring, identified the people most in need, people on income assistance and low income working, and tailored a program that would meet their needs."

reprinted from the Vancouver Province

**Region:** British Columbia <sup>[2]</sup>

**Tags:** subsidy <sup>[3]</sup>

funding <sup>[4]</sup>

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