



ECEBC recognizes the passion of the field and the hard work that is being done by so many, to bring attention to the concerns of the childcare sector and the families and children of British Columbia in response to the announced cuts to child care funding.

Code Blue for Child Care is on February 6

This is the anniversary of Stephen Harper's election and his announcement of the cancellation of the national Early Learning and Child Care funding. There will be a report card on Stephen Harper released to share with parents and many opportunities to write letters, hold parent information sessions, organize/attend town hall meetings and let everyone know that in addition to the national funding cuts, our provincial government slashed childcare funding by \$42 million in 2002 and has yet to come forward with any provincial money to show their true commitment to a child care plan or system. It isn't enough to blame it on the feds, our provincial government must be held accountable for their bare bones tactics towards working parents. We encourage you to wear black arm-bands on February 6 and inform parents about the impacts these drastic cuts will have on working parents, early childhood educators and child care centres. Why are cuts so necessary and deep when BC's economy is strong and the provincial budget shows such high surpluses?

An official day of protest against the childcare cuts has been called on Tuesday, February 13!!

There are many options for early childhood educators as we stand together to say that enough is enough!

- There will be a rally on the steps of the legislature in Victoria and we encourage all to attend. There is work being done to provide support to get people there and further announcements are coming.
- There will be rallies and town hall meetings in various communities around the province – if you can't come to Victoria, find out what is being organized in your community, encourage your parents to join you and let the Premier and his government know how strongly you feel.
- If there is nothing planned in your community, join together and make something happen. There is information available about organizing town hall meetings on the BCGEU website (www.bcgeu.bc.ca).
- It is imperative that parents understand that the cuts will have serious impacts on their ability to access childcare. Encourage parents to walk with you when they find your centre or family child care home closed. We must stand together with families in educating the broader public about what is at stake.
- We will be sending out messages that can be used for a lunch box campaign; the BCGEU has included a parent letter template in their town hall tool kit; the Coalition of Childcare Advocates of BC has valuable information to share on their website (www.cccabc.bc.ca); the Advocacy Forum of BC has developed handouts about how the cuts are direct attacks on working families (www.advocacyforum.bc.ca); and The Human Early Learning Partnership has done a financial analysis (www.earlylearning.ubc.ca) that shows how the provincial government can restore the cuts without even going into its \$2 billion surplus. ECEBC strongly encourages you to use these resources to find the right way for you, your program, and your community to join with others in raising our voices in support of children, working parents and early childhood educators.

We have been pushed to our knees – it is time to get up!