

# Daycare inspection reports good first step, say advocates <sup>[1]</sup>

Part 2 in CBC's series 'The Daycare Dilemma'

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## EXCERPTS:

Vancouver Coastal Health is now posting daycare inspection reports online, but those in the industry say the reports are just a small piece of the puzzle.

Checklist-style annual reports for the region's 1,200 licensed child-care facilities are now being posted on the health authority's website.

"It's going to help improve care, I'm sure of it," says Greg Ritchey, who manages inspectors for Vancouver Coastal Health.

Ritchey said the reports are posted online as part of a push towards transparency and accountability.

"It's our hope in the long-term that when people see that information that they can engage in conversations with their care providers or the staff in a facility can engage in conversations with each other and the licensee," he said.

The health authority's inspectors, all of whom are trained early childhood educators, inspect facilities at least once a year. Inspection criteria are divided into 10 categories - including care and supervision, physical building and playground, staffing, and nutrition - and items are then deemed either in compliance or not in compliance.

Re-inspections can take place the next day or several months down the road, depending on the severity of the infraction.

"I think it'll give a pretty good idea of the quality in a daycare," Ritchey said. "It's only one tool, though."

## Starting a conversation

Pam Preston of the Westcoast Childcare Resource Centre, which refers parents to daycares, says the reports are thorough but they don't measure quality of care.

"It is a health and safety type of focused checklist," she said.

"It is a moment in time. It is capturing the time that that inspection happened, and if there are red flags ... it's a place to start a conversation with that child-care provider about what happened ... and find out more."

Preston urges parents to look beyond the inspection reports when researching daycares.

"It really is a first step. There's so much more involved in looking for child care," she said.

"You have to visit, you have to compare and contrast, you have to ask your friends. I'm not sure that the inspection reports are going to be the answer. Licensing regulations are the baseline for safety, but what's important is the program, the people, the training."

Vancouver Coastal Health has no plans to offer more detailed information in its daycare reports.

Parents are advised to call the health authority with questions about inspection reports, issues of non-compliance or licensing legislation.

-reprinted from CBC News

See other parts of CBC's series "The Daycare Dilemma" <sup>[2]</sup>

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

**Tags:** quality <sup>[4]</sup>

health <sup>[5]</sup>

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<https://www.cbc.ca/bc/community/blog/2012/08/daycare-dilemma-a-special-series-on-childcare-in-vancouver.html> <sup>[3]</sup>

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