

As a Canadian, my priority for the 2015 budget is that Canada support families by creating affordable childcare programs so parents can afford to go to work and contribute to Canada's economy. Doing this ensures fiscal sustainability and economic growth. It ensures prosperous and secure communities and maximizes the number and types of jobs Canadians will be able to work at.

In Vancouver, British Columbia, the normal fee for infant and toddler daycare is approximately \$1200.00 per month. Not only is this fee unaffordable for most parents, in addition, many daycares do not have the ability to pay their staff a living wage, which is now \$20.10 per hour in Vancouver. Unless a parent earns significantly more money than \$1200.00 per month, it is economically unfeasible for them to go to work.

Add a second child into the scenario and we are now looking at daycare costs of \$2400.00 per month that a family needs to come up with. At this point, to be able to work and afford childcare, a parent in British Columbia must be in an extremely high paying job or else they must be extremely poor and be eligible for a government subsidy. There is no in-between.

The fact is, most families in British Columbia do not have a high income and they are being forced to choose between working and not working due to a lack of affordable childcare. And, those low-income families, who cannot afford to work, are now forced to raise their children on a very tight budget, preventing them from spending money in their communities at restaurants, retail businesses, cultural venues, travel, etc.

Is it better for the economy of British Columbia to have parents working at any and all of the diverse employment offered in British Columbia, such as the jobs supported by the federal temporary foreign workers program (that Canadians don't take because the wages are too low) make a living, and provide for their children, or is it better for the economy that these parents don't work because they cannot afford child care?

Working parents in BC want to have affordable day care such as Quebec does. British Columbians have a plan in place and are ready to implement it. They need government support for this. Canada as a whole will benefit from a universal childcare plan supported by both the provincial and federal governments. For more information on the plan see: <http://www.cccabc.bc.ca/plan/community-plan/10day-child-care/>

Thank you.

Janet Lacroix