

# British Columbia

## PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

### Number of children 0-12 yrs (2003 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	42,100
1	39,200
2	41,500
3	42,900
4	44,000
5	45,400
6	42,100
7	44,900
8	45,900
9	49,100
10	49,400
11	50,700
12	46,900
Total	584,100



### Number of children 0-12 years (2003 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0-2	122,800
3-5	132,300
6-12	329,000
Total	584,100

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**Children 0-12 yrs with mothers in the paid labour force (2003 rounded estimate)**

Age	Number of children
0	23,700
1	22,900
2	23,800
3	25,600
4	25,500
5	26,900
6	25,000
7	27,400
8	30,100
9	29,700
10	33,300
11	33,100
12	30,900
Total	357,900

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**Number of children 0-12 years with mothers in the paid labour force (2003 rounded estimate)**

Age	Number of children
0-2	70,400
3-5	78,000
6-12	209,500
Total	357,900

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**Children 0-14 yrs identifying with an Aboriginal group (2001)**

Age	North American					Total
	Indian	Metis	Inuit	Multiple	Other	
0-4	11,520	3,200	105	135	480	15,440
5-9	12,995	4,110	95	135	570	17,905
10-14	13,210	4,695	110	105	540	18,660
Total	37,725	12,005	310	375	1,590	52,005

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**Children 0-14 yrs with disabilities (2001)**

Age	Number of children with disabilities	Rate of children with disabilities (%)
0-4	3,950	2.0
5-9	9,080	3.9
10-14	12,000	4.7
Total	25,040	3.6

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*Note: Total may not add up due to rounding.*

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**Number of children by marital status of families (2001)**

Age	Children in couple families	Children in lone parent families	(with lone mothers)	(with lone fathers)
0-4	172,415	32,125	28,095	4,030
5-9	190,430	48,500	41,345	7,155
10-14	200,055	56,045	45,855	10,195
Total	562,900	136,670	115,295	21,380

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**Number of children by mother tongue (2001)**

Age	English	French	Non-official language
0-4	164,975	880	35,880
5-9	196,840	965	40,055
10-14	211,585	1,070	43,550
Total	573,400	2,915	119,485

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**Children living in families below the LICO (2002)**

Age	Number	Percent (%)
0-2	28,800	25.4
3-5	31,000	23.0
6-12	70,600	20.5
Total	130,400	22.0

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**Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2003 rounded estimate)**

Age of youngest child	Number of mothers	Participation rate (%)
0-2	70,100	67.4
3-5	56,000	73.5
6-15	175,100	78.7

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## FAMILY-RELATED LEAVE

### Maternity leave

Seventeen weeks. An additional six weeks is available to the birth mother if she is unable to return to work for health reasons related to the birth or pregnancy.

### Parental leave

Thirty-five weeks for birth mothers who have taken maternity leave; must be taken immediately following maternity leave. Thirty-seven weeks for other parent. An additional five weeks is available if the child has a condition requiring additional parental care. Thirty-seven weeks if birth mother has not taken maternity leave; must be taken within 52 weeks of the child's birth.

### Adoption leave

Thirty-seven weeks. An additional five weeks is available if the child has a condition requiring additional parental care.

### Family-related leave

Five days per year

### Births and EI maternity and parental claims (2003)

Number of births	40,039
Birth rate per 1,000 population	9.8
Number of initial maternity claims allowed	21,430
Average length of maternity claims	14.4 weeks
Number of parental claims	23,100
Average length of parental claim	23.1 weeks
Number of adoptive parent claims	250
Average length of adoptive claim	24.3 weeks

*Note: Maternity, parental and adoption leaves are determined by provincial and territorial legislation. The federal government pays for up to 15 weeks for maternity leave and 35 weeks for parental and adoptive leave for eligible parents at 55% of earned income to a maximum of \$413/week. See federal ECEC programs for more information.*

## KINDERGARTEN

### LEGISLATION

British Columbia. Legislative Assembly. *School Act*, 1996. [R.S.B.C c.412]

*Independent School Act*, 1989

## PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten contact  
Christine Barnhart  
Coordinator Early Literacy and Mathematics  
Ministry of Education  
PO Box 9183 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC, V8W 9H1  
Telephone: 250-387-4426  
Email: MarieChristine.Barnhart@gems9.gov.bc.ca  
Website: <http://www.gov.bc.ca/bced>

## KINDERGARTEN SERVICES

### KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten is delivered in public and private schools. It is available to all five year olds in British Columbia on a part-time basis. There are 2.4 hours of instruction during the day multiplied by the number of instructional days in the standard school calendar for that year.

Access to kindergarten is a legislated entitlement. Parents may choose to defer their child's enrolment in school until the following year.

### AGE ELIGIBILITY

Five years old before December 31st

### CLASS SIZE

A provincial class size limit is specified in the *School Act*. The *School Act* sets the maximum average aggregate size for kindergarten at 19 students, and no class can exceed 22 students.

## CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

There is a policy manual regarding educational services for children with special needs. School boards are responsible for providing facilities which allow equality of access to educational programs. Some students who are identified as having special education needs are eligible for 950 hours of instruction in kindergarten (full-day). Districts are advised to co-ordinate the entry of the child to school and the planning of the kindergarten program with programs which have been offered in the pre-school years. In some cases, school districts may elect to contract for services through a preschool or child development centre for some portion of the child's educational program in the kindergarten year.

Children with special needs are typically included in regular kindergarten. Learning Assistance Teachers typically provide the major link with support services available at the district level. Some schools combine learning assistance with other special education services to create a “Resource Teacher” model.

Ministries of Education and Children and Family Development (Supported Child Care Program) share a protocol agreement with respect to shared funding responsibility for children who have delayed kindergarten entry.

In 2003/04 there were 904 kindergarten children (752 part-day, 152 full-day) with identified special needs in public schools only (includes severe handicap, severe behaviour, moderate handicap, and gifted).

### ENROLMENT (2003/04)

Number of children enrolled in kindergarten (the year before Grade 1): 36,552

### KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

Qualification requirements: Kindergarten teachers must have teacher certification. Certification requires a B.Ed. or Bachelor’s degree plus post degree teacher training. There are no ECE requirements.

Responsibility for Certification: British Columbia College of Teachers

Representation: British Columbia Teachers Federation

The provincial average teacher salary (K-12) for 2003/04: \$60,844

### CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

Title: Teacher Assistant

Qualifications: Established by school boards

Role: The policy regarding teaching assistants is a local school board decision; teaching assistants are usually for special needs students.

Representation: CUPE

Average wage (2003/04): \$20/hour

### CURRICULUM

There is a specific provincial curriculum for kindergarten. It is attached to the grade one curriculum as a K-Grade 1 curriculum, part of a provincial framework called the Primary Program. It includes prescribed learning outcomes specific to K-Grade 1 for each area of study.

### MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

Kindergarten programs are monitored by school principals.

### SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR KINDERGARTEN

Funding is provided by the province under a block grant system. Access to property tax through referenda.<sup>1</sup>

Sources of funding for independent (private) schools: Independent schools receive half the per capita funding of public schools. The additional funding comes from school fees and fundraising.

There are no parent fees in the public school system for part-day programs. Some school boards offer full-day kindergarten with fees for part of the day.

### PUBLIC SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN (2003/04)

#### Average spending for each kindergarten student

Full-time equivalent: \$5,520

Part-time: \$2,760

*(Figures do not include spending on capital, transportation, special needs, Aboriginal Education, or ESL)*

Total provincial spending on kindergarten \$111,460,251

### SPECIAL FEATURES

Full-time kindergarten may be available for special populations. These include Aboriginal, special needs or ESL (approximately 4,000 in total). The Ministry provides funding and the school boards determine the details of the program for these children.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Canadian School Board Association. *Education Governance in Canada: Trends and Implications*. Last updated 1999.

The Ministry of Education's program CommunityLINK provides funding to school boards for programs to support vulnerable children for school meals, school-based support workers, inner-city school programs, and counselling for at-risk students.

The K-Plus Program, offered by the West Vancouver School District, provides families of kindergarten children the choice of an additional half-program that complements the Kindergarten program. Parents choose a three day or five day option, with monthly fees of \$310 and \$390 respectively. The K-Plus program is taught by teachers. A Teacher Assistant is hired to supervise the children over the lunch hour. The K-Plus Program is available in 11 of the district's 17 primary and elementary schools, including one French immersion school. There is a maximum of 17 children at each site.

## REGULATED CHILD CARE

### LEGISLATION

British Columbia. Legislative Assembly. *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*, S.B.C. 2002, Chapter 75; *Child Care Licensing Regulation* 319 / 89 as amended to O.C. 476/04, includes amendments to BC Reg. 217/2004 and 457/2004.

Note: Effective May 14, 2004 the *Community Care Facility Act* was repealed and replaced with the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*. The *Child Care Licensing Regulation* was continued with minor revisions to make it consistent with the new Act.

British Columbia. Legislative Assembly. *Child Care Subsidy Act*, 1996 *Child Care Subsidy Regulation* 74/97, includes amendments up to B.C. Reg. 388/2004.

British Columbia. Legislative Assembly. *Child Care BC Act*. SBC 2001. Chapter 4. Assented to March 29, 2001, Updated to November 5, 2001.

## PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

Executive Director  
Early Childhood Development and Child Care Policy  
Ministry of Children and Family Development  
PO Box 9778, STN Prov. Govt.  
Victoria, BC, V8W 9R4  
Telephone: (250) 953-4570  
Facsimile: (250) 356-2867  
Email: Irene.Robertson@gems4.gov.bc.ca

### CHILD CARE SERVICES

#### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

##### Unregulated family child care

Maximum number of children permitted: Two, not including children related to the caregiver. This category is often referred to as "license not required" (LNR).

A "registered" LNR provider is registered with a Child Care Resource and Referral Program (see OTHER category below for description) and meets the requirements of membership.

#### REGULATED CHILD CARE

##### Group child care centres

Group care for no more than 13 hours/day for children, from birth to school age.

##### Preschools

Group programs for no more than four hours/day for no more than 20 children, age 30 months to school age.

##### Out-of-school care

Care outside school hours, including school vacations, for children attending school (including kindergarten) for not more than 13 hours/day.

##### Family child care

Care in a private home for no more than seven children, aged birth to under 13 years. Of these seven, there can be no more than five preschool age children, three children under three years of age and one child under one year of age. Children 12 years or older who are related to the caregiver are not included in this definition.

##### Emergency care

Care for no more than 72 hours/month for children who have not entered Grade 1. Groups may be no larger than 12 for children under three years and no larger than 25 for older children.

### Child-minding

Care for up to three hours/day, no more than two days/week for children 18 months up to entry into grade one. Maximum of 16 children where any child is under three years and a maximum of 20 children if all are three years or older.

### Ski hill or resort care

Occasional child care is provided in resort locations to children who are at least 18 months and under six years old, for no more than 40 hours/month, and no more than eight hours/day.

*The Medical Health Officer may authorize a license to extend the maximum number of hours of care as long as there is no health or safety risk to children.*

### OTHER

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) Programs are provincially funded to provide information, support and training to licensed and registered family child care providers. They provide equipment and toy lending, workshops, networking, home visits and a caregiver referral registry for families inquiring about finding child care. The referral registry includes registered child care providers who meet conditions for registration.

### CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Supported Child Care Program is intended for children who require extra staffing and other supports to be included in a child care or other community setting because they have a developmental delay or disability in physical, cognitive, communicative or social/emotional/behavioural areas. Families participate on a voluntary basis. It is not income tested. The funds designated for these supports are referred to as the range payment.

Supported Child Care (SCC) community agencies provide both SCC Consultant Services for families and SCC Support Workers to families and child care and community settings. In addition, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), provides a Special Needs Supplement of up to \$107 to assist families eligible for the Child Care Subsidy Program with the costs of child care (see RECENT DEVELOPMENTS for announced change in amount). Supported Child Care is currently in transition.

### ABORIGINAL CHILD CARE

B.C. funds and licenses Aboriginal on-reserve and off-reserve child care through the same programs available to other (non-Aboriginal) facilities, parents and providers. There are 65 First Nations communities that have licensed child care facilities and approximately 800 licensed child care spaces are located on-reserve. Child care centres run by Band and Tribal Councils became eligible to apply for provincial funding as of October 1994.

A number of educational institutions have developed training for First Nations early childhood educators. British Columbia Aboriginal Child Care Society is funded by government to provide resource and referral services to Aboriginal child care providers. A number of Aboriginal communities are working with the Supported Child Care program to improve access to the program and to build capacity for SCC programs administered by Aboriginal communities.

### SPACE STATISTICS (2002/03)

#### Number of regulated child care spaces

Centre-based	Full-time	Part-time
Group child care (under 3 yrs)	4,511	—
Group child care (over 30 mths)	14,847	—
Preschool (nursery school)	—	17,728
Out-of-school	—	23,089
Child minding	—	1,972
Occasional child care/other	—	391
Special needs	320	—
Total centre-based spaces	62,858	
Regulated family child care	17,372	
Total regulated spaces	80,230	

**Other:** Registered (Licence-Not-Required) \*1,600

*\*Registered LNRs are not licensed by the province nor are they regulated. They are expected to meet the requirements set by their Child Care Resource and Referral Program.*

#### Average number of children with special needs in child care

5,000

*This includes children in some unregulated settings. The number in regulated care is not available.*

#### Estimated number of children in regulated child care receiving subsidies

11,000

*Note: British Columbia provides fee subsidies for children in both regulated and unregulated child care. Actual numbers are not available.*

<b>Number of centres and homes</b>	
Number of child care centres:	
- Full day	1,011
- Part-day nursery schools/preschools	982
- Stand-alone after school programs	969
- Other (child minding, emergency, occasional, specialized)	171
Number of licensed family child care providers	2,525
<b>Sponsorship of regulated centre spaces (2003/04)</b>	
Information no longer available	
<b>Openings and closings</b>	
New child care centre licenses issued	183
Number of child care centre closures	110
Number of new licenses issued to individual family child care providers	266
Number of family child care providers who ceased providing care	256
<i>Note: In addition, 24 new licenses were issued to unknown facility types and 12 unknowns closed</i>	
<i>Source: Information on numbers of new facility licenses issued and facilities closed comes from a 45% response rate of Health Authorities reporting to MCFD.</i>	

## STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

### REGULATED CENTRE

<b>Maximum centre size</b>	Not specified	
<b>Maximum staff:child ratios and group sizes</b>		
Age	Staff:child ratios	Max. group sizes
0-3 yrs	1:4	12
30 mos-school-age	1:8	25
Preschool	1:15	20
School-age	1:10-15	20-25
Special needs	1:4	12-16

#### Staff qualifications requirements

There are three levels of staff: Early Childhood Educators, Assistant Early Childhood Educators and Responsible Adults. The training requirements for each are as follows:

Early Childhood Educator – There are three categories of Early Childhood Educators, each with specific training requirements:

- *Early childhood educator* requires completion of a basic one year early childhood education training program from an approved training institution and 500 hours of supervised work experience.
- *Infant/toddler educator* requires completion of the basic early childhood education program plus specialized training related to infant/toddler care and education.
- *Special needs educator* requires completion of the basic early childhood education program plus specialized training related to children with special needs.

Assistant Early Childhood Educators – This category includes those who are in the process of qualifying for an ECE certificate or who have completed a training program that the director recognizes as at least equivalent to one course of a basic early childhood education program.

Responsible Adults – These staff must have completed a course on the care of young children or have relevant work experience.

Staffing requirements vary by the type of care provider and the age of the children as follows:

- *Group child care, under 36 months:* Each group of four or fewer children requires one Infant/Toddler Educator. Each group of five to eight children requires one Infant/Toddler Educator and one Early Childhood Educator. Each group of nine to twelve children requires one Infant/Toddler Educator, one Early Childhood Educator and one Assistant. The same staffing requirements apply in emergency care for children in this age group.\*
- *Group day care, 30 months to school-age:* Each group requires one early childhood educator plus Assistant Early Childhood Educators. The same staffing requirements apply in emergency care for children in this age group.\*

\* For children three years of age or more, the same staffing requirements apply for emergency care.

- *Out-of-school, child-minding, and occasional or ski resort care:* Staff must be older than 19 years and have taken a course on the care of young children or have relevant work experience. There are no specific early childhood training requirements (see above Responsible Adults).
- *Special needs facilities:* Special needs facilities (group care facilities where at least 25% of the children have special needs) require one Special Needs Educator for every group of four or fewer children. Larger groups require one Special Needs Educator plus Early Childhood Educators.



### Parent involvement

Not specified

### Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

The Ministry of Health Services through the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* is responsible for licensing and monitoring child care facilities as well as developing policies and procedures specific to program licensing. The functions are carried out by the local Health Authorities through the Medical Health Officers.

The local Medical Health Officer, through licensing officers, issues interim permits and licenses, amends, suspends or cancels licenses, investigates complaints about programs, and conducts inspections and ongoing monitoring of programs.

There is no legislated frequency for monitoring inspections. Generally, most facilities have an annual licensing visit.

If a centre is not in compliance, conditions can be placed on the license and the operator given a time frame in which to comply. If the situation is considered to be a danger to the children, the license can be suspended or cancelled. The operator can request a hearing and then, if not satisfied, can go to the Community Care and Assisted Living Appeal Board, composed of non-government members, including people from the child care field.

### REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE

#### Regulation

Individually licensed

#### Maximum capacity

Up to seven children under 13 years (including children living in the home). Of the seven children, there may be no more than five preschoolers, no more than three children under three years of age, and no more than one child under one year. Children 12 years or older and who are related to the caregiver are not included.

#### Provider qualification requirements

Must be over 19 years and have a first-aid certificate, be able to provide care and mature guidance to children, and have either completed a course on the care of young children or have relevant work experience. There are no early childhood training requirements.

### Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Most facilities have an annual licensing visit. An initial inspection by the Fire Marshall's office may be required when a new home opens.

## FUNDING

### CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

Fee subsidies are paid directly to service providers on behalf of eligible parents except when child care is provided in the child's own home. In this case, the fee subsidy is paid to the parent who assumes the role of employer, and is responsible for any required contributions to the Workers' Compensation Board, Employment Insurance Benefits, Canada Pension Plan and Canada Customs and Revenue Agency.

Eligibility is determined through an income test. The number of fee subsidies is not capped.

Fee subsidies may be used in for-profit, non-profit, regulated or unregulated child care and preschool but not in child-minding services (see definitions in CHILD CARE SERVICES section). Families who use in-own-home child care may be eligible for subsidy when the caregiver is not a relative who resides with the family. If unregulated care is used, the parent must complete a checklist on the provider and submit it to the Ministry of Human Resources which administers the subsidy program.

There is no minimum user fee but child care services may surcharge subsidized parents above the maximum subsidy rates. Surcharges may be paid by the government on behalf of the parent if the child is in child care as part of a risk reduction plan under the *Child, Family and Community Services Act*, or the child care is recommended under the *Child, Family and Community Services Act* for a parent participating in a Young Parent Program.

#### Eligibility for fee subsidy (net income 2003/04)\*

	Turning point	Break-even point
<i>Family child care</i>		
1 parent, 1 child	\$16,764	\$22,824
2 parents, 2 children	\$20,796	\$34,944
<i>Child care centres</i>		
1 parent, 1 child	\$16,764	\$23,124
2 parents, 2 children	\$20,796	\$37,716

*The turning point is the net income level up to which full subsidy is available. Partial subsidy is available up to the break-even point at which income subsidy ceases.*

*\*Subsidy eligibility levels were reduced in 2002 then increased in 2003. (See RECENT DEVELOPMENTS for details of a further increase.)*

### Maximum subsidy by age of child (2003/04)

Type of care	Part-day monthly (4 hrs or less/day)	Full-day monthly (more than 4 hrs/day)
<i>Family child care</i>		
0-18 months	\$219	\$438
19-36 months	202	404
36 months +	177	354
<i>Centre-based</i>		
0-18 months	\$292	\$585
19-36 months	264	528
36 months +	184	368
Kindergarten	\$204	\$255
School-age	\$147	\$173
Preschool	\$107	—
<i>In-child's-home</i>		
First child (0-18 mos)	\$197	\$394
First child (over 18 mos)	159	318
Second child (0-18 mos)	99	198
Each additional child	73	147

(see RECENT DEVELOPMENTS for subsequent changes to maximum subsidy rates)

### PUBLIC FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2003/04)

#### One-time funding

##### *Major capital funding for the creation of new child care spaces*

Up to 25% in urban and 50% in rural communities of eligible capital costs to a maximum of \$250,000 for facility acquisition, renovation or furnishings and equipment. Available to non-profit societies in good standing, local governments, and Aboriginal Bands and Tribal Councils on-reserve.

##### *Minor capital funding for emergency repair, replacement and relocation grant*

Up to \$4,000 to non-profit centres to upgrade or repair facilities in order to continue to comply with Ministry of Health licensing requirements and to assist with costs when a facility must move to another location. Eligibility as above.

#### Recurring funding

##### *Child care operating funding*

The operating funding is available to eligible licensed group and licensed family child care providers. Funding is based on enrolment and the age of the child and is available for all regulated care types, except Child Minding and Occasional Child Care at Ski Hill or Resort.

##### *Supported Child Care*

Funds to assist cover consultation, training and extra staffing. In some communities, program funding is targeted to improving access for Aboriginal families.

#### Other funding

##### *Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) Programs*

Annualized provincial funding to provide support, resources, training and referral services for child care providers and parents in all communities across the province. CCRRs assist in the recruitment, support and training of both licensed and unlicensed family child care providers and support parents in choosing and monitoring their child care.

##### *Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre (Westcoast)*

Westcoast is provincially funded to provide information, resources, specialized training and consultation to child care providers and CCRR agencies.

##### *BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS)*

Provides training, support and advice to child care providers and Child Care Resource and Referral agencies providing child care and child care supports to Aboriginal children on- and off-reserve.

##### *Regional CCRR Coordinators*

Training, planning, and support to Child Care Resource and Referral programs in the five regions of the province enhance coordination and cooperation in the delivery of services to children.

PROVINCIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR REGULATED  
CHILD CARE (2003/04)

**Child care subsidies in regulated care** \*\$54,000,000

**One-time funding (Minor/major capital funding)**  
2,500,000

**Recurring funding**

Child Care Operating Fund 48,000,000  
Supported Child Care 36,225,000  
Total 140,725,000

\*Total includes \$1.5 million for Special Needs Supplement

**Other funding**

Child Care Resource and Referral Programs\*\*\$9,000,000  
Subsidies in unregulated care (estimate) 50,002,000

\*\*Includes funding to CRRs, BC Aboriginal Child Care Society, Westcoast Resource Centre and the Regional CRR Coordinators

SALARIES (2001)

**Mean gross hourly wage for centre-based child care staff (full- and part-time staff combined) (2001)**

Supervisor \$14.61  
Child care teacher 13.28  
Assistant 11.68

Source: 2001 Provincial Child Care Survey Report, Government of British Columbia. More recent information is not available

**Family child care**

Information is not available

FEES (2001)

**Mean monthly parent fees for full-time centre-based care**

Infants (Age 0-17 mos) \$705  
Toddlers (Age 18 mos-3 yrs) 662  
Preschool (Age 3-5 yrs) 494  
Kindergarten 419  
School-age (a.m. and p.m.) 197  
Child-minding 61  
Preschool (3 times/week) 107

Source: 2001 Provincial Child Care Survey Report, Government of British Columbia. More recent information is not available.

**Average daily fee in family child care**

Infants (Age 0-17 mos) \$29.00  
Toddlers (Age 18 mos-3 yrs) 28.00  
Preschool (Age 3-5 yrs) 26.74  
Kindergarten 24.37  
School-age 3.94/hour

Source: 2001 Provincial Child Care Survey Report, Government of British Columbia. More recent information is not available.

**ADMINISTRATION**

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) has responsibility for child care policy and programs, the registration of early childhood educators, and approving early childhood training programs. The Minister of State for Early Childhood Development (within MCFD) is responsible for a cross-government integrated early childhood development strategy, including responsibility for the Supported Child Care Program.

The Ministry of Human Resources administers the subsidy program.

The Ministry of Health Services through the Community Care Facilities Branch, which is part of the Population Health and Wellness Unit Division, is responsible for the development and implementation of legislation, policy and guidelines of licensed child care facilities. Medical Health Officers are responsible for licensing and monitoring through five regional health authorities across the province.

## MUNICIPAL AND OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROLE

There is no legislated municipal or other local government role. The City of Vancouver and several other municipalities play a role in planning and developing child care.

## CHILD CARE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

A Provincial Child Care Council of 14 members appointed by the Minister responsible for child care addresses policy matters and priorities in an advisory capacity.

There are no provincial target levels of service nor a long-term planning process.

## HISTORY OF CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

**1910** The City Crèche was established in Vancouver as a child care service and employment agency.

**1930** Vancouver Day Nursery Association (later the Foster Day Care Association of Vancouver) was established to provide an employment service for women and a system of family child care homes opened.

**1943** The *Welfare Institutions Licensing Act* was amended to govern and license crèches, nursery playschools and kindergartens.

**1960s** The Child Care Subsidy Program was introduced.

**1968** B.C. Preschool Teachers' Association (now called the Early Childhood Educators of B.C.) was established.

**1969** The Provincial Child Care Facilities Licensing Board replaced the Welfare Institutions Licensing Board.

**1972** The Children's Services Employees Union was established.

**1981** The B.C. Day Care Action Coalition was established.

**1982** The Western Canada Family Day Care Association was established.

**1990** A Task Force on Child Care was appointed.

**1991** The Task Force on Child Care Report, *Showing We Care: A Child Care Strategy for the 90s*, was released.

**1991** An NDP government was elected.

**1992** The Child Care Branch, Ministry of Women's Equality, was established. The Provincial Child Care Facilities Licensing Board was disbanded and replaced by a Director of Community Care Facilities. The Ministry of Women's Equality took over existing grant programs from the Ministry of Social Services (Infant/Toddler Incentive Grant; Emergency Repair, Replacement, and Relocation; and Facilities and Equipment), and established the Needs Assessment and Planning Grants, and the Quality Enhancement Grants.

A province-wide consultation on child care for children with special needs was conducted. A committee was formed to make recommendations for children with special needs.

**1993** A child care regulation review began.

The Special Needs Day Care Review Board released their report, *Supported Child Care*.

A Provincial Child Care Council was appointed to provide advice to the Minister of Women's Equality on child care.

A school-based child care working group was established by the Ministry of Education to address ways to increase school district participation in the development of school-age child care.

A local government working group was established by the Ministry of Women's Equality to recommend actions to assist local government to improve and expand child care services.

The child care fee subsidy program and funding of the special needs program was shifted from the Ministry of Social Services to the Ministry of Women's Equality.

BC21, a plan to create 7,500 new child care spaces over three years in public buildings, was announced.

**1994** A Child Care Policy Team was established to coordinate child care policy across government ministries.

A wage supplement was introduced for non-profit child care programs.

**1995** The wage supplement was made available to eligible for-profit child care programs.

The Quality Enhancement Grants/Needs Assessment and Local Planning Grants were discontinued.

Implementation of Strategic Initiatives, a \$32 million, four year federal-provincial initiative was designed to test new approaches to various aspects of child care policy and programs. It included funding for the transition to Supported Child Care, different approaches to service delivery and One Stop Access (four test sites to provide a central location which co-located financial assistance workers, licensing officers and child care information).

The province released The Government's Response to Supported Child Care. A transition plan was developed to move from funding a specific number of places and specific programs to a system where funding is provided for extra supports in child care programs of the parent's choice.

**1996** As part of the transition from special needs day care to supported child care, 49 community-based Steering Committees were established to assess attitudes and skills, equipment and resource needs, and physical and structural barriers.

*The Emergency Repair, Replacement and Relocation Grant* was reduced to \$4,000 from \$5,000. BC21, the capital funding program which created child care facilities in public buildings, ended. An internal evaluation report was completed.

The *BC Benefits (Child Care) Act* was introduced and superseded the GAIN Act as the source of fee subsidies.

A performance audit of the Ministry of Women's Equality child care programs was completed. The Auditor General's report, *Management of Child Care Grants*, was released. It contained three recommendations:

The Ministry should improve its child care database so that it could identify areas of the province where needs are the greatest and it should subsequently give preference to funding child care projects in those areas;

The Ministry should develop standard costs for use in setting measurable goals for creating new child care spaces; and

The Ministry should extend its performance measurement to assess the effects of program efforts on quality and accessibility of child care.

**1997** Child care moved from the Ministry of Women's Equality to the Ministry for Children and Families (MCF). The former Ministry of Social Services became the Ministry of Human Resources (MHR). The child care subsidy program was administered by MHR on behalf of MCF. Responsibility for licensing and monitoring programs and individuals remains in the Ministry of Health. A regional operational model was introduced.

**1998** The Wage Supplement Initiative (WSI) was combined with the Infant/Toddler Incentive Grant (ITIG) for group centres and became the Compensation Contribution Program (CCP). In October 1998, centres on the waiting lists became eligible for funding. Family child care programs were still eligible for the ITIG.

**1998** A national study of wages, working conditions and quality, *You Bet I Care!*, found that – based on a sample of full-time centres for children 0-6 years and regulated family child care – British Columbia scored 5.6 on the ECERS-R (preschool rooms) and 5.6 on the ITERS (infant rooms) and 5.5 on the FDCRS (regulated family child care). The scale ranges from 1 to 7.

**1999** Child care was moved to the Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (MSDES). In the fall, a new policy paper, *Building a Better Future for British Columbia's Kids*, was released for public consultation by the Social Development Minister and the Women's Equality Minister.

**2001** A multi-phased, four-year plan described as a comprehensive, publicly funded child care system was announced. In January, phase one of the Funding Assistance Program (FAP) for school-age group care was implemented. Centre-based after-school programs received funding to provide child care for \$7 per day for before- and after-school care. For children in kindergarten and for all children on non-instructional days and seasonal breaks, parents paid up to \$14.00 per day. Low-income families were still eligible for child care subsidies.

The implementation of phase two was planned for January 2002 for school-aged children in licensed family child care and group infant-toddler care, followed by phase three in 2002/03, which was to cover all other children in licensed family child care settings. Phase four, planned for 2003/04, was to fund children in licensed group care for three to five year olds.

**March 2001** The *Child Care BC Act* was proclaimed to provide a legislative timetable for the new funding program; the budget allocation for 2000/01 was \$14 million, annualized to \$30 million (for the out of school funding).

**May 2001** A Liberal government was elected. A number of new ministries were established, resulting in changes in responsibility for some program areas. The main responsibility for child care policy and programs moved to the newly created Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services (MCAWS) (replacing the Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security). The Child Care Subsidy Program management remained with the Ministry of Human Resources at the regional level, under agreement with MCAWS. The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) was given responsibility for the Supported Child Care program.

**August 2001** The government repealed the implementation plan in the *Child Care BC Act*.

**January 2002** The Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services announced that it would replace existing child care grants with a new, consolidated operating grant for family child care and centres effective April 1, 2003, and that the Funding Assistance Program to school-age centres would end June 30, 2002. Out-of-school programs that were receiving the FAP received transition funding from July 1, 2002, to March 31, 2003.

**April 1, 2002** Several changes were made to the child care subsidy program. The income level for eligibility was reduced by \$285/month (net). (This reduction was subsequently increased in May 2003 by \$100). Subsidy payments below \$50 were no longer issued to families.

Parents earning above the exemption level continued to receive a partial subsidy; however, the subsidy above the exemption level was reduced by 60 cents (previously 50 cents) on each dollar of additional take-home pay.

Children with special needs and families receiving pre-school subsidies were now required to meet the social criteria as well as the financial eligibility criteria in order to be eligible for a fee subsidy. The social criteria requires a parent to be working, seeking work, attending school/training for jobs programs, or have child care recommended by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) as part of a risk-reduction plan.

Subsidy was no longer available to parents in rehabilitative programs or short-term family crisis.

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

**November 2002** The provincial government's earlier decision to discontinue funding Child Care Resource and Referral Programs and the provincial services of West Coast Child Care Resource Centre was reversed. However, One Stop Access Centre funding through the Ministry of Human Resources was eliminated.

**April 1 2003** Registration of Early Childhood Educators was transferred from the Community Care Facilities Licensing Branch to MCAWS. Responsibility for registration rests with the Executive Director of Child Care Programs, MCAWS (now in the Ministry for Children and Family Development, see June 2004).

A new funding arrangement was introduced. The \$48 million Child Care Operating Funding Program replaced the Compensation Contribution Program, the Infant/Toddler Incentive Grant Program, and the Out-of-School Care Transition Funding Program. The operating funding is intended to assist eligible licensed group and family child care providers with the cost of providing care. Funding amounts are based on enrolment. Funding is available for all licensed care types, with the exception of Child Minding, Occasional Child Care at Ski Hill or Resort.

**June 2003** MCFD ended the Special Needs Support Payment (\$107) and the funds were refocused on child development. In July 2003 the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal, and Women's Services (MCAWS), introduced a Special Needs Supplement of up to \$107, administered through Ministry of Human Resources (MHR) Employment and Assistance Centres. MCFD will maintain responsibility for the Range Payment.

**May 2004** The *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* replaced the *Community Care Facility Act*. The *Child Care Licensing Regulation* was continued with minor amendments, to make it consistent with the new Act.

**June 2004** Responsibility for child care moved from the Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services to the Ministry for Children and Family Development.

**July 2004** \$4.9 million was announced: \$1.7 million for children of non-working families to attend preschool; \$1.435 million for major capital; \$700,000 for CRRs to register license-not-required providers, and \$1.1 million to supplement the operating funding for out of school care to 600 licensed child care centres.

**January 2005** The income level at which families become eligible for child care subsidy rose by \$200/month (see April 2002, HISTORY section). Other announced changes include an additional \$100 rise to the income level of families with children who have special needs and their supplement increased to \$150 from \$107.

New subsidy rates took effect as follows:

**Maximum subsidy by age of child effective January 2005**

Type of care	Part-day monthly (4 hrs or less/day)	Full-day monthly (more than 4 hrs/day)
<i>Family child care</i>		
0-18 months	\$237.50	\$475.00
19-36 months	234.50	469.00
36 months +	207.50	415.00
<i>Centre-based</i>		
0-18 month	\$309.00	\$618.00
19-36 months	277.50	555.00
36 months +	197.00	394.00
Kindergarten	\$272.00	\$340.00
School-age	147.56	173.00
Preschool	173.00	—
<i>In-child's-home</i>		
First child (0-18 mos)	\$197.00	\$394.00
First child (over 18 mos)	159.00	318.00
Second child (0-18 mos)	99.00	198.00
Each additional child	73.50	147.00

*One-time transitional funding of \$4.45 million to assist service providers through the transition of subsidy changes, and one-time funding of \$500,000 to establish a professional development fund were announced.*

*The Safe Play Space Program – one-time funding of up to \$25,000 per facility became available to replace or upgrade outdoor play equipment and/or ground cover/surfacing to meet Canadian Standards Association standards.*

## KEY PROVINCIAL ECEC ORGANIZATIONS

Provincial Child Care Council  
2925 Meadowvista Pl  
Coquitlam BC V3E 2P5  
Phone: 604 941-0359  
604-944-0101  
Fax: 604-944-6166  
Website: <http://www.mcaaws.gov.bc.ca/childcare/index.htm>

BC Aboriginal Child Care Society  
209-1999 Marine Dr  
Vancouver BC V7P 3J3  
Phone: 604-990-9939  
Fax: 604-990-9457  
Website: <http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/>

BC Association of Child Care Employers  
210 W Broadway 3rd Fl  
Vancouver BC V5Y 3W2  
Phone: 604-944-0101  
Fax: 604-944-6166

Child Care Advocacy Forum  
300 W Broadway 3rd Fl  
Vancouver, BC V5Y 3W2  
Phone: 604-515-6257  
Fax: 604-709-5662  
Website: <http://www.cccabc.bc.ca/forum/>

Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC  
210 W Broadway 3rd Fl  
Vancouver BC V5Y 3W2  
Phone: 604-888-8786  
604-222-2290  
Fax: 604-888-8729  
Website: <http://www.cccabc.bc.ca/>

Early Childhood Educators of BC  
210 W Broadway, 3rd Fl  
Vancouver BC V5Y 3W2  
Phone: 604-709-6063  
Fax: 604-709-5662  
Website: <http://www.cfc-efc.ca/ecebc/>

School-Age Child Care Association of BC  
210 W Broadway 3rd Fl  
Vancouver BC V5Y 3W2  
Phone: 604-325-1010  
Fax: 604-325-1039  
Website: <http://www.wstcoast.org>

Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre  
210 W Broadway, 3rd Fl  
Vancouver BC V5Y 3W2  
Phone: 604-709-5661  
Fax: 604-709-5662  
Website :<http://www.wstcoast.org>

Western Canada Family Child Care Association of BC  
210 W Broadway 3rd Fl  
Vancouver BC V5Y 3W2  
Phone: 604-594-1146  
Fax: 604-594-1146  
Website: <http://www.cfc-efc.ca/wcfcca/>

### **TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS**

British Columbia Teachers' Federation  
100-550 West 6th Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V5Z 4P2  
Phone: 604-871-2283  
1-800-663-9163  
Fax: 604-871-2290  
Website :<http://www.bctf.ca/home.shtml>

