



**BUILD TOGETHER**  
WOMEN OF THE BUILDING TRADES OF ALBERTA



The labour movement has always fought hard to improve the livelihoods of working people, their families and their communities.

## FIGHTING FOR CHILDCARE IS NO DIFFERENT

Having affordable and accessible childcare will benefit every Canadian, our industries and our economy. The Building Trades of Alberta, which proudly represents more than 60,000 skilled tradespersons from 18 Alberta local unions, believes strongly in affordable, accessible and high-quality childcare for working parents and our children.

## SUPPORTING WORKING PARENTS

Solutions to Childcare Barriers in the Skilled Trades

*"I love my trade, but having to choose between having a family or having my career is a reality." - Tradesperson - Female, 24*

## What's The Problem?

**Accessible, affordable and quality childcare** is an obstacle skilled tradespeople in Alberta have faced for many years. It affects our ability to attract and retain people to pursue a career in the skilled trades, and it's only getting tougher on the industries we operate in, and our economy, as the demand for skilled trades people increases.

If we cannot accommodate family care needs, then we lose skilled tradespeople. When that happens, their knowledge, talent and dedication leave with them. As an industry, we invest in our apprentices and journeypeople, so we must ensure we keep people working. If not, we risk losing them to a career that better suits childcare needs.

### Accessibility

Long hours, long commutes, unexpected overtime.

Parents in the skilled trades have a particularly difficult time finding childcare that suits their needs. Finding accessible childcare is one of the largest barriers tradespeople face when it comes to juggling childcare and a career in the skilled trades.

### Quality

If working parents are stressed and anxious about the environment their children are in while they are at work, that stress and anxiety can divert attention from their job – not only negatively effecting productivity on the job site, but in construction, that can have an effect on safety as well.

### Affordability

When trades workers are required to work overtime, extended hours and have long commutes, the childcare costs go above and beyond average rates. With Alberta's new \$10/ day childcare plan, we must not lose sight of the extended hours required by skilled trades workers and ensure there are spots available to these families.

## What's The Solution? Keep Reading!

See how unions, employers and government can work together and provide solutions to the childcare barrier that is faced by so many tradespeople and potential tradespeople in Canada!

# What's The Solution?

**Accessible, affordable and quality childcare is within our reach.** The health and welfare of our labour force depends greatly on access to childcare. Childcare means family support – without it, many parents cannot go to work. Skilled labour is essential and having a family should not interfere. Workers should not have to choose between the two. Work/life balance creates a better environment for everyone. It is critical to support all tradespeople in order to retain this highly skilled workforce.

One size does not fit all. If we truly want to access some of the hardest working, most skilled and most dedicated workforce, we need to focus on flexibility. **Flexibility is key.** In order to recruit outside the box, we need to operate outside the box.

## Government

With support from government, we can advocate for accessible, affordable and quality childcare that has:

- **Extended hours and drop in's**
- **24/Hour care facilities**
- **Affordable care for kids age 6+**
- **Overnight options**
- **Spaces dedicated to parents working in the Skilled Trades**

Skilled tradespeople are constantly supporting the economy and building and maintaining the systems we rely on, every day. They are essential, but they may leave for jobs in other industries in order to be able to access adequate childcare.

## Industry

There are plenty of solutions the construction industry can incorporate to create an environment where family life and childcare barriers are accommodated for, without sacrificing our skilled labour force:

- **Job sharing capability**
- **Flexible working hours**
- **Employee subsidies**
- **Flexible hours (FAA Flexible Averaging Agreement)**
- **Special leave accommodations**
- **On-site daycare or near site daycare**

The workforce is changing, and we must adapt to provide opportunity to everyone, regardless of their family situation.

## Unions

There are a few steps unions can take to recruit and retain the best skilled tradespeople - this means looking outside the status quo. .

- **Collective agreement clauses**
- **Job sharing options**
- **Health and welfare plans**
- **Member benefit programs**

Accommodating the needs of our workforce doesn't have to come at a significant cost. There are ways to ensure we still have the most highly skilled and available workforce. We miss out on talent when childcare is an obstacle.

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Curious on the details? Read the entire report!



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*"I was a red-seal journeyman in my trade for 15 years and had to make a career change when my husband and I decided to have children. I knew working six days a week and up to 14 hours a day some days would not be sustainable with children due to limited childcare options."* - Tradesperson - Female, 35