

# Vancouver says it will surpass childcare goals this year <sup>[1]</sup>

But parents still cite long waiting lists and high costs

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The City of Vancouver is three years into its four-year plan to create 1,000 childcare spaces, and says it's on track to surpass its target.

In the last three years, the city says it has achieved 98 per cent of its target to create 1,000 new childcare spaces across the city.

It opened 78 new spots last year and another 200 will open in 2018 in Marpole, Kitsilano and downtown.

Parents like Candace Li say it's good news but not good enough considering the waiting lists and demand.

"I put my child on the waiting list since I was three months pregnant and they didn't get in there until after [they were] one years old," Li said.

"So I waited almost like two years to get into the childcare."

## Cost an issue

Space isn't the only problem. According to a study published in December 2017, Vancouver had the second highest childcare costs in the country after Toronto. It costs between \$950 a month and \$1,360 a month depending on the age of the child in the city.

Sharon Gregson, a representative with the Coalition of Childcare Advocates in B.C., says the provincial and federal governments need to step up to alleviate the crisis.

"On February 20, in the provincial budget, we're expecting that families who've got young children, infants and toddlers, will see a fee reduction. And, we're expecting a commitment for 22,500 new spaces over three years," Gregson said.

During last year's provincial election, the NDP campaigned to bring a \$10-a-day childcare program but that hasn't materialized.

Last month, the government announced \$33 million to build 3,800 new daycare spaces across the province.

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