

# New Squamish Nation childcare centre an 'investment in the future'

"Our children are our future, as our Elders always say, and we have to start that investment early."

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## AVAILABILITY

Access online <sup>[2]</sup>

## EXCERPTS

Squamish Nation families in the community of Xwemélch'stn now have access to a brand-new childcare centre.

Chesha7 Míxalh Ménmen Xwemélch'stn, Mother Bear Child Development Capilano, officially opened its doors to the community earlier this month, after a blessing ceremony was held on Oct. 16.

Chris Lewis, Syeta'xtn, spokesman for Squamish Nation, said it was wonderful to be able to welcome community members and their children to the centre at 206 Lawa Road, which he labelled a "beacon" for the entrance to Xwemélch'stn, Capilano 5 reserve.

"Xwemélch'stn, Capilano 5, is our largest populated reserve for Squamish people and to have a daycare there to meet the needs of our little ones, our children, along with our families is just great," Syeta'xtn said.

"There was a lot of excitement, especially from our working families to allow them a little more flexibility."

The \$1.3-million project, first announced in 2018, was partly funded by the provincial government, which allocated \$900,000 towards the centre as part of a greater initiative to fund 103 childcare projects across B.C., and Squamish Nation, which contributed \$400,000.

Syeta'xtn said the centre could cater to up to 44 children, split into two programs with 32 spaces for children 30-months to school age and 12 spaces for children under 36 months old.

He said the centre was an investment in the future.

"It's really about connecting our children, right from the earliest age, from supporting our families to come in and have their children learn our Squamish values and teachings and build a really strong self identity that allows them to create that foundational base around our culture so that themselves, along with their parents, become really active members of our community to ensure that our culture, our language and our teachings survive," Syeta'xtn explained.

Syeta'xtn said the centre would also have a strong focus on development and ensuring that children's gifts were harnessed and supported from an early stage.

"Our children are our future, as our Elders always say, and we have to start that investment early and we have to ensure they are getting all the support that they need and their families need so that they can be bright stars into the future," he said.

He said he was thankful for the provincial government support and for the Nation having the vision to support the project.

The childcare centre opened Nov. 2.

The centre was built by Zirnhelt Timber Frames. You can watch a time-lapse video of it being built below:

**Mother Bear Timelapse** <sup>[3]</sup>

*Elisia Seeber is the North Shore News' Indigenous and civic affairs reporter. This reporting beat is made possible by the Local Journalism Initiative.*

**Region:** British Columbia <sup>[4]</sup>

**Tags:** Indigenous <sup>[5]</sup>

funding <sup>[6]</sup>

spaces <sup>[7]</sup>

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/20/11/new-squamish-nation-childcare-centre-investment-future> [2] <https://www.nsnews.com/news/new-squamish-nation-childcare-centre-an-investment-in-the-future-1.24238800> [3] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5A2R5ppZMOA> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7860> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/indigenous> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/funding> [7] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/spaces>