

# \$10/day daycare came at 'perfect time', says Nakusp operator <sup>[1]</sup>

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## EXCERPTS

The manager of Stepping Stones Daycare in Nakusp still remembers her reaction when provincial officials told her the facility was being accepted as a \$10/day Universal Childcare Prototype Site.

"When I found out in November that we received it, I actually cried," says Nancy Bone. "This is going to help everyone. This is a big thing for us. There's so many times families can't afford to come to a quality child care centre. Now there's no limitations, every child will be able to come to this wonderful centre."

On February 3, Nelson-Creston MLA Brittney Anderson announced the Province was providing about 150 new spaces in the East and West Kootenays under the Childcare BC Centres program, where Prototype Sites charge \$10/day and fees are capped at a maximum of \$200 a month. Families can apply for further grants to reduce that even more.

Bone says the joyful reaction was the same when she broke the news to parents of the children she cares for every day.

"We got to tell our families on February 2, and the emails I received – 'thank you!,' 'thanks for the hard work,' 'you don't know how much this is going to take stress off of us,' 'now I can work more,'" she recalls grateful parents writing.

"This couldn't have come at a better time. Families are struggling right now with COVID and jobs and all those stresses. This came at the most perfect time."

The financial impact alone will be significant. Up until February 1, a child spending the whole day at Stepping Stones would cost a family \$60. That's been slashed nearly 85%.

"Now your child can come here five days a week, 8-5, and all you would have to pay is \$200/month," says Bone. "On top of that... you can apply for affordable child care, and you wouldn't have to pay any – or at least just a little portion."

Stepping Stones, which has been in operation in Nakusp for nearly 50 years, has 16 spaces for children. They're filled for three of five days a week, but officials think they'll fill up fast.

"I would expect so, childcare is hard to come by, and especially at an affordable rate," says Stepping Stones' board vice-chair Candice Didier. "I expect we'll be full in no time, with the wait list."

She said the Prototype Site designation will not only help Nakusp, but families who attend the program from Fauquier, Edgewood, Silverton and New Denver as well.

"So not only does it help our centre directly, it also alleviates other private childcare to have more support systems in place," Didier says. "All around it helps the whole community."

Bone says Stepping Stones qualifying as a Universal Childcare Prototype Site is a testament to the hard work they've done to keep up to the best provincial standards, including having three qualified early childhood educators on staff.

The program will last for one year, and the daycare can re-apply in March 2023 to continue to participate in the program.

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

**Tags:** \$10aDay <sup>[4]</sup>

child care expansion <sup>[5]</sup>

public investment <sup>[6]</sup>

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/22/02/10day-daycare-came-%E2%80%98perfect-time%E2%80%99-says-nakusp-operator> [2] <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2022/02/10/10day-daycare-came-at-perfect-time-says-nakusp-operator.html> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7860> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/10-a-day-child-care> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9210> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9126>