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February 26, 2024

Dear <Salutation>,

Can you imagine what it would feel like to have your baby cared for by a total stranger?

I remember the first time I handed my baby girl, Jasper, to a child care worker like it was yesterday. Leaving her felt like leaving a piece of my heart behind.

I was filled with anxiety and guilt. I kept asking myself, will she be okay? What if she doesn't stop crying? What if something goes terribly wrong?

But as a first-year policing student without any family nearby, I didn't have any other choice. I had to make it work. I needed someone to watch her while I worked to pay our bills and studied to give us a shot at a brighter future.

Fast forward three years and now there isn't anyone that I would trust more than the child care workers at Bissell Centre who have taken care of Jasper.

I've gotten to see just how much she loves them. In fact, they've become an extension of our family. I like to say that my daughter has a second set of moms, and I really mean it.

When you're barely making ends meet, child care can make all the difference in the world. It's like the glue holding families together, giving parents like me the opportunity to work. That means we can feed our kids, keep a roof over our heads, and rest easy knowing our little ones are safe and well looked after.

<<FirstName>>, will you consider helping a family like mine today? You can give them support to the amazing programs at Bissell Centre, like their child care program. Times are tough out here in Edmonton right now, and so many families are counting on you.

Now, every time I walk through the doors at Bissell it's like reuniting with friends and family. They always make you feel safe and comfortable. Every parent is always welcomed with warm smiles and open arms.

It makes me feel good knowing that Jasper isn't just being watched, she's growing and learning. Her vocabulary is expanding constantly -- she's got a whole trove of new words! I know it's because of the time she spends at the Child Care Centre. They really take the time to work with kids and help them grow and develop.

My "mama heart" is full seeing how much Jasper loves spending time at Bissell and how much this program is shaping her. She is growing into a happy and confident little girl. It's so amazing to see how much she enjoys playing, learning and making new friends every day. The child care workers are so great at their jobs -- they make sure that Jasper and all the kids feel special and cared for.

I'm really grateful to you for making these types of programs possible. I really couldn't imagine what Jasper's life would look like without Bissell.

Everything is so expensive right now. The rising costs of living are really hitting hard for so many of us in Edmonton. It's a real struggle for a lot of people to make ends meet. When you add the cost of child care to the mix, it can be a really stressful situation.

And you know what else? It breaks my heart to think how many families are having a tough time just getting dinner on the table these days, let alone being able to afford healthy meals. This is why the child care program is so great. At Bissell, every child gets healthy and nutritious meals -- a hot lunch and two snacks. Imagine what a difference that makes!

It means so much to us parents to know that our little ones are getting proper meals every day. Healthy food options are not affordable for everyone. For families getting by on limited budgets and single parents this is a real problem. And for those who are working long hours, cooking a healthy meal isn't always easy. That's why the daily nutritious meals at Bissell make such a difference.

When kids are well-fed, they are healthier and happier and can learn, play and grow better. I'm so happy that Jasper is getting the nutritious food she needs at Bissell.

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

I can't tell you how much the Child Care Centre 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.

And I know other parents at Bissell feel the same way. Everyone's dealing with their own stuff. Some are single parents with no family to lean on for support. Others are juggling two or even three part-time jobs just to make ends meet. And then you've got families going through rough times – struggling to find work, pay the bills and keep a roof over their heads.

As a parent, it means so much to have Bissell Centre right here in our community. It's a safety net we can count on for support.

There's so much more that Bissell can help with besides child care. If you are out of work and need help getting back on track, they have a program that helps you learn new skills. Or if you are struggling with addiction or mental health issues – they have programs available for that too. Even something as simple as a hot meal at their Community Space can make a difference to a parent who is counting every dime.

I am so grateful to you for making Jasper's experience at Bissell Centre possible. Your amazing kindness and support have created a safe and nurturing place for my daughter – and so many other kids in our city.

You know, one of the other things I love about Bissell's child care is the diversity. Kids from all walks of life, with different needs and backgrounds, find a place that's not just welcoming but respectful and accommodating. I love this for what it's teaching Jasper. 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.

I keep Jasper at Bissell because it's important to me that she has her needs met so that she can continue to learn 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.

Every day, Jasper is soaking up the fun at Bissell. Whether she's getting creative with arts and crafts, playing dress up or diving into educational games and activities, she is enjoying every moment.

For families like mine doing the work-school juggle, Bissell's Child Care Centre is a true blessing.

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 more families like mine can benefit from vital services at Bissell Centre, including affordable child care. Your incredible generosity has already created a brighter world for countless people in our community, 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. But 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 people in our city right now.

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 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. I love seeing a big smile on Jasper's face 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 happy environment. Your donation today will make it possible for Bissell to continue being there for more kids like my daughter.