

Lack of childcare a 'crisis' in Summerland ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Summerland has joined approximately 60 other B.C. municipalities in urging the provincial government to step up and make childcare more affordable.

"We desperately need it here," Coun. Martin Val Alphen told colleagues at a meeting Monday. "It's a crisis now, and it's not going to get any better. We need the government to move much quicker."

The Coalition of Childcare Advocates of B.C. submitted a letter to the District of Summerland in December seeking its support alongside 63 other municipalities, 32 school boards and other community organizations who have agreed to show their support for a \$10-a-day childcare initiative.

Adding its name in support, however, does not commit Summerland to offering \$10-a-day service in the community.

Coun. Doug Holmes told colleagues he has heard upwards of 12 family doctors between Summerland and Penticton have chosen not to practice due to being unable to find childcare services.

"If those doctors had childcare – and we know the shortage of doctors in the community – what impact that would have if those doctors were employed if they could find childcare?" he said.

"When you start having those conversations, I think it hits home."

The B.C. NDP campaigned in 2017 on implementing universal \$10-a-day childcare, but so far in government has only funded about 2,500 such spaces for low-income families.

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