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February 26, 2024

Dear <Salutation>,

The first time I had to leave my daughter at Bissell’s Child Care Centre, it felt like I was leaving a piece of my heart behind.

The pit in my stomach, the constant worry – it was a daily struggle. Entrusting my little one in the care of those I'd only just met stirred up waves of anxiety and mom guilt.

Every parent experiences that familiar pang when their child starts daycare, but for me, it cut deeper. Jasper was just *four months old*.

I kept asking myself, will she be okay? What if she cries inconsolably? Will they understand her needs?

Throughout each day, I found myself glued to my phone, fearing I might miss an important call from one of the child care workers. The need to check in and ensure Jasper was okay became a daily routine.

Fast forward three years and Bissell’s Child Care Centre isn’t just a place – it’s Jasper’s second home. And she’s not just doing ok, *she’s thriving!* It makes me so happy to see my little girl blossoming in the care of the incredible individuals who've become more than caregivers – they're an extension of our family. I like to say that my daughter has a second set of moms, and I mean it.

Bissell Child Care Centre holds a special place in my heart. For families weathering the storm of financial strain in these challenging times, it's not just a child care program; it's a lifeline, a beacon that offers both support and security.

[VARIABLE] **FirstName**, I want to ask you to consider making a special gift today to ensure Bissell Centre can continue providing quality, affordable child care to families in our community. Your extraordinary generosity and kindness are the driving force behind countless families in our city, mine included, being able to depend on Bissell’s Child Care Centre.

You, alongside the many caring, kindhearted people in our community, embody the hope and support that families in Edmonton, affected by poverty and financial challenges, desperately need.

Thanks to you, Bissell Child Care Centre's doors were open to me and my daughter when we needed them the most. Having a reliable and affordable child care option made a huge difference in my life.

At the time, I was a first-year policing student and had a lot on my plate. Without family or relatives to lean on for help, it became a balancing act – juggling child care, household responsibilities, paying bills and keeping up with coursework.

The Child Care Centre became a sanctuary, lifting a significant burden off my shoulders and providing peace of mind. The child care workers are an extraordinary bunch – caring and wonderful individuals who go above and beyond for all the kids in their care.

What really stands out about Bissell is that they don't just look after kids; they create a nurturing environment, establishing routines for nap time, feeding, play, and learning. The entire center is built around providing children with a safe environment where they can learn, explore, develop and reach their fullest potential.

It's amazing how much Jasper is thriving every day. Her vocabulary has expanded and she's got a whole trove of new words! I know it's a direct result of the time she spends at the Child Care Centre. They really take the time to work with kids and make sure they hit their developmental milestones.

My mama heart is full seeing how much Jasper loves spending time at Bissell and how much this program has shaped her. She is growing into a happy and confident little girl.

Your support makes this kind of high quality child care accessible to Edmontonians who would otherwise struggle to afford such services.

Everything is so expensive right now. The rising costs of living are impacting so many people in our city. Some are on the edge of poverty, barely scraping by. Groceries and basics are through the roof, leaving many families with next to nothing for essential services like child care.

It's heartbreaking to think about how many families are struggling to put food on the table. Eating healthy every day is out of reach for many low-income households. But

at Bissell, every child gets healthy and nutritious meals – a hot lunch and two snacks. Imagine what a difference that makes!

Your continued support means the world. You're making sure that quality child care stays within reach for families who need it most.

Access to affordable child care can lift a huge burden off families who are living paycheque to paycheque.

I can't tell you how much the Child Care Center has made a difference in our lives! Knowing that Jasper is in good hands, I can focus on what I need to do to take care of our family.

What touches me deeply is the diversity and inclusivity embraced by Bissell. Kids from all walks of life, with different needs and backgrounds, find a place that's not just welcoming but respectful and accommodating. Stepping in there feels like stepping into a home, and I know other families at Bissell feel the same – welcomed, respected, and cared for.

We are so lucky to have a gem like Bissell Child Care Centre in our community! And you know what...your support is what is keeping its doors wide open for hundreds of families in Edmonton, including ours.

Every child deserves to grow up in a safe and loving environment, and through your kindness, you make this possible for the children at Bissell.

When I was looking for a child care program for Jasper it was important for me to find a place that could meet her needs and help her develop and grow. I didn't want just a babysitting service; I wanted to make sure all of Jasper's needs were met. And let me tell you, Jasper's development and growth at the Child Care Centre are nothing short of incredible.

The staff engage the children in fun, hands-on activities. From reading, singing and dancing to outdoor playtime and summer field trips, Bissell creates an enriching environment where every child gets to shine.

And Bissell stands out in another remarkable way – they are licenced to care for infants. Because Jasper was only a few months old when I needed help taking care of her, there weren't many options available to me. Most child care centres in our province are not licenced to provide care to babies.

For families with no relatives to lean on or single parents doing the work-school juggle, Bissell's Child Care Centre is a true blessing. It's a lifeline to so many families throughout our city. Especially those who are facing severe financial hardships.

[VARIABLE] I know times are rough for many in Edmonton right now. But I would like to ask you to consider making a special donation – whatever amount feels right to you – to ensure families facing hardships in our city can still rely on the vital services provided by Bissell Centre, including affordable child care. Your incredible generosity has already created a brighter world for countless families, and I hope you'll continue to be a beacon of hope to those in need.

By supporting Bissell's Child Care Centre, you are not just making a donation; you're empowering children's hopes and dreams. You're giving Edmonton's kids the chance to be kids – growing up strong, healthy, and confident.

I know you agree that every child deserves a chance at a bright future. Sadly, not all families have the means to provide the necessary support for their kids' needs and dreams, especially those getting by on a shoestring budget. Even the most basic of necessities, like quality child care, are out of reach for many fellow Edmontonians.

That's why places like Bissell need all the support they can get. We need it to stay available for as many families as possible in our community.

Will you send a gift today? It would mean more families, like mine and countless others, can benefit from the incredible – and crucial – service that Bissell Child Care Centre offers.

You can send your gift using the enclosed reply coupon.

With my sincere thanks,

Meryl (Jasper's mom)

P.S. Nothing beats the sight of Jasper's big smile when I pick her up from the Child Care Centre. It's a beautiful reassurance that she's enjoying herself, soaking up new experiences, and thriving in a safe and cheerful environment. Your donation today will ensure this quality child care remains available to families in our city who desperately depend on it. Thank you!