

Child-care options in Metro Vancouver as B.C. schools closed for Queen's funeral ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

More options are being made available in Vancouver to help families struggling to find last-minute child care on Monday, as B.C. shuts down schools to observe the national day of mourning to honour Queen Elizabeth II.

In a news release Thursday, the City of Vancouver said it's recognizing Sept. 19 as a civic holiday. The move comes after both the federal and provincial governments announced earlier this week that a national holiday will be held on Monday to mark the Queen's funeral in the U.K.

Vancouver City Hall will be closed to honour the late monarch that day, but several essential services will continue operating. Other options are also being added for parents in need of child care.

"Park Board facilities will be open and will be adding options for families who find themselves without child care and/or youth care support," the city said in the release.

"Recreation facilities will remain open as they have been deemed an essential service to their communities."

The city said additional programs will also be offered for school-aged children on Monday, which will be listed on the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation website Friday.

Most Crown corporations will be closed to mark the day, along with all public schools from kindergarten through post-secondary.

The sudden announcement made on Tuesday left many families in a frenzy.

"We don't like surprises when we are trying to orchestrate all of the moving parts of kids' schedules. It seems a bit insane," North Vancouver parent Brendon James told CTV News.

Sharon Gregson with the Coalition of Childcare Advocates added that the province's decision to only make Monday a day off for students and civil servants makes life difficult for working families.

"For parents, it's a scramble to know if their child care provider will be available," she said. "Just like we discovered during the pandemic, child care is the backbone of how people go to work and how the economy moves along."

According to the City of New Westminster's website, drop-in services and registered programs will operate as per usual on Monday. The city is also offering day camps for children ages five through 12.

Region: British Columbia ^[3]

Tags: child care ^[4]

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