

# Child care falls short in 11 cities, study finds [CA] <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

See text below.

## EXCERPTS

All 11 Canadian cities studied in a new report do not have enough child-care services for children up to age 12, researchers said as they released their findings on Wednesday.

The study, which was commissioned by Social Development Canada and the cities of Toronto and Vancouver, examined the provision of children's services in St. John's, Halifax, Montreal, Sherbrooke, Toronto, Sudbury, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Calgary, Vancouver and Whitehorse.

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The study, entitled *Learning from Each Other: Early Learning and Child Care Experiences in Canadian Cities*, says more regional planning is needed, especially considering that more than 70 per cent of mothers with young children work outside the home.

It finds that the percentage of children who have access to licensed child-care spaces varies widely from city to city and province to province:

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The study also found that low-income neighbourhoods have the fewest number of services available.

...

The study found the most successful local services share the following:

- They are created for all children, not for specific groups.
- They allow for local control, boosting the odds that those involved are committed to the services provided.
- They enjoy support from the local community.

It also discovered that "hubs" of services &mdash; organized around non-profit child-care centres and accountable to elected boards with representatives from the community and parents &mdash; can respond to community needs.

Local schools often serve as the sites for such hubs, while cities are crucial for providing recreational programs, the researchers say.

More funding is needed from federal and provincial governments, the study says.

Inconsistent levels of service will continue across the country if Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his Conservative government implement their plan to cancel funds committed by the previous Liberal government to create child-care spaces, the researchers warn.

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An analyst with the City of Toronto, which organized the national study, warned that if the Conservatives phase out the funding agreements, it will result in even more of a squeeze &mdash; with 5,000 fewer spaces in Toronto alone.

"Most of those spaces were in communities where there were significant numbers of children living below the poverty line and there is a significant lack of services to begin with," Julie Mathien, a policy development officer with the city.

...

- reprinted from CBC News

**Region:** Newfoundland <sup>[2]</sup>

Nova Scotia <sup>[3]</sup>

Canada <sup>[4]</sup>

Ontario <sup>[5]</sup>

Manitoba <sup>[6]</sup>

Saskatchewan <sup>[7]</sup>

Alberta <sup>[8]</sup>

British Columbia <sup>[9]</sup>

Tags: urban <sup>[10]</sup>

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