

JULY EMAIL REPLY FROM BC GOVERNMENT: does not address discrimination, confirms discriminatory funding

SUBJECT: Re: Child care funding and gender equity

MCF Early Years MCF:EX <EarlyYears@gov.bc.ca>

To:

Jul 24 at 11:04 AM

VIA E-MAIL

Ref: 244156

Helen Ward

Dear Helen Ward:

Thank you for your email of July 3, 2019, addressed to the Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Children and Family Development and the Honourable Katrina Chen, Minister of State for Child Care, regarding support for parents who choose to stay at home to care for their children. As the Director of Child Care Policy, I am pleased to respond.

As you are likely aware, under the [Childcare BC plan](#), government is investing \$630 million over three years to improve the affordability of child care, along with multiple programs and initiatives to expand the sector and ensure a supply of well-qualified early childhood educators to provide early care and education. The expansion of child care under the Childcare BC plan is expected to benefit women in multiple ways. For example, evidence suggests that female labour force participation behaviour is affected by the price and availability of child care (as well as other family benefits). Statistics Canada analysis suggests the cost of child care, along with the limited availability of regulated spaces, may play a role in the high gender employment gap in Vancouver to the extent that it inhibits mothers' participation in the labour market as women typically serve as primary care providers for their children. As well, women are predominantly engaged in the early learning and child care sector and are the predominant employee group, and so expansion of the sector will provide more employment opportunities.

As part of government's investment, the new [Affordable Child Care Benefit](#) (ACCB) and [Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative](#) (CCFRI) are already helping to bring down child care fees for many families. The ACCB is an income-tested benefit to help families with their child care costs, and families earning under \$111,000 annually are encouraged to apply. The ACCB supports families with children attending Licensed Child Care, Registered Licence-Not-Required Child Care, Licence-Not-Required Child Care, and In-Child's-Own-Home Care. For further information on the ACCB, please go to [our website](#).

To support the affordability of child care, government also provides benefits for all parents of young children. The BC Early Childhood Tax Benefit (BCECTB) is a tax-free monthly payment made to eligible families to help with the cost of raising young children under age 6. Benefits from this program are combined with the federal Canada Child Benefit (CCB) into a single monthly payment. The BCECTB provides a benefit of up to \$55 per month per child under age 6. Benefits are based on the number of children in the family and the family's net income. For more information on the BCECTB, please visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/family-benefits/bc-early-childhood-tax-benefit>.

In Budget 2019, government announced it intends to replace the BCECTB with a new, enhanced BC Child Opportunity Benefit (BCCOB) effective October 1, 2020. The BCCOB will provide a tax-free monthly payment to families that have children under the age of 18, regardless of their choices for child care. The BCCOB will be paid with the CCB as a single monthly payment. For families with a family net income under \$80,000, the maximum BCCOB amount is:

- \$1,600 for a family's first child,
- \$1,000 for a second child and
- \$800 for each subsequent child under the age of 18.

For more information on the BCCOB, please visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/family-benefits/child-opportunity-benefit>.

I appreciate your advocacy for parents who make the decision to stay at home with their children. Thank you again for writing.

Respectfully,

Teresa Butler
Director
Child Care Policy