

June 2021

## **Bilateral Child Care Negotiations**

BC is expected to be the first province/territory to reach an Agreement with the Federal government for new child care funds committed in the 2021 Federal Budget.

The Federal Government has adopted the goal of providing \$10aDay child care across Canada and has allocated significant, sustained funds – enough to make substantial progress on universal access to \$10aDay Child Care a reality in BC. It is therefore essential that governments use this historic opportunity to move away from fragmented grants and subsidies to system building policies and funding.

We are in full support of the rights of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples to design, develop, and deliver early care and learning services that meet their needs as established in the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework. We acknowledge that Indigenous communities have and may evolve their services in directions other than those outlined here.

We recommend that the new Bi-lateral Agreement meets the following minimum conditions:

1. **Welcomes in current licensed programs**, on a level playing field, while new programs are developed.
2. **Ensures all publicly supported expansion is in Indigenous, public, and non-profit facilities and programs**, ending the current practice of using public funds to support the acquisition of privately- owned real estate
3. **Ensures all operating funding is provided directly and equitably to programs**, with accountability for reducing parent fees to a maximum of \$10/day and increasing overall ECE compensation.
4. **Advances inclusive, universally accessible programs that meet diverse family needs**, on a voluntary basis.
5. **Advances the goal of a respected, well-educated and fairly compensated ECE profession**, including the implementation of a competitive provincial ECE wage grid within a comprehensive recruitment and retention strategy.

With these conditions in place, we recommend that BC use new federal funds for the following urgent priorities, as outlined in the Roadmap to \$10aDay Child Care in BC.

1. **A planned transition to \$10aDay child care in every BC community.** Start with programs located in publicly and non-profit owned facilities, where taxpayers do not assume the mortgage/leasing costs of privately owned assets. Set and report on quarterly expansion targets
2. **An Equitable Funding Formula** that provides direct operating funds to new and existing \$10aday programs to lower parent fees, raise wages, cover programming costs and facility maintenance.
3. **A competitive provincial ECE wage grid delivered through the Funding Formula.** Increase access to public post-secondary ECE programs, offer free tuition and/or student-debt relief for ECE graduates and fund on-line, part time, distance ed and work/study offerings.
4. **A child care capital budget** to replace the ineffective New Spaces Fund. Develop a provincial plan to create Indigenous, Public, and Non-profit child care facilities and programs and include child care in all major public infrastructure projects. In the short-term, purchase high-quality modular buildings to be placed on public land across the province.
5. **Establish a provincial transition team with** expertise from inside and outside government. Give this team the mandate and authority to lead the move of child care to the Ministry of Education and ensure the expansion of \$10aDay programs.

With these actions underway, implement a cap on fees in existing programs receiving operating funds, to provide interim relief to families not yet able to access a \$10aDay site.

[www.10aday.ca/roadmap](http://www.10aday.ca/roadmap)