

BC Association of Child Development (BCACDI) Election Toolkit

BCACDI:

- BCACDI is a provincial non-profit organization which provides advocacy, communication networking, research and education services to its member agencies throughout B.C. and the Yukon.
- BCACDI represent member agencies which provide developmental and intervention services for children and youth with special needs and their families.
- The core services provided by member agencies include, but are not limited to, early intervention therapy services including physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech language pathology; infant development programs; supported child development programs; school based therapies; behavioral support services; and autism services and programs.

Demographics:

- Population of B.C.: 3,907,738 (2001 Census)
- Population 0 to 6 years of age: 287,917
- Population 0 to 19 years of age: 976,345
- Children with special needs: 52,000
- Children in care: 9,000 to 10,000
- Children in care with special needs: 4,000 to 5,000
- Children with special needs on wait lists for early intervention services: over 7,000 and growing

Issues:

- ❖ Lack of integrated vision for services for children and youth with special needs and their families.
- ❖ Wait lists for all services for children and youth with special needs.
- ❖ Inadequate funding.
- ❖ Fragmentation of service for children and youth with special needs.

Recommendations:

- ✓ Services for children including services for children and youth with special needs should be a top priority for the government.
- ✓ All of children's services for those ages 0 to 19 should be centralized in one ministry. A provincial children's secretariat should be developed to ensure the integration of all of children's services across government.
- ✓ \$75 million needs to be allocated to address wait list and program needs for services and facilities for children and youth with special needs. This should include at least \$15 million for school aged therapies.
- ✓ The funding for services for children and youth with special needs should be protected from any future government funding reductions.

Questions for candidates:

- What will you do to ensure that children services and services for children and youth will be a top priority for the government?
- How do you propose addressing the wait lists for services for children and youth with special needs? (Considering the \$2 billion surplus the government had last fiscal year and the additional child care funding promised by the federal government).
- Will you commit to continued protected funding for these services?