

# Daycare cuts hurts single parents in B.C.

by Neal Watson and CUP News Services

Some parents and childcare workers in B.C. say single mothers face incredible barriers to post-secondary education because the B.C. government does not provide enough money for campus daycare centres.

Lee McKay, a member of Vancouver's lesbian and feminist mothers' action group, says government cutbacks in daycare subsidies mean single mothers must often choose between going to school and ensuring their children are well looked after.

"If universities want to be accessible to women as well as men they have to arrange some first-rate childcare, otherwise the situation is just not equal," McKay said.

Universities and colleges, she says, are designed for students without dependents and many in B.C. have substandard facilities for children.

Although the Canadian Federation of Students-Pacific launched a campaign three years ago urging the government to upgrade daycare on campuses, CFS-Pacific chair Tami Roberts says subsidies have been frozen since 1981.

Marian Warwick, the director of the Day Care centre at the U of A, says despite a zero per cent increase in the centre's operating budget over the past few years, the centre



The day care centre at the U of A is funded through a combination of the provincial government, the city and fees from parents. The centre has a capacity of 64 children and applications are not accepted until the child is two.

But Warwick does emphasize the centre has problems coping with the demand.

"We do have a waiting list to get in," said Warwick. "And the biggest demand we have is for infant care and we do not do infant care."

Warwick said student parents are eligible for subsidies from the government. The day care centre charges \$45 per month for one

child.

The cutbacks have severely affected daycare facilities on two B.C. campuses so far. At Kwantlen College in Surrey, the on-campus daycare centre closed its doors in September, while the Simon Fraser University daycare centre is selling raffle tickets to pay for its maintenance and utilities.

Julia Sweet, former Kwantlen college daycare worker, says the centre workers staged bake sales to keep the facility afloat, but was forced to close this year when the college administration refused to guarantee salaries for workers and keep the money from the child-

ren's fees for later supplies.

Disheartened and angry, Sweet says the closure is symptomatic of the low priority given to children and people who care for them.

"Why do cashiers, for example, make more money than us?" We are responsible for children. We are helping to better society."

SFU daycare workers, however, are more optimistic about their situation. Although they are faced with a \$66,000 cut in funding for maintenance and utilities over a three year period, they hope they will raise \$10,000 this fall to upgrade the centre's 10 large playgrounds and provide bursaries to subsidize parents' childcare fees.

"The playgrounds have to be safe," said centre director Joyce Branscombe.

At the University of Victoria, the daycare centre got a boost from students who voted last spring to kick in a dollar per student per year to fund the centre. Most of the money will go to a five per cent salary increase for the workers at the student-run centre.

Although daycare centres collect fees from parents range anywhere from \$100 to \$500 a month, most daycare workers only earn minimum wage. Crystal Saunders of the Capilano College Women's Centre, a single mother herself, says the wages are a reflection of the poor government planning of daycare.

"It's not set up with any kind of intelligent rationale at all. I think we single parents are discriminated against all the way down the line."

## Edwards debuts in Commons

# MP's youth plan

by Jim Herbert

In his first speech before Parliament last week, the freshman MP for Edmonton South, Jim Edwards, revealed a plan that he says would help eliminate youth unemployment.

Edwards wants to encourage a "generational partnership" between well educated, unemployed

young people and the many "mature" former business people who have been laid off or forced into early retirement because of the recession.

The young and the old would combine to form businesses which would be funded by banks but backed up by "federal government insurance or guarantees."

Four or five years later, the mature partners would leave, taking an "equity share" from the business' assets with them.

By then, experienced younger partners would be left to expand these businesses and create further jobs.

Edwards said recent announcements by Finance Minister Michael Wilson included measures that will help revive the province's oil and gas industry, which Edwards said was savaged by the National Energy Program.

The change to world prices for oil is a major step in the right direction, according to Edwards. A healthy energy industry "means business for the supply and service companies, the restaurants, hotels and hardware stores. It means thriving communities and healthy family life," said Edwards.

Edwards also praised what he calls the renewal of "Canadian internationalism."

As examples of this new spirit, he cited the warming of Canadian-American relations, the "new commitment to our North Atlantic allies," and the support for the Ethiopian drought victims.

Finally, Edwards called the search for peace the "ultimate sine qua non." He said the dedicated and unrelenting pursuit of peace "is demanded by posterity."

# CABARETS

**DINWOODIE**  
2nd Floor SUB

**DOORS**  
8:00 pm

Tickets are available from the SUB Box Office (2nd floor SUB) and various club members.  
NOTE: These events are open only to U of A students, staff, and guests. Absolutely no minors admitted!



Mineral Engineering Club present

**Harlequin**

plus guests

**Friday, November 23**



U of A Golden Bears Gymnastics present from Toronto

**Parachute Club**

plus guests

**Saturday, November 24**

# LUBA DOUBLE BILL

plus guests

**TRUTH**

**DOORS 8 PM**  
**EACH NIGHT**

**Friday, November 30**

presented by U of A  
**Debating Club**

and

**Saturday, December 1**

presented by

**Chemical Engineering**  
**A Pre-Blizzard BASH**



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