

CC 526

# The alternatives:

## An accessible, affordable childcare system in BC

- developed in consultation with local communities
- regulated by the province
- supported by direct government funding with little or no user fee.
- held publicly accountable
- available to children 0-12 years regardless of location, family income, and parental employment status.

## A range of services:

- including full and part-time group programs, supervised family home care, out-of-school care, special needs programs, emergency and occasional care.
- providing parents with real choices and flexibility in their child care decisions.

## High quality programs:

- reflecting the best current knowledge about early childhood development within our multicultural society.
- using qualified, caring staff who receive salaries and benefits equal to the value of their work and education.
- providing opportunities for an active and significant parental role.
- assurance of enriching, nurturing care.

**Our children are worth the investment.**

# VOTE FOR CHILD CARE

Contact the candidates in your community and ask them for their commitment. Write to the new government expressing your views.



# THE BC DAYCARE ACTION COALITION

... is a group of parents, caregivers, professional organizations and concerned citizens committed to the development of a high quality, accessible and affordable child care system to meet the needs of BC families.

**For more information write or call:**

The BC Daycare Action Coalition  
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# A VOTERS GUIDE TO CHILD CARE IN BC



**VOTE FOR**

**ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE,  
HIGH QUALITY CHILD CARE**



# Child Care In BC

— A growing crisis —

## Increasing need

In 1984, 43.7% of mothers with children under 3 years, and 56.5% of mothers with preschoolers aged 3 – 5 years, were in the paid labour force. This percentage is even higher for mothers whose youngest child was 6 – 12 years.

For many families, two incomes have become an economic necessity to avoid falling below the poverty line.

Increasing numbers of families with young children are headed by a single parent.

The number of latchkey children is rising – over 62,000 children aged 6 – 12 caring for themselves outside of school hours on a regular basis.



## Shortages

In 1981, 255,000 children aged 0 – 12 years required non-parental child care on a regular part-time and full-time basis, while their parents were working or studying. This number has increased by an estimated 10% in the last 5 years, yet the total number of licensed group daycare, family day home, and out-of-school care spaces is still less than 17,000.

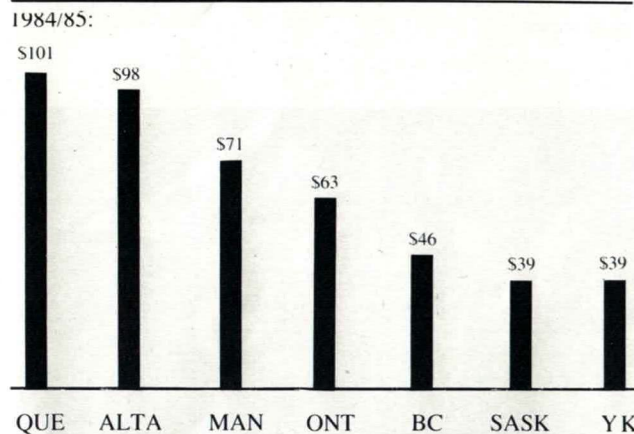
In the City of Vancouver, there are fewer than 75 licensed spaces for infants under 18 months. The limited availability of licensed care for infants and toddlers is a critical problem across BC.

BC's child care services for emergency situations, rural families, shift-workers, and children with special needs are woefully inadequate.

## Underfunding

BC spends less than half on child care than is spent by either Quebec or Alberta.

PROVINCIAL CHILD CARE EXPENDITURES  
(per child under 14 yrs)



The provincial government provides no start-up, expansion or operating funds for licensed child care programs.

## Not affordable

Licensed child care is funded entirely by parent user fees. Government assistance is only available, through daycare subsidies, to a small minority of families deemed sufficiently "in need".

BC has restricted the maximum allowable earnings for parents eligible for full subsidy to levels 1/3 to 1/2 below the poverty line. Families earning more pay 50 cents of every additional dollar directly to child care fees.

Daycare subsidies do not cover the actual cost of licensed care. Parents designated most "in need" may still pay a substantial monthly child care fee. In 1984, subsidy rates lagged from \$57.50 – \$132.00 per month behind the average monthly cost of licensed care for children 0 – 5 years.

Middle income parents are finding it increasingly difficult to afford licensed care.

AVERAGE MONTHLY COST OF DAYCARE IN  
VANCOUVER 1985/86

	INFANT CARE	18 MOS 3 YRS	3 – 5 YRS
1 CHILD	\$525.00	\$425.00	\$297.00
Subsidy (86)	316.00	316.00	230.00

## Quality under attack

In BC over 90% of the children receiving non-parental child care are in unlicensed, unmonitored care arrangements.

Lack of government funding is eroding the high quality of care offered by licensed programs.

Cutbacks in public health and social service workers have meant less time for monitoring and inspection of child care programs in BC.

The elimination of child abuse teams, family support workers and other programs have reduced the available support to child care programs.

## Workers subsidize costs

Qualified child care staff earn on average \$14,430 per year – 64% of the average industrial wage and less than 50% of a teacher's salary.

Many child care employees are not even receiving the benefits guaranteed under the Employment Standards Act.

