

# British Columbia



## OVERVIEW

Responsibility for BC’s early childhood education and care is split among three ministries:

- Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) oversees child care policy and funding programs, including child care subsidies; operating funding; major and minor capital funding; the ECE Registry; and Indigenous child and family supports.
- Ministry of Health (HLTH) oversees child care licensing, with monitoring carried out through local health authorities.
- Ministry of Education (EDUC) establishes standards and policy direction for the Kindergarten to Grade 12 education system and for providing funding to boards of education. EDUC supports early learning in school districts by setting policy and providing funding for full day kindergarten, StrongStart BC Early Learning Programs and the Ready, Set, Learn initiative.

Access to full day kindergarten is available for all eligible five year olds in British Columbia. Both public and independent schools provide kindergarten programs. Kindergarten is optional in BC but nearly all children attend (99% of age cohort).

A variety of regulated child care programs (referred to as facilities in BC) for children 0 – 12 years old are provided, including programs outside regular school hours for school-aged children. About half of BC’s full and part day centre based programs are operated on a non-profit basis and half are for-profit.

Both non-profit and for-profit child care may receive all forms of funding—operating funds, fee subsidies, and capital funding (one time only). BC also provides parent fee subsidies in unregulated child care.

Although there is no mandated role for local government entities (i.e., municipalities or school boards) in child care delivery, administration or funding, there is a growing—albeit small— number of services operated by public government entities including First Nations governments. In addition, several local governments including the City of Vancouver have been voluntarily engaged in child care planning and funding for some years. Most recently, the provincial government has encouraged the role of municipalities in local planning for child care through collaboration with the Union of BC Municipalities.

Licensed family child care for up to seven 0 – 12 year olds is provided by individually licensed family child care providers. BC terms unregulated providers caring for a maximum of two children or a sibling group “licence not required” (LNR). Local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) offices offer a voluntary registration process for LNR providers to become “Registered LNR providers”. Registered LNR providers receive a higher child care subsidy rate than licence not required providers that are not registered.

A general election in May 2017 brought a change of government to British Columbia. The new NDP government had made a commitment to significant changes in child care. The new government rapidly began to introduce reforms to child care including revision of parent fee subsidy levels (the Affordable Child Care Benefit), reduced parent fees (reduced more for infants and toddlers than three to five year olds) supported by operational funding to services earmarked for this purpose, and piloting of substantially operationally funded services to deliver child care at a maximum parent fee of \$10 a day, as per the election commitment.

In February 2018, the Government of Canada and the Government of British Columbia signed the [Canada-British Columbia Early Learning and Child Care Agreement](#), effective for a three year term from April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2020. Over the course of this first phase three year agreement, British Columbia will have received almost \$153 million dollars from federal funds. The funds were committed to initiatives including accessibility, quality improvement and supporting underserved communities.

## PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

*Please note that some of the following figures are rounded, while totals are based on exact figures and may therefore not equal the sum of the rounded figures shown here.*

---

### Number of children 0 – 12 (2019 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	36,600
1	38,800
2	43,300
3	43,500
4	44,600
5	45,200
6	42,200
7	47,800
8	44,500
9	50,700
10	47,700
11	49,400
12	50,100
Total	584,400

---

### Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2019 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0 – 2	118,700
3 – 5	133,300
6 – 12	332,400
Total	584,400

---

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (2019 rounded estimate)**

Age	Number of children
0	24,000
1	26,000
2	28,500
3	27,500
4	31,500
5	29,300
6	26,200
7	34,700
8	30,500
9	35,700
10	33,300
11	35,400
12	36,800
Total	399,400

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 with employed mothers (aggregated) (2019 rounded estimate)**

Age	Number of children
0 – 2	78,500
3 – 5	88,300
6 – 12	232,600
Total	399,400

---

**Number of children 0 – 14 identifying with an Indigenous group (2016)**

Age	First Nations	Métis	Inuk (Inuit)	Multiple	Other
0 – 4	14,485	6,510	195	440	150
5 – 9	16,535	6,730	210	555	165
10 – 14	15,945	7,365	135	380	135
Total	46,970	20,605	540	1375	450

---

**Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2019 rounded estimate)**

Age of youngest child	Number of mothers	Participation rate (%)
0 – 2	81,600	74.0
3 – 5	61,200	77.5
0 – 5	142,700	75.4
6 – 15	195,400	84.4

---

**Living arrangements of child by age by number of parents (2016)**

Age	Living with two parents	Living with one parent	Lone mother	Lone father
0 – 4	189,370	27,840	23,210	4,625
5 – 9	188,900	43,695	34,845	8,850
10 – 14	177,910	50,970	40,475	10,490

---

---

**Languages spoken most often at home (2016)**

Age	English	French	Non-official	Multiple
0 – 4	174,715	990	33,270	11,485
5 – 9	196,320	930	25,465	14,045
10 – 14	194,470	780	23,695	14,735
Total	565,505	2,705	82,435	40,280

---

**Median after tax income among families with children aged 0 – 5 (2015) (\$)**

Two parent families	Lone parent families	Male lone parent families	Female lone parent families
81,298	27,621	33,024	26,967

---

**PARENTAL LEAVE AND BENEFITS****Maternity leave**

17 weeks.

**Parental leave**

61 weeks for birth mothers who have taken maternity leave. Parental leave must be taken immediately following maternity leave.

62 weeks if parental leave is taken by the other parent including adoptive parents or by a birth mother who has not taken maternity leave. Parental leave must be taken within 78 weeks of the child's birth or placement.

**Adoption leave**

None additional.

**Family related leave**

Five days per year.

**Benefits**

Maternity and parental leave provisions in Canada outside Quebec are divided between federal and provincial/territorial governments. Benefits are paid by the federal government under the Employment Insurance program (EI), while provincial/territorial provisions for job protected leave are established in each jurisdiction's employment standards legislation. The federal benefit covers 15 weeks of maternity leave for eligible employees who are birth mothers, up to 12 weeks prior to the expected date of birth, and up to 17 weeks following the date of birth.

There are two federal benefit options for parental leave: the Standard Parental Benefit and the Extended Parental Benefit. The Standard Parental Benefit covers 35 weeks of paid leave taken over a 12 month period, paid at 55% of average weekly insurable earnings, up to \$573/week (2020) for either eligible parent, including adoptive parents. The Extended Parental Benefit allows 61 weeks of parental leave benefits taken over an 18 month period paid at 33% of average weekly earnings up to \$344/week (2020) for either eligible parent including adoptive parents.

The Parental Sharing Benefit is available to non-birth (second) parents. It covers an additional five weeks of benefits if both parents have shared the Standard Benefit option (40 weeks total) or an additional eight weeks of benefits under the Extended option if both parents have shared the Extended Benefit option (69 weeks total). It is paid at either the Standard or the Extended rate.

*Note: For further details about the EI federal benefit, Quebec benefit and leave provisions, and all provincial/territorial provisions for job protected leave, see the PARENTAL LEAVES AND BENEFITS section of this publication.*

## KINDERGARTEN

### PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

Ministry of Education  
PO Box 9158 STN Prov. Govt.  
4th floor, 620 Superior Street  
Victoria, BC, V8W 9H1  
Email: [EDUC.EarlyLearning@gov.bc.ca](mailto:EDUC.EarlyLearning@gov.bc.ca)  
Website: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/ministries/education>

### LEGISLATION

*School Act* [R.S.B.C 1996] Chapter 412. (Current to October 21, 2020)  
*Independent School Act* [R.S.B.C. 1996] c. 216. (Current to October 21, 2020)  
*Teacher's Act* [S.B.C. 2011] Chapter 19. (Current to October 21, 2020)  
*First Nations Education Act* [S.B.C. 2007] Chapter 40. (Current to October 21, 2020)

### AGE ELIGIBILITY

Five years old on or before December 31 of that school year.

### COMPULSORY

Not compulsory

### HOURS

Full school day

### KINDERGARTEN ENROLMENT (2018-2019)

Public schools:	39,416
Independent schools:	6,504
<b>Total K enrolment:</b>	<b>45,920</b>

### CLASS SIZE

The provincial class size limit was revised following a 2016 decision of the Supreme Court of Canada and following a Memorandum of Agreement between the British Columbia Ministry of Education and the British Columbia Public School Employers' Association which restored provision for class size within collective agreements.

Effective as of the 2017-2018 school year, the maximum kindergarten class size was 20 students.

In 2018-2019, the average kindergarten class size was 18 students.

[More detailed data is available re: BC class sizes.](#)

### CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The schools Section 106.3 (5) of the *School Act* provides the legal authority for special needs funding. A student must qualify for special needs funding through appropriate assessment and identification. An Individual Education Plan (IEP) must be in place for each student.

### TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Elementary school teachers must have completed 30 credits of general coursework in areas related to the BC elementary curriculum. These 30 credits must include the following:

- six credits of English Literature and Composition
- three credits of Canadian Studies (typically History or Geography)
- three credits of Mathematics and
- three credits of Science.

There are no additional qualifications/ training requirement in early childhood education for teachers in kindergarten classrooms.

### CURRICULUM

British Columbia Kindergarten-Grade 12 Curriculum  
[Kindergarten Curriculum](#)

As of the 2019-2020 school year; BC has transitioned to [a redesigned curriculum](#) for K-12.

### SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN

*K – 12 per student funding (2019-2020)*

Public schools:	
(Headcount: 39,825)	\$9,448
Independent (private) schools:	
Group 1 schools, average per pupil (Headcount 5,524)	\$4,800
Group 2 schools, average per pupil (Headcount 1,068)	\$3,360

*Operating funding allocated based on kindergarten enrolment (2019-2020)*

Public schools:	\$376,275,578
Independent schools	\$30,103,460
<b>Total kindergarten funding</b>	<b>\$406,379,038</b>

## STRONGSTART BC

StrongStart BC is an early childhood play based drop in program under the Ministry of Education. It operates in 329 sites within all 60 school districts for children 0 – 5 years. It requires that children be accompanied by a parent or other caregiver, is provided at no cost and is intended to prepare children for kindergarten.

## READY, SET, LEARN

The Ready, Set, Learn initiative supports schools to offer school orientation events for pre-schoolers (3 – 5 years) and their families.

## REGULATED CHILD CARE

### PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

Ministry of Children and Family Development  
Child Care Programs and Services Branch  
PO Box 99565, STN Prov. Govt.

Victoria, BC, V8W 9R4

Telephone: (888) 338-6622

Website: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children>

Ministry of Health

Community Care Facility Licensing

PO Box 9638 Stn. Prov. Govt.

Victoria, BC, V8W 9P1

Telephone: (250) 952-1442

Website: <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/topic.page?id=83785931C8854381849E4208B4EBBAFB>

### LEGISLATION

*Community Care and Assisted Living Act*, S.B.C. 2002.

Chapter 75. Includes amendments up to B.C. Reg. 188/2018, October 1, 2018] (Current to November 11, 2020)

*Child Care Licensing Regulation*. B.C. Reg. 332/2007 O.C. 728/2007. Last amended June 1, 2020 by B.C. Reg. 118/2020]. (Current to November 17, 2020)

*Child Care Subsidy Act*, R.S.B.C. 1996, Chapter 26; Child Care Subsidy Regulation 74/97. (Current to November 11, 2020)

*Child Care BC Act*, S.B.C. 2001. Chapter 4. (Current to November 11, 2020)

## CHILD CARE SERVICES

### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

There are three forms of legal unregulated child care: Licence not required (LNR), Registered licence not required child care (RLNR) and in child's own home care.

#### Licence not required child care

Unregulated providers are called licence not required care in British Columbia. LNR providers are not licensed, monitored or inspected, so there are no health, safety or education standards. As in other provinces/territories, unregulated child care providers operate legally in B.C. provided they do not exceed the maximum number of children. LNR providers can legally care for up to two children (or a sibling group) who are not related to them. Parents and guardians are responsible for overseeing the care and safety of their children in these care arrangements.

- Ages: From birth to any age.
- Maximum group size: Only two children or a sibling group not related to the provider.
- Staff to child ratio: One adult per two children (or sibling group) per premises.
- Setting: In the child care provider's own home.

#### Registered licence not required child care

Registered licence not required child care providers are those who have registered with a Child Care Resource and Referral Centre (CCR&R)

To register, operators must complete with the CCR&R:

- Criminal record check (for everyone over age 12 living in the home)
- Character references
- Home safety assessment
- First aid training
- Child care training courses or workshops

Registered care providers have access to ongoing CCR&R support, training, resources and group liability insurance.

- Ages: From birth to (and including) age 12.
- Maximum group size: Two children or a sibling group not related to the provider.
- Staff:child ratio: one "responsible adult" per two children (or sibling group) per premises.

- Staff requirements: A “responsible adult” must be 19 years of age or older, able to provide care and mature guidance to children, have 20 hours of child care-related training, relevant work experience, a valid first aid certificate and a clear criminal record check.
- Setting: In the child care provider’s own home.

#### **In child’s own home care**

This refers to unregulated child care in the child’s own home by a nanny or a babysitter. Children from other families cannot be included in this care. The care provider cannot be a relative who lives in the home. In child’s own home care is not monitored or regulated nor is there public oversight. Parents or guardians screen and hire the child care provider who becomes their employee.

Under this arrangement, the parent employer is expected to:

- Make regular payments to Employment Insurance and Canada Pension Plan.
- Register the employment situation with Revenue Canada and WorkSafeBC.

#### **Child minding**

As well, BC defines child minding, which is exempt from licensing under the *Act*:

Care offered to parent(s) who are engaged in activities or classes for a total of less than 2 hours each day, are on the same premise as the child-minding service and are immediately accessible at all times to attend to the child’s needs.

*Maximum group size:* 24, with each child younger than 12 months counted as 2.5 children, each child younger than 36 months but 12 months or older is counted as two children, and each child 36 months or older is counted as one child.

#### **REGULATED CHILD CARE**

Regulated child care centres are licensed and monitored regularly by health authorities. These must meet specific minimum criteria outlined in provincial legislation for: health and safety, staff qualifications, records, space, equipment, child-staff ratios and programming.

#### **Centre based child care/ Group child care (under 36 months)**

Centre based care for no more than 13 hours/day for no more than 12 children from birth to 36 months.

#### **Centre based child care / Group child care (30 months to school-age)**

Centre based child care for no more than 13 hours/day for no more than 25 children.

#### **Centre based child care / Group child care (kindergarten to school-age)**

Centre based child care outside school hours including during school vacations for children attending school. It may be provided for no more than 13 hours/day for no more than 24 children (if kindergarten or Grade 1 children are present) and no more than 30 children (if all children are in Grade 2 or higher).

#### **Preschool (30 months to school-age)**

Part day centre based programs for preschool-age children for no more than four hours/day per child for no more than 20 children. Typically in operation during the school year (September to June).

#### **Family child care**

Child care in a private home for no more than seven children, aged birth to 12 years including the provider’s own children under age 12.

The care provider must reside in the same location as care is provided.

No more than three children may be under 48 months, and of those three, no more than one child may be younger than 12 months. If there are no children under 12 months, there may be no more than four children under 48 months and no more than two children under 24 months.

Regulated family child care providers are individually licensed by the provincial government according to provincial regulations and are monitored on a specified schedule.

#### **Occasional child care**

Occasional or short term child care for children who are at least 18 months old for no more than eight hours per day and no more than 40 hours within each 30 day period to each child and cannot be overnight care.

A maximum of 16 children if a child under three years of age is present and a maximum of 20 children if all children are three years of age or older.

Occasional child care could be in a home or centre but is typically in a centre.



### Multi-age child care

Centre based child care by an early childhood educator to groups of eight children of various ages. If there is a child younger than 12 months, there can be no more than three children under 36 months and, of those three, a maximum of one child under 12 months. If no child is younger than 12 months, there can be no more than three children under 36 months.

### In home multi-age child care

Child care by an early childhood educator to no more than eight children in the educator's personal residence. The care provider must reside in the same location as care is provided. If there is a child younger than 12 months, there can be no more than three children under 36 months and, of those three, a maximum of one child under 12 months. If no child is younger than 12 months, there can be no more than three children under 36 months.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The [Early Learning Framework](#) was developed by British Columbia's Ministry of Education in consultation with MCFD, the Ministry of Health, early childhood educators, primary teachers, academics and Indigenous leaders. It was updated in 2019.

The revised framework, released in September 2019 addresses the early years from infancy through eight years, includes a perspective on reconciliation and Indigenous worldviews, and highlights inclusive practices, among other changes. It is used in a variety of early learning environments, including kindergarten, StrongStart BC programs, licensed child care services, preschools and other early childhood development or child health programs, and by parents/families.

The use of the Early Learning Framework (ELF) is mandatory in all StrongStart BC programs but not for early years service providers or child care settings. Free online training modules are publicly available for early years' professionals providing care for children. These training modules are currently being updated to reflect changes in the 2019 Early Learning Framework. Additionally, many recognized post secondary programs teach pre-service ECEs using the ELF as a foundational document.

## CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Supported Child Development (SCD) program assists families and child care providers to fully include children needing extra support in typical child care settings. The SCD program can be delivered in regulated and unregulated child care settings.

The program serves children from birth to 12 years old, with services for youth 13 to 19 years old available in some communities. Services include individualized planning, training, information and resources, referrals to other specialized services and when required, extra staffing supports.

In 2019-2020, there were 51 community agencies providing SCD services and supports for families and extra support staff for children in child care settings.

In addition, there were 54 Aboriginal SCD (ASCD) Programs across BC; 48 of these programs are within Aboriginal agencies – both on and off reserve, with an additional six ASCD programs currently with non-Aboriginal contractors in BC.

Participation is voluntary and SCD/ASCD services are provided at no charge to parents; however, parents are responsible for child care fees. Additionally, for families who are eligible for the Affordable Child Care Benefit (which replaced child care fee subsidy in 2018), the Ministry of Children and Family Development provides a special needs supplement of up to \$150 per month towards the cost of child care to assist families whose child has a designated special need.

## INDIGENOUS CHILD CARE

On reserve child care services are licensed and funded by the province through the same programs available to non Indigenous facilities, parents, and providers.

A number of post secondary educational institutions deliver ECE training with an Indigenous focus. In addition, the provincial government provides funding to the [British Columbia Aboriginal Child Care Society](#) (BCACCS) to provide training and workshops, resource and referral services to Aboriginal child care providers.



As of March 2019, the number of licensed, funded child care facilities located on reserve or who reported a First Nation contract type as part of their application for Child Care Operating Funding was 226 (194 organizations) and the number of licensed, funded child care spaces was 6,857. These are included in the overall count of child care spaces for British Columbia.

*Note: The above Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) data is as of March 2019. The funding and number of spaces provided to First Nations and Aboriginal child care may be underreported since child care providers are not required to provide this information to the ministry.*

### SPACE STATISTICS (2019)

<b>Number of regulated child care spaces (March 31, 2019)</b>			
<i>Centre based programs</i>			
Age group or program	Full day	Part day	Total
Group child care (< 3 years)	12,303	-	12,303
Group child care (30 months > school-age)	33,310	-	33,310
Preschool-age	-	18,988	18,988
School-age (including kindergarten-age)	-	35,683	35,683
Group multi-age child care	3,179	-	3,179
<b>Total centre based spaces</b>	48,792	54,671	103,463
<b>Total regulated family child care spaces</b>			12,024
<b>Total regulated child care spaces</b>			115,487

*Note: The table shows the number of licensed centre based child care spaces that received Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) as of March 31, 2019. Information on the number of child care spaces that do not receive CCOF is not available and is therefore not included in the totals; however, the majority of licensed child care providers in the province receive this operating funding.*

*Note: Spaces for school-age (including kindergarten-age) may include full day spaces but are included in the part day spaces in order to be consistent with past reporting practice.*

*Note: Dependent upon date of birth and age at the start of kindergarten, some four year olds may already be attending school-age programs (children with late birthdays will be four years old at the start of kindergarten) and some five year olds may attend child care programs (children with birthdays prior to September may attend child care between January-August as a five year old.)*

### Children with special needs in regulated care (2018-2019)

Supported Child Development (SCD) and Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD) 6,337

*Note: This represents the average monthly number of children receiving special needs support through the SCD and ASCD programs in both regulated and unregulated child care. The number of children receiving SCD services in regulated child care only is not available.*

*Note: The way this figure was calculated in ECEC in Canada 2016 was different, so the two time points are not comparable.*

### Children receiving fee subsidies in regulated child care (March 31, 2019)

Age group	Number of children
Under three years	6,638
3 – 4 years	12,517
School-age (includes kindergarten-age children)	8,091
<b>Total number of children receiving fee subsidies</b>	27,246

*Note: Figures provided are distinct counts by claim dates as at March 31, 2019.*

### Number of child care programs (March 31, 2019)

<i>Centre based programs</i>	
Full day centres (Birth – 3 years; 3 – 5 years)	1,694
Part day preschools/nursery schools (30 months – school entry)	958
After school programs	1,208
Multi-age	325

*Note: Program types cannot be summed to get the total number of centre based programs as facilities may offer more than one care type and be double counted.*

<b>Total centre based programs</b>	3,099
<b>Total school based child care centres</b> (included in centre based) (all ages)	819
<i>Family child care</i>	
Licensed family child care providers	1,700

*Note: Number of programs for school based child care programs is based on 2018-2019 fiscal year.*

**Sponsorship of full and part day centre based child care spaces (March 31, 2019)**

Program	Full day		Part day		Total spaces
	Non-profit	For-profit	Non-profit	For-profit	
Child care (< 36 months)	3,781	8,522	-	-	12,303
Child care (30 months – school-age)	12,925	20,385	-	-	33,310
Preschool	-	-	10,369	8,619	18,988
School-age	-	-	20,799	14,884	35,683
Group multi-age care	969	2,210	-	-	3,179
<b>Total centre based spaces by part and full day and sponsorship</b>	<b>17,675</b>	<b>31,117</b>	<b>31,168</b>	<b>23,503</b>	<b>103,463</b>
<b>Total centre spaces by sponsorship</b>					
		Non-profit	For-profit		Total
		48,843	54,620		103,463

**PARENT FEES**

Parent fees in B.C. have been established by individual child care service providers, and vary depending on the type of care, age of child, and community. In 2018, the province began several initiatives to address high fees that make child care unaffordable for many families.

These initiatives include:

[Affordable Child Care Benefit](#) - parent fee subsidy for eligible families that may cover the full fee or partial fee. It replaces the previous child care fee subsidy program.

[Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative \(CCFRI\)](#) - public operational funding to approved child care programs for 0 – 12 year olds. that agree to reduce fees. CCFRI reduces infant and toddler fees by as much as \$350/month.

By March 31, 2019, 2,841 organizations representing 3,703 facilities were participating in CCFRI in the 2018-2019 fiscal year.

*Note: See the fee subsidy system re: the Affordable Child Care Benefit.*

[Universal Child Care Prototype Centres](#) - this initiative is intended to shift 2,500 child care spaces in existing facilities to low cost spaces for which parents pay up to \$200 per month (\$10 a day). For eligible families, the Affordable Child Care Benefit may help defray this reduced fee.

In 2019, more than 50 centres and family child care homes were designated as Universal Child Care Prototype sites to provide reduced fee child care. Designated Prototype sites include public, non-profit and for-profit centres, and family child care homes.

In 2018-2019, the Child Care Provider Profile Survey reported the following median monthly fees for licensed, funded centre based child care facilities in BC:

Age group	Median monthly centre fee
Infant	\$900
Toddler	\$850
30 months to five years	\$780
Preschool-age (three day)	\$205
Preschool-age (five day)	\$365
Out of school (kindergarten)	\$400
Out of school (Grade 1+)	\$350

*Source: The 2018-2019 Child Care Provider Survey conducted by the provincial government.*

*Note: The 2018-2019 median monthly fees did not include fee reduction amounts paid under the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative.*

**In 2019, a national survey of child care fees in Canada's large cities included the following BC cities:**

Median monthly fees by city			
City	Infant	Toddler	Preschooler
Kelowna	\$825	\$680	\$810
Burnaby	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$850
Surrey	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$850
Vancouver	\$1,112	\$1,112	\$954
Richmond	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$955

*Source: Macdonald, D., & Friendly, M. (2020). In Progress: Child care fees in Canada 2019. Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.*

## STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

### LICENSED CENTRES

<b>Maximum centre size:</b>	not specified	
<b>Maximum staff:child ratios and group sizes</b>		
<i>Age</i>	<i>Staff:child ratio</i>	<i>Max. group sizes</i>
Under 36 months	1:4	12
30 months – school entry	1:8	25
Preschool (part day)	1:10	20
Kindergarten-age – Grade 1	1:12	24
Above Grade 1	1:15	30
Multi-age	1:8	8

### STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

#### Early childhood educator certification

BC has four categories of certification for early childhood educators:

##### *Five year early childhood educator certificate*

Successful completion of a basic early childhood education training program that is a minimum of 902 hours of instruction and includes training in the areas of: child growth and development; program development, curriculum planning and foundations; family, community resources and communications; health, safety and nutrition; and practicum. This training is to be completed at a recognized post secondary educational institution (Schedule D of the [Child Care Licensing Regulation](#)). In addition, a written reference from an educator, and completion of 500 hours of supervised work experience is also required.

##### *One year early childhood educator certificate*

Same educational requirements as above but there is no requirement to complete 500 hours of work experience. A written reference from an educator is required. This certificate is only valid for one year and may only be renewed once.

##### *Infant and toddler educator certificate*

Must qualify for an early childhood educator certificate (five year) and have successfully completed a specialized post basic program that includes 250 hours of instruction in the areas of: advanced child growth and development; working with infants and toddlers; working with families; administration; advanced health, safety and nutrition; and a 200 hour infant/toddler practicum. This training is to be completed through a post secondary educational institution recognized to offer the post basic program.

##### *Special needs early childhood educator certificate*

Must qualify for an early childhood educator certificate - five year and have successfully completed a specialized post basic program that includes 250 hours of instruction in the areas of: advanced child growth and development; working with children with special needs; working with families; administration; advanced health safety and nutrition; and a 200 hour special needs practicum. This training is to be completed through a post secondary educational institution recognized to offer the post basic program.

Certificates issued for early childhood educators, infant/toddler educators or special needs early childhood educators are valid for five years. To renew the certificate, the individual must complete 40 hours of professional development and 400 hours of work experience within the previous five years, both relevant to early childhood education.

##### *Assistant early childhood educator certificate*

This category requires successful completion of one course of a basic early childhood education training program from a recognized post secondary ECE program in one of the following three areas: child growth and development, child guidance or health, safety and nutrition. To renew their certificate, ECE Assistants are required to complete one additional course that is part of a recognized post secondary ECE program and 400 hours of work experience relevant to early childhood education every five years.

#### Other - non certification

##### *Responsible adult - non certification*

These staff must be at least 19 years of age, able to provide care and mature guidance to children, have completed a course or a combination of courses of at least 20 hours duration in child development, guidance, health and safety, or nutrition and have relevant work experience.

#### Staff qualification requirements in child care centres

##### *Centre based child care, under 36 months*

Each group of four or fewer children requires one infant and toddler educator. Each group of five to eight children requires one infant and toddler educator and one early childhood educator. Each group of 9 – 12 children requires one infant/toddler educator, one early childhood educator and one assistant.

#### *Centre based child care, 30 months to school-age*

Each group of eight or fewer children requires one early childhood educator. Each group of 9 – 16 children requires one early childhood educator and one assistant. Each group of 17 – 25 children requires one early childhood educator and two assistants.

#### *Preschool-age, 30 months to school-age*

Each group of 10 or fewer children requires one early childhood educator. Each group of 11 – 20 children requires one early childhood educator and one assistant (some exceptions apply where there is an approved parent education program).

#### *Centre based child care - school-age*

Staff must meet the requirements of “responsible adult”.

#### *Occasional child care*

Staff must meet the requirements of “responsible adult”.

#### *Multi-age care*

Each group of eight children requires one early childhood educator.

If there are concerns regarding the practice of a licensed early childhood educator, special needs educator, infant/toddler educator or assistant, the Director of the Early Childhood Educator Registry has the authority to investigate and take action on a certificate, including the placing of terms and conditions, suspension or cancellation. In all cases, early childhood educators or assistants are entitled to a hearing and appeal process.

#### STAFF WAGES

---

#### **Median annual employment income (\$) and median hourly wage rate (\$) for Early Childhood Educators and Assistants working in day care services full time, full year.**

*Median annual employment income* \$32,732

*Median hourly employment income* \$15.74 - 17.98/hr  
(calculated using 2080 hrs/year (40 hrs week)  
and 1280 hrs/year (35 hrs/week))

*Source: Canadian Census, 2016*

*Note: These data include Early Childhood Educators and Assistants, as defined in NOC 4214, working in the day care services industry in centre based environments with children aged 0 – 12 years, as defined in NAICS 6244. Included as individuals who worked full-time (30+ hours/week) and full-year (48+ weeks/year), did not work at home, and were not self-employed. Included are supervisors but not managers. Employment income refers to income from all jobs if the Early Childhood Educator or Assistant holds a second job providing a wage, salary or commissions.*

#### REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE

##### **Model of organization**

Individually licensed.

##### **Maximum capacity**

Maximum capacity is seven children, 0 – 12 years including the provider’s own children.

If any child younger than 12 months old is present, no more than three children younger than 48 months old and, of those three, no more than one child younger than 12 months. If no child younger than 12 months old is present, no more than four children younger than 48 months old, and of those four, no more than two children younger than 24 months old. Care must be provided in the provider’s personal residence.

If the licensee is an early childhood educator, he/she may operate an in home multi-age child care, in which the licensee may care for no more than eight children in his or her personal residence, and no more than three of those children may be younger than 36 months old. No more than one child may be younger than 12 months old.

##### **Licensing, monitoring and enforcement**

All facilities have at least one comprehensive licensing inspection conducted by their local health authority every 12 – 18 months. An initial inspection by the local fire authority may be required when a new licensed family child care facility opens.

##### **Family child care provider requirements**

Providers do not need to be certified early childhood educators unless they are operating an in home multi-age care program.

Providers must meet the requirements of a responsible adult. They must be at least 19 years of age, be of good character and have a valid first aid certificate, be able to provide care and mature guidance to children, and have completed a course or combination of courses of at least 20 hours in child development, guidance, health and safety or nutrition and have relevant work experience.

A criminal records check must be completed for any person over the age of 12 who will be ordinarily present at the facility.

## FUNDING

### TYPES OF FUNDING

#### Affordable Child Care Benefit (formerly fee subsidies)

Parent fee subsidy in British Columbia is now called the Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB). It replaced the previous fee subsidy program in September 2018.

#### Eligibility for families

##### *Social criteria*

Families are required to have one of the following reasons for care in order to receive the Affordable Child Care Benefit (fee subsidy):

- working or self-employed;
- attending school;
- participating in an employment program;
- looking for work (only one parent or guardian);
- living with a medical condition that interferes with your ability to care for your child;
- child is attending licensed preschool;
- referred by a Ministry of Children and Family Development or Delegated Aboriginal Agency social worker.

##### *Financial eligibility (2019) (net income)*

Graduated subsidies are available to families with a net family income up to \$111,000. The subsidy amount depends on income level and amount of care received.

#### Family eligibility for Affordable Child Care Benefit (fee subsidy) in licensed child care – all types 2019

Type of care	\$0 to < \$45k	\$45 to < \$60k	\$60k to < \$80k	\$80k to \$111k
	Maximum subsidy	Reduction of subsidy per \$1 over income threshold (monthly)	Maximum subsidy	Reduction of subsidy per \$1 over income threshold (monthly)
Licensed group infant	\$1,250	\$0.27	\$910	\$0.35
Licensed group toddler	\$1,060	\$0.23	\$772	\$0.30
Licensed group 3 years to school-age	\$550	\$0.12	\$400	\$0.15
Licensed family infant/toddler	\$1,000	\$0.22	\$728	\$0.27
Licensed family 3 years to school-age	\$550	\$0.12	\$400	\$0.15
Licensed group school-age	\$415	\$0.09	\$302	\$0.12
Licensed family school-age	\$415	\$0.09	\$302	\$0.12
Licensed preschool	\$225	\$0.05	\$164	\$0.06
Licensed care surrounding school day	\$210	\$0.05	\$153	\$0.06

Eligibility for Affordable Child Care Benefit (fee subsidy) in unlicensed child care – all types (2019)

Type of care	\$0 to < \$24k	\$24 to < \$70k
	Maximum subsidy	Reduction of subsidy per \$1 over income threshold (monthly)
LNR/RLNR care surrounding school day	\$210	\$0.05
RLNR infant/toddler	\$600	\$0.16
RLNR 3 years to school-age	\$550	\$0.14
RLNR school-age	\$415	\$0.11
LNR infant	\$438	\$0.11
LNR toddler	\$404	\$0.11
LNR 3 years +	\$354	\$0.09
ICH 1st child infant	\$394	\$0.10
ICH 1st child 18 months +	\$318	\$0.08
ICH 2nd child infant	\$198	\$0.05
ICH 2nd Child 18 months +	\$147	\$0.04

Note: LNR: Licence not required; RLNR: Registered licence not required; ICH: In child's home.

Which service providers are eligible to deliver subsidized child care?

The Affordable Child Care Benefit/fee subsidy may be used in all licensed child care programs, including part day preschool. It may also be used in unregulated (unlicensed) settings: registered licence not required (RNLN), licence not required (LNR) (both in the provider's home) and in child's own home care except by someone who is a relative of the child or a dependent of the parent and who resides in the child's home.

Surcharges above the subsidy

If the program's fee exceeds the value of the ACCB, the parent is responsible for paying the balance. Fees are not capped except in the \$10/day prototype centres.

Subsidy rates

The subsidy rate is the maximum amount paid by the provincial/territorial government to the service to cover all or part of the parent fee.

Licensed child care settings – maximum rates

Type of child care provided in a licensed child care setting	Maximum rate per month
Group child care / multi age child care	
Children under 19 months	\$1,250
Children 19 months and over but under 37 months	\$1,060
Children 37 months and over but who have not reached school-age	\$550
Children of school-age	\$415
Family child care / in home multi age child care	
Children under 19 months	\$1 000
Children 19 months and over but under 37 months	\$1 000
Children 37 months and over but who have not reached school-age	\$550
Children of school-age	\$415
Other	
Preschool-age (children 30 months and over but who have not reached school-age)	\$225
Care surrounding school day	\$210

Registered licence not required child care setting – maximum rates

Type of child care provided in a registered licence not required child care setting	Maximum rate per month
Children under 19 months	\$600
Children 19 months and over but under 37 months	\$600
Children 37 months and over but who have not reached school-age	\$550
Children of school-age	\$415
Care surrounding school day	\$210

**Licence not required child care setting – maximum rates**

<i>Type of child care provided in licence not required child care setting</i>	<i>Maximum rate per month</i>
Children under 19 months	\$438
Children 19 months and over but under 37 months	\$404
Children 37 months and over	\$354
Care surrounding school day	\$210

**Child care provided in child’s own home – maximum rates**

<i>Type of child care provided in child's own home</i>	<i>Maximum rate per month</i>
1st child under 19 months	\$394
1st child 19 months and over	\$318
2nd child under 19 months	\$198
(a) 1st child of school age receiving care surrounding school day if another child in the family, who has not reached school age, is in care code H1 or H2	\$147
(b) 2nd child, unless the child is under 19 months, whether or not receiving care surrounding school day	
(c) each child in addition to the 1st or 2nd child, as applicable, whether or not receiving care surrounding school day	
Care surrounding school day – 1st child of school age unless another child in the family, who has not reached school age, is in care code H1 or H2	\$210

**Are all eligible families entitled to a fee subsidy?**

There are no waitlists for the Affordable Child Care Benefit. Any family that applies and is found to be eligible receives the ACCB.

**Are there other programs that subsidize the individual family regarding child care?**

None.

**Operational (formerly known as Recurring) funding**

Non-profit and for-profit child care providers are eligible for the same recurring funding.

**Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF)**

Operating funding is available to eligible providers through CCOF base funding, the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative and the Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement.

CCOF base funding provides direct operational funding to assist eligible licensed centre based and family child care providers with the cost of providing child care. Amounts are based on enrolment, number of hours per day care is provided and the age and type of child care. Daily rates are set by the government; CCOF is not available for Occasional Child Care.

**CCOF daily rates for centres by age group and hours of attendance**

*Group child care: Rates for providers with a group or multi-age group license for more than eight children, or if the facility is in a location other than a personal residence.*

<i>Rate category</i>	<i>Four hours or less</i>	<i>More than four hours</i>
Under 36 months	\$6.00	\$12.00
3 years to kindergarten-age	\$2.74	\$5.48
Grade 1 to 12 years	\$1.40	\$2.80
Preschool	\$1.37	\$1.37

**CCOF daily rates for family child care: family care license for seven or fewer children in a personal residence**

<i>Rate category</i>	<i>Four hours or less</i>	<i>More than four hours</i>
Under 36 months	\$1.85	\$3.70
3 years to kindergarten-age	\$1.41	\$2.82
Grade 1 to 12 years	\$0.73	\$1.46



CCOF daily rates for in home multi age child care for eight or fewer children in the licensee's personal residence

Rate category	Four hours or less	More than four hours
Under 36 months	\$2.22	\$4.44
3 years to kindergarten-age	\$1.69	\$3.38
Grade 1 to 12 years	\$0.88	\$1.75

Note: These rates are 20% higher than the Family Child Care rates in recognition of the Early Childhood Educator credential.

CCOF daily rates for group or multi age child care for more than eight children, or in a location other than a personal residence

Rate category	Four hours or less	More than four hours
Under 36 months	\$6.00	\$12.00
3 years to kindergarten-age	\$2.74	\$5.48
Grade 1 to 12 years	\$1.40	\$2.80
Preschool	\$1.37	\$1.37

#### Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI)

The [Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative](#) provides funding to eligible programs which, in turn, reduce fees to parents. Fees may go down as much as \$350 per month for infants/toddlers in full time group care. As of 2019-2020, child care programs are obliged to provide information to parents about the amount of funding they receive to reduce fees on a per enrolment basis. A child care program may obtain approval for an exceptional fee increase to pay for increased wages for direct service staff. This information must also be shared with parents and staff.

#### Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement (ECEWE)

Child care programs receiving Child Care Operating Funds (CCOF) and enrol in the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) are eligible to apply for the [Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement](#) (ECEWE). Frontline early childhood educator employees (including those in supervisory roles) of these child care programs are eligible to receive \$1 per hour wage enhancement with an additional \$1 per hour worked in April 2020. Funds to cover additional statutory benefits are also provided.

#### Supported Child Development (SCD) Programs

SCD offers a range of supports and services to enable children with support needs to participate in inclusive child care settings. These services include education, training, and consultation for child care staff and families, and when required, extra staffing supports. SCD may support eligible children in both regulated and unregulated child care, in not-for-profit, for-profit, and public child care centres. MCFD funds contracted agencies to deliver SCD programs in their local communities.

#### Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD) Programs

ASCD offers a range of supports and services within a cultural model to enable children with support needs to participate in inclusive child care settings. These services include education, training, and consultation for child care staff and families, and when required, extra staffing supports. ASCD also provides supports for cultural connection. ASCD may support eligible children in both regulated and unregulated child care, in non-profit, for-profit, and public child care centres. MCFD funds contracted agencies to deliver ASCD programs in their local communities.

#### One time funding

##### Child Care BC Maintenance Fund

The Childcare BC Maintenance Fund helps licensed child care facilities address maintenance issues that may impact children's health, safety, or wellbeing, or cause a facility to close. The fund also assists with relocation costs, if the relocation is required for the provider to remain in compliance with requirements under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*.

The following providers can apply:

- For-profit licensed group child care providers, including sole proprietorships, partnerships, and limited and corporate companies.
- Non-profit licensed group child care providers, including local governments, boards of education, public institutions and Indigenous Nations.

Eligible applicants can receive, per fiscal year:

- Up to \$10,000 per facility for non-profit licensed providers;
- Up to \$5,000 per facility for for-profit licensed providers; and
- Up to \$2,000 per facility for licensed personal residence providers, regardless of license type.

---

### **Childcare BC New Spaces Fund**

Public sector organizations, Indigenous governments, non-profit societies and for-profit operators can apply for funds to create/expand/relocate child care services. The three goal is to create up to 22,000 licensed child care spaces. As of 2019-2020, maximum funds are higher for public sector, Indigenous governments and non-profit societies.

Maximum funds 2019-2020:

- \$3 million for up to 100% of project costs for public sector organizations and Indigenous governments
- \$1.5 million for up to 100% of project costs for Indigenous non-profit societies
- \$1.5 million for up to 90% of project costs for non-profit societies, including non-profit child care providers and child development centres
- \$250,000 for up to 75% of project costs for child care providers that are businesses or corporate companies

In order to be eligible for funding, organizations must be in good standing with the Ministry, and participate in CCOF, including the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative. Priority is given to the creation of new spaces that are aligned with a community child care plan, spaces created by public sector organizations or Indigenous Governments, through direct delivery or non-profit providers, spaces created on school grounds, spaces that operate on non-traditional hours, and projects with a cost of \$40,000 or less per space.

---

### **Community Child Care Planning Grants**

Administered by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM), this fund of \$2.85 million provided by the Ministry of Children and Family Development is available to local governments to assist in determining the child care needs of their communities. Grants up to \$25,000 support planning activities including an inventory of existing spaces, developing targets for the next decade and an action plan for implementation. By mid 2019, at least 74 local governments had received funding.

---

---

### **Community Child Care Space Creation Program**

To support local governments, the Ministry of Children and Family Development created the Community Child Care Space Creation Program administered by the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM). Local governments may obtain grants of up to \$1 million to create new licensed child care spaces for children 0 – 5 years. Services for infants/toddlers, for families requiring non-standard hours, those operated by public bodies and non-profit organizations and those that benefit underserved populations will be given priority.

---

### **Funded through Early Learning and Child Care Agreement**

---

#### **Universal Child Care Prototype Sites**

More than 50 sites provide approximately 2,500 low cost child care (with a maximum fee of \$200 per month) spaces in existing facilities, providing valuable information about the funding and operational issues pertinent to developing a universally accessible child care system. Through the Early Learning and Child Care Agreement with the federal government, the province will spend \$60 million to support these operational sites from November 1, 2018 through March 31, 2020. Included in these prototype sites is an Inclusion Pilot Project to learn new perspectives and practices that improve the inclusion of children with extra supports in community child care centres. These sites may be non-profit or for-profit centres, or family child care homes.

---

PROVINCIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2018-2019)

**Fee subsidies**

Affordable Child Care Benefit (for licensed/regulated care)	\$ 122,765,000
Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative	\$ 76,980,000
Single Parent Employment Initiative	\$ 1,600,000

**Total fee subsidies \$ 201,345,000**

**Operational (previously Recurring) funding**

Child Care Operating Fund (CCOF)	\$ 94,650,000
Supportive Child Development Program	\$ 62,498,000
Child Care ECE Wage Enhancement	\$ 21,000,000

**Total Operational funding \$ 178,148,000**

**One time funding**

Child Care BC Space Creation	\$ 30,939,000
Child Care BC Maintenance Fund	\$ 1,200,000
Grants to Communities	\$ 3,000,000
Strong Start Pilots	\$ 160,000

**Total one time funding \$35,299,000**

**Total provincial allocation for regulated child care \$414,792,000**

*Note: Federal funding of \$50,993,994 through the Canada – BC Early Learning and Child Care Agreement for 2018-2019 is not included in the provincial allocations.*

*Note: Provincial program allocations have been rounded by the province.*

**TOTAL ALLOCATION \$497,495,994**

*Total provincial allocation for regulated child care + \$50,993,994 federal funding through the Canada-BC Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (2018-2019) + \$31,710,000 carry over (2017-2018)*

**Other provincial funding**

Child Care Resource and Referral Program	\$10,150,000
Early Childhood Pedagogy Network	\$220,000
Affordable Child Care Benefit (for unregulated care)	\$ 22,155,000

**Total other funding \$32,525,000**

FEDERAL FUNDING UNDER THE CANADA-BRITISH COLUMBIA EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE AGREEMENT (2018-2019)

2018-2019 Base allocation Prototype Sites	\$30,000,000
Aboriginal Head Start	\$10,000,000
Supported Child Development (SCD)	\$10,000,000
Young Parent Program	\$1,000,000

**Total 2018-2019 Base allocation \$51,000,000**

**2017-2018 Deferred allocation**

Infant Toddler Spaces	\$13,700,000
Training Fund for ECEs	\$6,300,000
Supported Child Development (SCD)	\$10,000,000
Young Parent Program	\$385,000
Additional allocation based on Canadian population distribution	\$1,325,000

**Total Deferred 2017-2018 allocation \$31,710,000**

**Total Federal allocation \$82,710,000**

*Note: BC has rounded the total base allocation through the ELCC agreements above. Actual base allocation for 2018-2019 is \$50,993,994.*