

Since 2011, the Coalition of Child Care Advocates and the Early Childhood Educators of BC have been advancing the Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning.

When government puts the Plan in place, child care will cost families \$10 a day for a full time program, \$7 a day for part-time, and no user fee for families with annual incomes under \$40,000.

Every young child will have the right to participate in quality early care and learning programs that meet their needs. It will be up to families to choose what services work for them. With new investments from the province, locally elected school boards will provide early care and learning programs with the operating funds needed to deliver quality care.

Learn more about the Plan at 10aDay.ca

FACT SHEET

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PROFESSIONALLY SPEAKING

How the \$10aDay Plan Supports Early Childhood Educators

This fact sheet highlights the key elements of the \$10aDay Child Care Plan that directly impact early childhood educators, who provide full or part time care and learning for children birth to 12 years of age.

A new system will emerge with the implementation of the Plan, and that means positive changes for the profession of early childhood educators. Child care and preschool services will operate under new legislation with a different administrative and funding delivery model. Early childhood educators will receive financial support to achieve higher educational levels.

As a result of this new approach, which may take a generation to implement, ECEs will benefit from the increased respect, remuneration, and professionalism they deserve for the valuable contribution they make in the lives of children and families.

New Legislation: An Early Care and Learning Act in BC

NEW RESPECT: New legislation will move all regulated programs (including family and group child care, preschool and school age care) into the Ministry of Education. This creates the opportunity for the contributions of the profession of early childhood educators to the lives of children and families to be more publicly recognized. Early learning and care will become an equally valued part of children's educational journey.



The \$10aDay Plan will bring early childhood educators the increased respect, remuneration, and professionalism they deserve for the valuable contribution they make in the lives of children and families.



UNIVERSAL ENTITLEMENT: The Plan calls for the rights of all young children from birth to five years to access high quality, integrated early care and learning services that respect their unique developmental needs as well as family choice. It also addresses school age care and support for children in kindergarten and primary classrooms.

FUNDING AND STRUCTURE: Instead of the majority of child care funding coming directly from parents as it does now, under the new system government (public) funding is provided directly to child care programs, in the same way as public education is funded. The level of public funding will ensure that quality, inclusive programming is provided, with early childhood educators receiving wages and benefits that reflect the value and importance of their qualifications and work. For example, the costing for the \$10aDay Plan assumes that early childhood educators earn an average of \$25 per hour and receive on average an additional 20 per cent in benefits.

PROGRAM CONTENT: the BC Early Learning Framework and Aboriginal Frameworks form the basis for the structure of high quality early care and learning programs. They would continue to guide educators in their response to children's developmental needs and safeguard high quality play-based programming for children.

Moving to a Bachelor's of ECE as the New Educational Standard; Diploma as the Minimum Credential

ELEVATING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION ELEVATES ALL: A key element and benefit of the Plan is the development of new generations of early childhood educators with higher levels of education. By moving to a Bachelor's of ECE as the educational standard, and supporting every educator, including those working in family and school age care, to hold a minimum of a diploma, the outcomes for children and families will be powerful. Research indicates that the better the quality of early care and learning, the better the outcomes are for children, and the key factor in the equation of quality is the educator. The research on quality early childhood education speaks to the very strong correlation between the level of education of early childhood educators and increased opportunities for children – the better educated and remunerated the educators, the better the quality of child care for children and their families. "It is fundamental that high quality ELCC programs have staff that are well educated in early childhood education, skilled, competent, well respected and well remunerated... There is evidence

of strong associations between high quality child care and the wages and working conditions, post-secondary education in early childhood education, and job satisfaction of staff.¹ This means that children, families, and society will all benefit. Our children all deserve the best care possible from highly educated, well-remunerated professionals.

MORE POST-SECONDARY OPPORTUNITIES AND UPGRADING

SUPPORT: Within five years of full implementation of the \$10aDay Plan, the goal is that at least one early childhood educator in every program will hold a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education degree or a bachelor's degree with an early years specialization from a related field. It is recognized as part of the Plan that BC needs an increase in post-secondary opportunities in early childhood education, including distance and online learning to meet this goal. Implementation of the Plan does not mean that those who already hold a certificate to practice would lose their credentials. There would be ongoing support and funding in place for existing early childhood educators to upgrade their education. Mature providers who may not want to upgrade their education to the new standards could remain in their current positions, with their current qualifications, until they decide to retire or move on.

Pathway to Increased Professionalism

The Plan creates the opportunity for early childhood educators to move from what many view as a 'job' to a professional career. Within the Plan, ECEs are entitled to an active voice in the development of new early care and learning plans for the communities and families they serve. This will bring increased opportunities for shared professional development, mentoring, expanded career opportunities and access to a larger pool of professionals to work in programs.

Child care organizations receiving new public funds will be required to use the funds, amongst other things, to improve staff education levels and wages and to offer programs that are consistent with BC's Early Learning Framework and Aboriginal Frameworks.² And, in kindergarten and Grade 1 programs, ECEs will work as professional colleagues alongside teachers to support full school day, play-based programs.

1 Child Care Resource and Research Unit, *Early Learning and Child Care Quality by Design* (www.childcarequality.ca/sys/hr.html), childcarecanada.org

2 In addition to raising wages and staff educational levels, child care services that participate in the system will be required to use new public funds to lower fees, welcome all children, address community needs, and offer play-based programs. Providers who choose not to participate could continue to operate independently outside of the new system, if they meet licensing requirements.



Importantly, within the new educational standards, the Plan ensures that all ECEs in BC are educated about the history, cultures, and practices of First Nations peoples and integrate these learning into the programs they provide for all children.

Indigenous communities would be supported to develop and deliver their own culturally relevant and traditional language based programs.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has called on governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families as a part of healing and reconciliation. The \$10aDay Plan fully supports this call to action.



Early childhood educators in BC are personified by vision, creativity, flexibility, patience, courage and perseverance to achieve the best for the children in their care and their families.

All of these measures will help break down the artificial barriers that now exist between education and child care. With better educational qualifications, combined with an existing code of ethics and a professional association already in place to guide practice, the pathway to increased professionalism for ECEs is ensured.

Change

The \$10 a Day Child Care Plan is going to require courage, and means change for everyone. Early childhood educators in BC are personified by vision, creativity, flexibility, patience, courage and perseverance to achieve the best for the children in their care and their families. These qualities will serve to move the profession forward to the recognition they deserve for the valuable contribution they make in the lives of children and families.



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COALITION OF
**child care
advocates**
OF BC

The Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC and the Early Childhood Educators of BC advance the \$10aDay Plan in ways that are consistent with their respective mandates and applicable regulatory requirements. Both organizations individually and jointly provide public education about the Plan. As a registered charity, ECEBC also engages in a limited amount of permitted non-partisan advocacy which is directly connected to its charitable public education work. As a registered non-profit society, CCCABC advances the Plan through its advocacy campaign, and at www.10aDay.ca.