

# Milestone reached in newly funded child care spaces for British Columbia families <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

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

## EXCERPTS

Child care is not just a social policy—it is an economic policy, too. Access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive child care will grow our economy, allow more women to enter the workforce and help give every Canadian child the best start in life. While cutting child care fees is important, it is just one part of the equation. That is why the governments of Canada and British Columbia have been working together to increase the number of licensed child care spaces available in the province.

Today, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Carla Qualtrough, on behalf of Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Karina Gould, joined Minister of State for Child Care in British Columbia, Katrina Chen, at Cookie Monster Preschool to celebrate that British Columbia has surpassed 30,500 new child care spaces funded since the launch of ChildCareBC in 2018. By March 2026, British Columbia families will have benefitted from the creation of approximately 60,000 new licensed spaces for all ages of child care since 2018, through provincial and federal support—this will rise to approximately 70,000 by March 2028.

The Government of Canada has now signed agreements with every province and territory to deliver on its promise to build a high-quality Canada-wide affordable and inclusive early learning and child care system. As part of the agreement with the Government of British Columbia, the Government of Canada will invest \$3.2 billion over five years to help improve regulated early learning and child care for children under 6 years of age in the province.

Building a child care system that works for Canadians in every region of the country is a key part of the plan to make life more affordable for families while creating good jobs and growing the economy. As part of the agreements, the Government of Canada aims to create approximately 250,000 new child care spaces across the country by March 2026 to give families affordable child care options, no matter where they live.

This plan is already making life more affordable for families. Nearly all of Canada's provinces and territories have already seen reductions in child care fees and, by the end of 2022, average fees for regulated early learning and child care spaces will be cut in half across the country.

## Quotes

“High-quality, affordable and inclusive child care is becoming a reality in British Columbia. This is a game-changer for so many parents, especially mothers who won't have to choose between raising a family and having a career. I'm so excited to see what a difference this is going to make for children, families, workers—for entire communities across our province.”

– Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Carla Qualtrough

“Reaching more than 30,500 new licensed child care spaces is a true cause for celebration and made possible by the providers and organizations that have stepped up to apply for new spaces funding. Funding more spaces is good for families, for communities and for the economy because it means more parents will be able to pursue their careers, return to school and be active in their communities, all while knowing their children are well cared for. We are making sure child care is no longer a luxury but a core service for all.”

– Minister of State for Child Care in British Columbia, Katrina Chen

## Quick facts

In response to requests from provinces and territories, and to support the implementation of the Canada-wide early learning and child care system, Budget 2022 proposes to provide \$625 million over four years, beginning in 2023–24, for an Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund. This funding will enable provinces and territories to make additional child care investments, including the building of new facilities.

As part of Budget 2021, the Government of Canada made a transformative investment of over \$27 billion over five years to build a Canada-wide early learning and child care system with the provinces and territories. Combined with other investments, including investments in Indigenous early learning and child care, up to \$30 billion over five years will be provided in support of early learning and child care.

In total, the Government of Canada is aiming to create approximately 250,000 new child care spaces through Canada-wide agreements with provinces and territories, and has already achieved its goal of creating 40,000 more affordable child care spaces before 2020 through the 2017–18 to 2019–20 Early Learning and Child Care Agreements. These new licensed spaces will be created predominantly among not-for-profit, public and family-based child care providers.

Investments in child care will benefit everyone across Canada. Studies show that for every dollar invested in early childhood education, the broader economy receives between \$1.50 and \$2.80 in return.

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

**Tags:** universal system <sup>[4]</sup>

spaces <sup>[5]</sup>

accessibility <sup>[6]</sup>

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