



COALITION MEETING MINUTES

BC TEACHERS' FEDERATION
550 WEST 6TH AVENUE, VANCOUVER

January 11, 2017

PRESENT:

Barb Ryeburn, BC Teachers' Federation
Bibigul Amirova
Carol Madsen, Parent Support Services Society of BC
Caroline Kent, Comp 3, BC Government and Service Employees' Union
Christine Lawson, Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre
Daniel Almeida, BC Association of Family Resource Programs
Dawn Steele, Inclusion BC
Deb Anderson Eng, Pacific Community Resources Society
Dylan Falconer, PLEA
Faith Bodnar, Inclusion BC
Fionn Yaxley, BC Aboriginal Child Care Society
Fred Milowsky, Representative for Children and Youth office

Gyda Chud, First Call/Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC (chair)
Jean Moore, BC Alliance for Mental Health & Addiction
Joel Kaplan, BC Council for Families
Katherine Moore, First Call/UBC
Kerry Watts, BC CAPC Society/Connect for Kids
Lisa Young, SUCCESS
Mab Oloman, Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC
Mary Johnston, Five Family Place Partnership/Eastside Family Place
Mike Clarke, BC Government and Service Employees' Union
Noorjean Hassam, BC Centre for Disease Control
Ramsay Malange, BC Association of Family Resource Programs

Stephanie Howell, Society for Children & Youth of BC
Sue Irwin, North Shore Community Resources, CCRR Vancouver Coastal
Tara Wolff, Canadian Mental Health Association – BC
Viveca Ellis, Single Mothers Alliance of BC
Adrienne Montani, First Call
John Kennedy, First Call
Julie Cheng, First Call

CALL-IN:

Pamela Alcorn, Federation of Community Social Services of BC

REGRETS:

Deanna Ogle, Living Wage for Families Campaign

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Gyda Chud welcomed everyone and acknowledged we are meeting on unceded Coast Salish territory, home of Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. A round of introductions was made.

2. FIRST CALL UPDATES

Feb. 23, 2017 Fundraising Gala

Our one big fundraising dinner with Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond is coming up Thursday, Feb. 23, 2017.

We're selling tickets now firstcallbc.org/gala and looking for sponsors and silent auction items, as well as volunteers. Any members who can contribute please [let us know](#).

Presentations and other publications (see end of minutes)

The Living Wage for Families Campaign circulated its [2016 annual report](#). We now have 75 Living Wage Employers across BC and six local governments have passed living wage policies: Quesnel, Vancouver, New Westminster, Port Coquitlam, Parksville and Huu-ay-aht First Nations.

putting children and youth first

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First Call made a submission to the Canada Revenue Agency Consultation on Charitable Organization Political Activities. We are not a registered charity because we do 100% advocacy. However our charitable activities are hosted by Vancity Community Foundation. Hopefully with the new federal government will accept the many recommendations to change the rules to make sure the voices of civil society groups are not constrained for fear of losing their charitable status.

Youth Art for Change – First Call has worked with the Society for Children and Youth of BC on Youth Art for Change and the youth voices in our *2016 BC Child Poverty Report Card* comes courtesy of that project. On Jan. 25, 4:30-6:30 pm, SCY will host a showcase of art produced in coordination with various groups including Arts Starts. They are planning a panel discussion talking about the value of art in change and the importance of youth voice for change. Please share the event with your networks.

First Call has been working on the Canadian Federation of University Women BC Council's Aging Out of Foster Care Study Circle Project. A guide has been produced and former youth in care are leading study circles around BC for University Women's Club members, raising awareness of youth aging out of care without proper supports. They hosted an action forum in December.

3. KIDS CAN'T WAIT CAMPAIGN, FAITH BODNAR, INCLUSION BC

- Read the press release: <https://goo.gl/9oxL8P>
- Find Inclusion BC reports, background, and links to BCACDI and FSI materials: <https://goo.gl/LcmcPi>

Faith Bodnar, executive director, and Dawn Steele, communications coordinator, presented on Inclusion BC's Kids Can't Wait campaign.

Inclusion BC has been in BC for 62 years. They're a grassroots organization engaged in activities that advance the human rights of kids with developmental disabilities. They've helped the move from kids who are segregated from mainstream service organizations to a human rights model in which kids with developmental disabilities have the right to full inclusion.

BC has set the trend in Canada for inclusion. Faith Bodnar sits at a national table of community living and members of Inclusion International. The Canadian Association of Community Living was part of the repatriation of the human rights and freedoms and the diversity language was included in the UN Charter of Human Rights of Persons with a Disability.

Background

Kids are missing out on timely access to therapies, like speech and language therapy, that they need from an early age. We are in crisis due to underfunding services. Best practice of family-centred support has been shifted to more centre-based support because of limited budgets. There is a real degradation of early childhood programming and access. Kids are entering school at age 5 without needed early intervention therapies. Schools are often not able to provide adequate supports either.

Inclusion BC and partners hosted a [summit](#) in November 2016 and out of that came a report called [Kids Can't Wait](#) that urges the government to invest properly in early childhood education and intervention for kids with disabilities with the long-term benefits in mind.

Some of the recommendations involve wait lists, increasing case loads, rural distances therapists must travel, MCFD's failure to adequately collect wait list data, the funding freeze in this sector, kids being sent

home from school because schools lack the resources to deal with them, more public money shifting to private schools, MCFD dropping policy changes on agencies, and the expanded link with child protection due to the crisis parents are facing.

About the Kids Can't Wait campaign

Inclusion BC is recommending children's early intervention services be expanded to age 8, up from age 5.

Their [report](#) with the Family Support Institute of BC gathered feedback from parents who have accessed or are waiting to access early intervention services and supports for their child. The BC Association for Child Development and Intervention has been collecting [stories](#). Their work reinforces Inclusion BC's work.

They have a [petition](#) urging BC to invest in early childhood intervention. Members are encouraged to share the link. There is a special [webpage](#) with background, media reports and links to partners and other groups. Inclusion BC's work is part of broader work in the early years sector, like First Call. They are using social media to connect with young families, give them a voice and connect with each other. They are often isolated and do not know resources exist. Their use of Facebook has seen a tremendous response.

The time before election is a prime opportunity to get the government to support funding in this sector. Inclusion BC is developing an election toolkit and will provide messaging for the election. Their election campaign will launch in February. They have a small working group that has been guiding them but they are open to input from other First Call members.

They will also be raising the issue of low disability assistance rates. BC has the most shameful rates in Canada. They will also be raising the need for housing to be inclusive, affordable, and safe across the province and the importance of inclusive education.

DISCUSSION

Cultural diversity is integrated in their programs and services with people who can speak many languages.

It was noted that there are many access issues for Indigenous children.

Teachers need the supports in the classroom and at the administrative level to get enhance their capacity to support students with disabilities.

What can First Call do?

1. Petition to sign
2. Reports to share
3. Add to our election toolkit

4. CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT CANADIAN ACTION PLAN FOR CHILDREN (CAPC) PROGRAMS, RAMSAY MALANGE, FAMILY RESOURCE PROGRAMS BC (FRPBC) AND KERRY WATTS, BC CAPC SOCIETY

- Find CAPC campaign materials: <http://www.bccapcsociety.org/get-involved/current-campaigns/>

Ramsay Malange, BC director of research programs at the FRPBC, and Kerry Watts, president of BC CAPC Society, presented on what CAPC programs do, how they're consistent with child development knowledge and why they are cost effective.

Background

Funding for CAPC comes from the federal Public Health Agency of Canada. PHAC funds CAPC coalitions running 415 projects across the province. Most CAPC programs provide family support.

For example, on the North Shore, CAPC provides parenting support and knowledge translation, making sure resources around health are getting out in the community. They focus on the health and social development of children 0-6 years and their families facing challenging life circumstances.

BC CAPC Society is a stand-alone society with a mandate to create public awareness of the importance and value of these programs to people who use them and to ensure there is sustainable and effective funding.

There have been rigorous evaluations of CAPC programs. Outcomes reported nationally include:

- Better outcomes for children in terms of physical, social, emotional and language and cognitive development. (Direct effect)
- Indirect effects: Programs lead to improved children's social and emotional development through benefits to parents' improved self-confidence.
- Improved parent outcomes including life skills (time management, budgeting), emotional well-being, increased social support networks, knowledge and use of community resources, parent knowledge and skills.
- Community benefits such as building partnerships and providing leadership in communities.

Effectiveness: About one quarter of participants have income less than \$15,000 a year and half are under the low-income cutoff. Programs are serving many single parents and parents who have not graduated from high school.

They find community-based prevention programs up to six times more cost effective than interventions. CAPC is estimated to save \$200 million per year in avoided public costs in health care, education and more.

Challenges: CAPC has received the same funding for 10 years but because of inflation this amounts to a 17% cut over the past decade from 2006 to 2016, meaning cuts to staff positions or time. They appreciate the three-year funding cycles but they are being asked to do a lot more with a lot less. Funding has remained stagnant since the program began in 1993.

The campaign

They are advocating for sustainable funding and restoring it to original levels accounting for inflation.

Campaign includes parents sending postcards, site visits with politicians and gathering endorsement letters from organizations to speak on the value that CAPC programs provide to the communities.

What can First Call do

1. Write a letter of endorsement
2. Send in postcards

They are looking at the impact of programs in terms of the Early Development Instrument (EDI) from the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP). EDI data show an upward trend in social emotional vulnerability. Supporting the emotional well-being of parents is linked to benefits for their children. A new focus will be to ask for provincial funding and a health strategy at the provincial level.

DISCUSSION

They currently have a relationship with individual health authorities but would be useful to have a formal relationship with a provincial umbrella.

Some issues raised are similar to what's come out of the *Kids Can't Wait* report. There's a lack of information, lack of support, difficulty accessing programs, seeing more families in crisis. It points to the need to work and advocate together.

EDI is one tool but other provinces are using up to three tools for evaluation. What we're seeing on the ground are families in crisis especially around housing, food security and child care. The conversation needs to be broadened from the EDI. Vulnerable children and families are not segregated in the EDI data, so does not reflect what disability groups are seeing on the ground.

Information from the BC Council for Families poll opened up the door for additional funding for one of their programs at the provincial level. It took them 2.5 years to get the research going and momentum growing to achieve the funding. It might be good strategy to find out what other CAPC programs are doing across Canada.

Child Care Resource and Referral programs have lost huge funding in past. This resulted in strategic planning and CCRs coming together to engage community partners and province. It took time. CCRR community partners spoke up about the negative impact to other organizations with the loss of CCRR services, e.g. the increased workload, calls from parents, etc. The multicultural agencies were also key supporters.

First Call will write a letter in support of the campaign and enlarge on the discussion at the Early Childhood Development Roundtable. We can encourage our member agencies to write their own letters. We can spread the word on any campaign tools. Where we can target provincial funding is a conversation to pursue. Data from CAPC programs can be added into the data gathered through the ECD Roundtable's early years access barriers survey.

They are focusing on putting the CAPC logo on their programs so people can start to identify where their funding comes from..

Government is saying we're building early years centres but none is related to expanding direct family support services. That is the public awareness challenge. A pre-election message is needed.

5. REVIEW OF REPRESENTATIVE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACT

<https://consultations.leg.bc.ca/Submission/Create?cons=StatutoryReview>

The select standing committee is reviewing the *Representative for Children and Youth Act* and asking for submissions.

Limitations in their legislation right now include their support for children and youth ends at age 19. The RCY can assist adults with developmental disabilities aged 19 to 24 for adults if they are receiving services from Community Living BC (CLBC), but otherwise services are provided only up to their 19th birthday. Agreements with Young Adults have been extended to age 26. RCY technically **doesn't** have ability to advocate for children who leave the foster care system or those who go on these post-majority agreements.

Designated services under the Act don't include education or health (other than child and youth mental health services). Mental health is a designated service for children but not included as they move to adults. Designated services are primarily services offered through the Ministry of Children and Family Development, but do include addiction services which are moving to the health ministry.

For ages 19-24 the only eligibility for RCY helps is related to CLBC services, and includes a restriction to youth who have received an MCFD service 15 months prior to turning 19. RCY cannot advocate for youth over 19 in relation to health services, mental health services and income assistance services.

The Representative's mandate to monitor MCFD should definitely continue.

There is a silo approach focusing on one ministry or another. The Representative should be able to focus on what the child needs, e.g. including services in school.

6. MEMBER UPDATES

Five Family Place Partnership is developing a strategic plan later in January that will include strategies to build partnerships, raise profiles and attain sustainable funding.

BC Teachers' Federation has a public education advocacy conference on Saturday, Feb. 18 presenting to parents and teachers from communities across BC. There will be a panel discussion on poverty. They are looking for a parent who can speak on how poverty has affected them; please get in touch with Barb Ryeburn bryeburn@bctf.ca if you can refer someone.

Barb also encouraged members to have a table at their social justice conference Feb. 10-11, or if they want to submit an article to the teacher newsletter related to how teachers can get involved with their campaigns.

Single Mothers' Alliance of BC is working on a legal aid listening campaign in partnership with West Coast LEAF and Public Interest Advocacy Centre. They are looking to hear the experiences of women who received or didn't receive legal aid and the impact on child custody, family law and particularly women who have escaped domestic violence. Members are encouraged to let women they know to share their story with SMA—contact info@singlemothersbc.org.

On Feb. 11 and 18 SMA is offering a two-part [workshop](#), Equality Law for Social Change by West Coast LEAF, at the Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House.

April 1, SMA is holding an [all-candidates debate](#) on women's equality. It's a four-hour event with community-based discussion groups and representatives from political parties. They want to encourage low-income women to attend.

At the end of January SMA will release their [review](#) of gender equality to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in partnership with West Coast LEAF. They are lobbying for a provincial ask endorsed by 100 organizations and looking for more organizations to endorse their letter.

BC Council for Families has moved to new offices at 1847 West Broadway between Burrard and Cypress.

BC Government and Service Employees' Union reports that the fentanyl crisis is impacting a lot of their members who provide drug addiction counselling and health services. The BCGEU is working to make the environment safer for their members.

First Call continues to work on our provincial first call election toolkit. If you have any issues or questions to add please email John Kennedy as soon as possible john@firstcallbc.org.

Social media shareables for the *2016 BC Child Report Card* are now up on stillin5.ca and you can help spread the word by clicking on the [graphics](#) and tweeting and posting them on Facebook.

As part of the first Poverty Reduction Coalition [speaker series](#) on Jan. 16, 2017, Adrienne Montani and Viveca Ellis will be presenting with David Morley from UNICEF. Adrienne will be sharing BC child poverty statistics. Adrienne and David will also be doing a [webinar](#) the following morning on Jan. 17.

PLEA has seen the tightest funding yet from the Ministry of Children and Family Development for youth in care. With the fentanyl crisis, youth in care are more at risk. More youth in care need homes.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next coalition meeting will take place Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2017. Refreshments are served at 9 am, meeting from 9:15–11:30 am. BC Teachers' Federation, 550 West 6th Avenue in Vancouver. Telephone participation welcome; please contact us by the Monday before the meeting at info@firstcallbc.org if you wish to participate by phone.

FIRST CALL OUT AND ABOUT

Community Presentations December 2016-January 2017

- Child Poverty Report Card webinar
- Living wage presentation to Next Up participants
- Vancouver Community College Nursing students – Child Poverty Report Card and First Call
- CUPE 498 on the living wage in Port Coquitlam

Recent Publications

December: [2016 BC Child Poverty Report Card - Response from BC MP John Aldag](#)

December: [Living Wage Campaign - 2016 Year in Review](#)

December: [First Call Submission to the CRA Consultation on Charitable Organization Political Activities](#)

Media Hits

The topic of child poverty continued to garner much of the media hits from late November to the end of 2016 — 71 in total. This follows the release of the First Call *2016 BC Child Poverty Report Card* on Nov. 23, 2016.