

Victoria's child care priorities go from bad to worse ^[1]

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Summary:

With an election less than six months away, it comes as no surprise to hear the BC government make spending announcements. Child care is no exception. Government's plan to spend on child care comes after 3 years of provincial cuts & totaling \$42 million in 2004/05 alone, or 20% of the provincial child care budget of 2001/02.

The damage done cannot be reversed for the children, families and child care providers who paid the price for these cuts.

Given the devastating impacts of these provincial cuts to child care, advocates have worked tirelessly to convince the provincial government to restore provincial funding for child care, to use federal funds to supplement provincial funding, and to develop a plan to create a publicly funded quality child care system in BC.

The response? Last month, the province announced \$33 million in child care spending for the rest of this fiscal year and the next fiscal year. While some details are not yet known, we understand that these funds will be used for child care subsidies, a one-time payment to service providers, and a one time payment to establish a professional development fund.

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC is calling on the provincial government to develop a five year plan for moving away from a user fee/subsidy system to a publicly funded system based on the principles of Quality, Universality, Accessibility, Developmental programming and Inclusion.

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