

# City looking into lack of childcare services in Kamloops <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

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## EXCERPTS

KAMLOOPS - There are no daycare facilities in Savona where Olivia Willett lives with her fiancée and two kids.

Willett is one of many young families in Savona who come into Kamloops for work and daycare.

"The fact that I am driving half an hour into town, then I have to separate my children just to have care is what's been the most upsetting," she says in a phone interview.

Willett has her children in a Kamloops daycare on Mondays and Fridays. For the rest of the week she has had an au pair, but when the last one left she had no replacement. If her neighbour had not stepped in, she would have needed to take time off work to look after her three-year-old and one-year-old.

"In Savona I have multiple friends who haven't bothered going back to work," she says.

B.C. parents have to wait about two years to get their kids into daycare and some even sign their kids up before they are born. Childcare falls under the provincial government's mandate, so the city currently does not identify it in its development plans. What the city has done, as revealed from a December 2018 closed council meeting, is authorize a grant application to create an inventory of childcare services in Kamloops. The sought-after amount is up to \$25,000 from the province's Community Child Care Planning Program.

Natalie Serl with the City of Kamloops says the inventory will help the city determine how many childcare spaces are available in the city compared to the demand. It will include the number of licensed operators as well as those who provide childcare without a licence.

"If we know exactly what we have we'll be able to see what we don't have, figure out those gaps for ages, demographics, if there are some special groups or special needs that need to be served," Serl says.

The results will then be submitted to the Ministry of Child and Family Development so they can assess funding needed for future opportunities.

The B.C. Government has started an initiative to provide affordable child care to families for about \$200 a month, per child. Though the centre in Kamloops chosen for the affordable childcare pilot program is already booked until 2021.

As for Willett, her son does not get into full time daycare until this May, and her daughter has to wait until August.

"It's more just like, how did we get here in the first place? How did it get to a point that this isn't available for people?"

**Related link:**

**Region:** British Columbia <sup>[3]</sup>

**Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/19/01/city-looking-lack-childcare-services-kamloops>

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