

# Percentage of vulnerable children on the rise in B.C kindergartens - UBC study <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

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## EXCERPTS

The percentage of children in B.C. kindergarten classes who were considered vulnerable last year was higher than the year before, according to a mega-study at the University of B.C.

The worst results were in downtown Prince George and Chilliwack North where almost two out of three children were ill-prepared for school because of language, communications, social, emotional, physical health vulnerabilities.

The best result was in Rossland, where the vulnerability rate was zero, and Revelstoke was second, with a rate of 15.5 per cent, says the study by UBC's Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP).

In Vancouver, the most vulnerable children were in the Strathcona neighbourhood on the city's east side, at 58.5 per cent. West and North Vancouver had Metro's lowest vulnerability rates.

Overall, data from 53 of the 59 school districts that participated in the study showed that 30.3 per cent of kindergarten children were vulnerable last year, up from 28.5 per cent in those same districts in 2008-09.

"Since we started tracking the progress of B.C. children 10 years ago, we can clearly demonstrate that child vulnerability is trending upwards," HELP director Clyde Hertzman said in a release today.

"Anything more than 10 per cent is avoidable under optimal conditions of early childhood so about two-thirds of the development vulnerabilities that B.C. children currently experience as they start school is preventable."

The study found the most positive trends in Fort Nelson, West Vancouver and Revelstoke while the largest increases in vulnerability were in Vancouver, the Comox Valley and Langley, the release says.

- reprinted from the Vancouver Sun

**Region:** British Columbia <sup>[2]</sup>

**Tags:** child development <sup>[3]</sup>

kindergarten <sup>[4]</sup>

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<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7860> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/child-development> [4]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/kindergarten> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/statistics> [6]

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