

CODE BLUE for child care



Proclamation based

International Day of the Child, 2007

November 20, 2007

WHEREAS 123 Busy Beavers Learning Centres is a child care chain closely linked to ABC Learning Centres of Australia, the world's largest child care corporation operating 2,500 profit-making child care centres worldwide; and posting profits of A\$143.1 million dollars last year.

Australian media reports have identified the source of these profits as "subsidy milking" whereby an estimated 40% of ABC's revenues come from government funding;

In the summer of 2007, 123 Busy Beavers learning Centres registered companies in Canada and began to purchase child care centres. 123 Busy Beavers could be expanding privatized education in Canada by claiming to tailor programs to junior kindergarten and kindergarten-aged children.

The international practice of the ABC/123 is to promote its own trademarked "Lifesmart" curriculum and ABC/123 equipment in many of its centres. The corporate group also has its own staff recruitment agency and private training "college"

Reports from Australia highlight high parent fees, poor staff wages and working conditions and examples of child neglect. A study by The Australia Institute showed poorer staff:child ratios, insufficient food and less time for children compared to community child care programs;

Canadian and international research on for-profit/non-profit child care shows that public and non-profit programs consistently produce higher quality programs for children;

Young Canadian children deserve a system of high quality, public or non-profit early learning and child care in which resources serve the child and not foreign shareholders;

AND WHEREAS Bill C303, *An Early Learning and Child Care Act* which supports existing child care programs while limiting federal funding for future expansion to public and non-profit child care, is today before the House of Commons for discussion and adoption;

NOW THEREFORE, WE, on behalf of

Do hereby proclaim that on the *International Day of the Child, 2007*, we will do everything in our power to:

1. Prevent the foreign take-over of Canadian child care centres;
2. Persuade federal MPs – of all parties - to support the passage of Bill C303, an early learning and child care act;
3. Convince provincial governments to change regulations/legislation to prevent offshore companies from opening child care centres in Canada;
4. Join with Code Blue for Child Care to oppose ABC/123 child care in Canada.