

Families will save big as child care fees cut as much as \$550 more per month ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Starting in December, parents in British Columbia will save as much as an additional \$550 per month for each child they have in participating licensed child care centres.

“Child care is one of the biggest bills many families face each month,” said Katrina Chen, B.C.’s Minister of State for Child Care. “Cutting child care fees again, this time by as much as \$550 a month more per child, is one way we are taking action to put money back in people’s pockets at a time when rising global inflation is making life more expensive.”

The Province is directly funding licensed child care centres so families will not need to apply for these savings. This funding will lower fees for children, kindergarten-aged and younger.

These additional savings, which build on earlier fee cuts introduced as part of the Province’s \$2.7-billion investment in ChildCareBC since 2018, are being funded through the five-year, \$3.2-billion Canada-British Columbia Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

“The Canada-British Columbia Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement that we signed just over a year ago puts families first, and will ensure every child has access to high-quality, affordable, accessible child care,” said Karina Gould, federal Minister of Families Children and Social Development. “With hundreds of dollars in savings, this investment will provide much-needed support to reduce the cost of living for families with young children. Our government remains focused on making life more affordable for families and giving every child the best possible start in life.”

As part of this fee cut, the Province is taking action to better support child care providers. Payments to providers will be increased by 100% or more. These payments are designed to help ensure providers can continue providing quality care for children, help them fight rising costs and reduce the need to pass on these costs to families.

“The YMCA is honoured to partner with the Government of B.C. and join other providers to deliver significant savings to deserving families throughout the province,” said Heidi Worthington, president and CEO, YMCA of Greater Vancouver. “Making child care in British Columbia high quality, affordable and accessible requires a true commitment to collaboration. The YMCA applauds the governments of Canada and B.C. for their ongoing investment in child care, and we look forward to continuing our partnership with all levels of government to support even more families and to ensure their children get the best possible start.”

These monthly fee cuts mean that parents will be saving as much as \$6,600 more a year for each child in licensed care at facilities participating in the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative, depending on their children’s ages and the type of care they are receiving. As a result of the new savings, on average, families will be paying similar out-of-pocket costs for child care, regardless of type of care, if their provider is charging typical fees.

For example:

- A family with a 10-month-old and a three-year-old in group care could save as much as \$11,940 more per year, in addition to the \$5,400 per year they are already saving.
- A family with a two-year-old and a four-year-old receiving family care would see up to \$10,080 more in savings each year, in addition to the \$3,120 per year they are already saving.

Previous savings were introduced in 2018 and participating child care providers are already passing on these savings of up to \$350 a month per child to families.

“I’ve had my child at Cascade Heights YMCA since they opened,” said Tania Cubells, a parent benefiting from cuts to child care fees. “I’m very happy and lucky that my daughter is in a high-quality care centre and appreciate the government working with it to lower the fees. This will have a big impact on my family. With the extra savings, we will pay off our debts faster, have extra recreational activities for the

kids and save for their post-secondary education.”

In addition to these fee reductions, the Province has been making further progress toward all families being able to access affordable child care by introducing the Affordable Child Care Benefit and by transforming child care centres into \$10 a Day ChildCareBC sites. By the end of 2022, there will be 12,500 of these low-cost, high-quality \$10 a Day child care spaces throughout B.C.

“For too long, child care wasn’t treated like a necessity, and it was gated behind rising fees that shut out many families,” said Jennifer Whiteside, B.C.’s Minister of Education and Child Care. “We are working hard to change that, and these new savings are a significant step toward our goal of \$10-a-day child care for all parents. These savings are about helping families to get ahead and ensuring families are supported to pursue opportunities.”

To support families in accessing high-quality, licensed care, the provincial government, with support from the federal government, has also funded more than 30,500 new licensed child care spaces since the launch of ChildCareBC in 2018, while improving training opportunities and wages for the early childhood educators needed to deliver this service.

Related link: Parents of kids up to kindergarten age will soon save up to \$550 a month on child-care fees, ministry says [3]

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