

Child care missing job link ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

The Cowichan Child Care Council's Mary Dolan this week said she's worried that the provincial government has its priorities backwards when it comes to helping children and families.

"I often hear members of the B.C. government saying that the solution to poverty is for people to get a job. The missing link for parents is often quality childcare," she said in a release.

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Meanwhile, the council is working to raise awareness of the recently published UNICEF Report, The Child Care Transition: A League Table of Early Childhood Education and Care in Economically Advanced Countries.

That report, which places Canada dead last out of 25 countries measured in the provision of early childhood care and education.

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The report rated countries using 10 basic minimum standards as benchmark indicators.

The only benchmark that Canada achieved in the report was having 50 per cent of staff in accredited early education services holding proper post-secondary qualifications.

Under the guidelines of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child, many Canadian children are being denied entitlement to their rights.

Benchmarks that Canada did not achieve include:

- Subsidized and regulated child care services for 25 per cent of children under three;
- Subsidized and accredited early education services for 80 per cent of four year olds;
- 80 per cent of child care staff trained;
- One per cent of GDP spent on early childhood services;
- Child poverty rate less than 10 per cent;
- A national plan with priority for disadvantaged children.

The UNICEF Report calls on public and policy makers to decide whether we will stand up and rise to the challenge of this time of transition in our world to set standards that will ensure the well-being of "today's children and tomorrow's world."

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-reprinted from The Cowichan Valley Citizen

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