



A GREAT PLACE TO GROW PUBLIC CHILD CARE

British Columbia profile

Public child care and early childhood education

British Columbia has no publicly delivered child care; all child care centres are either private for-profit or private non-profit. While there is no mandated role for the local/municipal level of government in regulated child care, several municipalities—the City of Vancouver in particular—have undertaken planning and funding roles.

British Columbia has publicly delivered part-day kindergarten as part of the school system. Full school-day public kindergarten for a fee is available in some communities (for example West Vancouver's K-Plus program, where parents pay about \$350 for an additional part-day program).

In 2006, the British Columbia Ministry of Education launched another kind of school-based early childhood program. StrongStart British Columbia is primarily publicly delivered by school authorities—a network of programs open at least three hours a day, five days a week. Preschool-aged children must be accompanied by an adult to take part in activities led by early childhood educators.

Why public early childhood education and child care?

Most people don't think of non-profit community-based child care centres as "private", but they are. That's because parent or voluntary groups—not public entities such as municipalities or school boards—bear the responsibility for creating and maintaining centres. Almost all of Canada's patchwork delivery of regulated child care services is private, relying on for-profit or non-profit services. And today, Canada is experiencing an alarming trend—a surge in for-profit child care. In some provinces, almost all new spaces are for-profit.

Children and families would be far better served by a public system that blends early childhood education and child care—in other words, publicly funded and delivered early childhood education and care programs managed and mostly operated by local governments or education authorities.

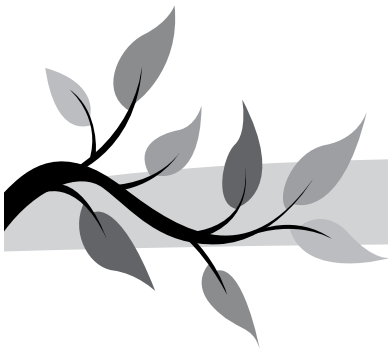
Here's what well-designed public systems can deliver:

- Integrated early childhood education and kindergarten programs.
- Better access and inclusion of families—no matter where they live or their language, origins or abilities.
- More consistent quality.
- With small or no fees, all parents who want child care can afford it.
- Services that are planned and accountable to communities.

What we want

Our vision is a public system where every child can attend a program that blends early childhood education and care. The research and experience shows that systems based on privately funded and delivered child care are not a foundation for building blended, high quality ECEC programs.

Support public child care—it's the way to go for a great place to grow.



Following the 2008 feasibility study of full school-day kindergarten for three-, four- and five-year-olds, the provincial government announced in 2009 that universal full school-day kindergarten for five-year-olds would be phased in over two years, starting in September 2010.

Who provides child care?

In 2008, there were 42,447 non-profit and 30,456 for-profit centre-based spaces. The proportion of for-profit care has risen slightly over the years, from 38.6% in 1992 to 41.8% in 2008. As Figure 2 shows, data was not

available in 2004 or 2006; 2008 data shows modest comparable expansion over 2001 in both sectors.

As Table 1 and Figure 1 show, British Columbia's for-profit and non-profit sectors serve somewhat different groups, by age and program type:

- The non-profit sector is more likely to care for infants and toddlers; 23% of all full-day non-profit spaces are licensed as infant/toddler spaces (under 36 months), while only 14% of all full-day for-profit spaces are for infants/toddlers.
- The for-profit sector is more likely to care for preschoolers; 75% of

all full-day non-profit spaces are for preschool-age children (30 months – school age) while 85% of full-day, for-profit spaces are for this age group.

- The non-profit sector is more likely to provide school-age spaces—41% of all (full- and part-day) centre-based non-profit spaces are school age, compared to 28% of total centre-based for-profit spaces.
- Both sectors provide part-day spaces in preschools (nursery schools) at about the same rate—26-28% of total centre spaces in each sector.

TABLE 1
Sponsorship of regulated centre-based spaces by type, British Columbia – 2008

Non-profit		
Age group	Full-day	Part-day
Group child care (under 36 months)	3,154	-
Group child care (30 months-school age)	10,179	-
Preschool (part-day)	-	11,193
School-age	-	17,723
Emergency care	-	31
Special needs	167	-
Total centre-based non-profit spaces	13,500	28,947
For-profit		
Age group	Full-day	Part-day
Group child care (under 36 months)	1,634	-
Group child care (30 months-school age)	9,593	-
Preschool (part-day)	-	8,717
School-age	-	10,510
Emergency care	-	2
Special needs	0	-
Total centre-based for-profit spaces	11,227	19,229

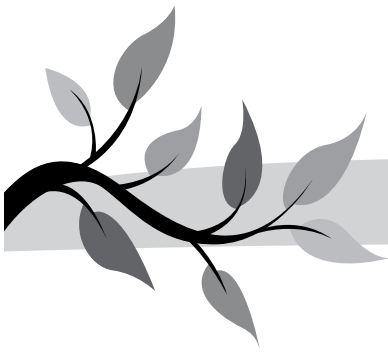
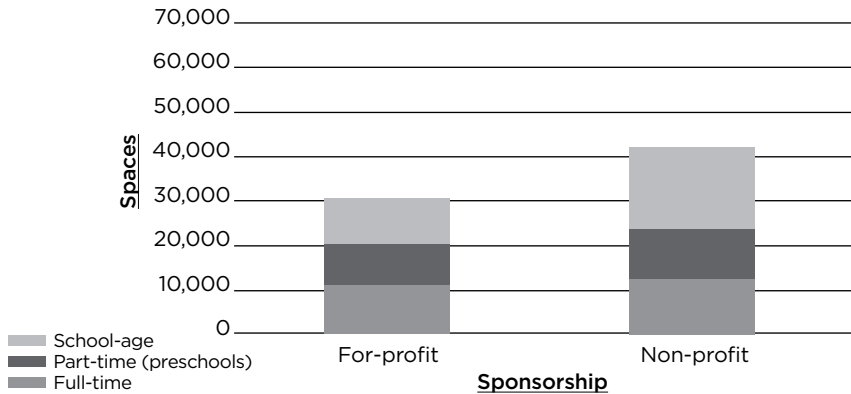


FIGURE 1
Full-time, part-time and school-age spaces in for-profit and non-profit child care centres, British Columbia - 2008



Public funding

British Columbia's public spending for regulated child care increased fairly regularly from 1992 to 2004 and then dropped by more than \$20 million. It increased again in 2005-2006 and 2007-2008.

More than a third of British Columbia's total 2007/2008 allocation for regulated child care is spent on fee subsidies, and a substantial part of the budget—25%—is allocated to Supported Child Care (special needs).

All public funds—fee subsidies, capital funds, operating funds and Supported Child Care—are available to both non-profit and for-profit child care.

British Columbia is the only province that spends a substantial amount of money on subsidies in unregulated family child care and care in the child's own home.

In 2007, British Columbia extended capital funding to for-profit centres. British Columbia is one of four provinces that provide all forms

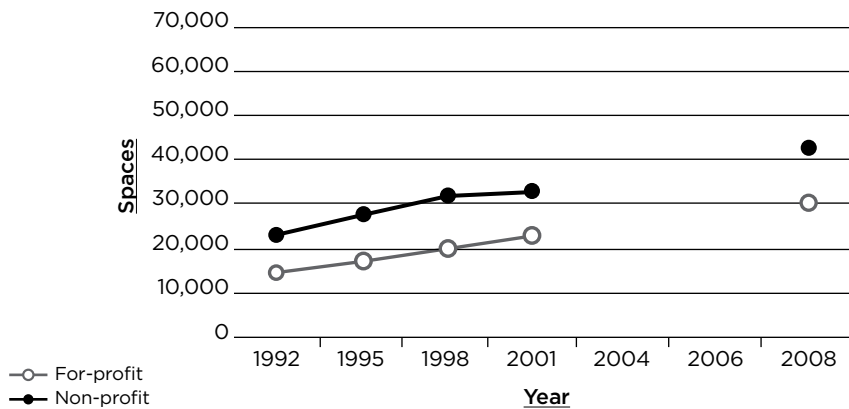
of funding—subsidies, operating funding, wage grants and capital grants—to both non-profit and for-profit centres (the others are Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Alberta).



TABLE 2
Sponsorship of regulated centre-based spaces and proportion for-profit

Year	1992	1995	1998	2001	2004	2006	2008
Non-profit	23,228	27,305	31,126	32,699	not available	not available	42,447
For-profit	14,593	17,517	20,495	23,217	not available	not available	30,456
% For-profit	38.6%	39.1%	40.0%	41.5%	not available	not available	41.8%

FIGURE 2
Sponsorship of regulated centre-based spaces, British Columbia - 1992-2008

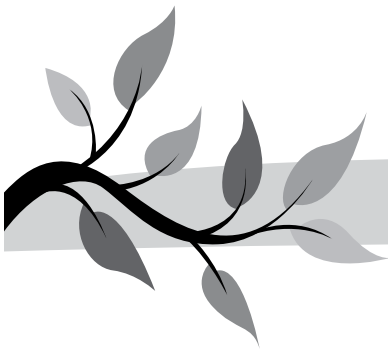


Provincial funding policy

- Total provincial budget allocations for regulated care (2007/2008): \$216,740,000.
- Fee subsidies may be used in for-profit and non-profit regulated services, unregulated child care arrangements and in the child's own home. Child care providers may charge subsidized parents above the maximum subsidy rates.

- Child care operating funding (CCOF) is available to both non-profit and for-profit services.
- Both sectors have access to capital funding. (Note: there was no capital funding in British Columbia's most recent budget.)
- Early childhood educators working in either non-profit or for-profit settings may be eligible for the Early Childhood Educator Loan Assistance Program (student loan

repayment) and the Early Childhood Educator Incentive Grant Program (wage grants).



History

1960

The Child Care Subsidy Program was introduced.

1993

Under an NDP government, British Columbia announced a plan to create 7,500 new child care spaces over three years in public buildings. This goal was not met.

1994

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

1995

The supplement was extended to for-profit programs.

2001

The government announced a multi-phased, four-year plan described as a comprehensive, publicly funded child care system. In March, the *Child Care BC Act* was proclaimed to provide a legislative timetable for the new funding program. A Liberal government was elected in May, and in August it repealed the implementation plan for the *Act*.

2003

A new funding arrangement was introduced. The Child Care Operating Funding Program—available to all licensed child care types, non-profit and for-profit—replaced the Compensation Contribution Program, the Infant/Toddler Incentive Grant Program, and the Out-of-School Care Transition Funding Program.

2007

The government extended capital funding to for-profit centres.

Relevant quality research

Kershaw, Forer and Goelman (2004) found that for-profit centres in British Columbia were more likely to close than non-profits. This “hidden fragility” in the for-profit market, the authors suggested, can have an impact on the overall stability of the child care sector in areas where there is a lot of for-profit care.

Who’s who in the for-profit sector?

The for-profit sector in British Columbia is made up of individual owner-operated centres and provincial chains such as Wind and Tide Preschools (19 locations, mostly in the Lower Mainland), Happy Campers Daycare (eight locations in Victoria) and Monkeys Play House (five locations around the province). Port Moody/Coquitlam-based chain Kinder Kampus (five locations around the province) also has connections to the Greater Toronto Area. Kids & Company is planning to move into British Columbia in 2009.

Chains (multiple ownership in the for-profit sector)¹

Larger chains (six or more locations)

Core Education and Fine Arts™ (CEFA™)

Founder and CEO: Natacha V. Beim
Six locations (three in Vancouver, one in Burnaby, one in Westminster, one in Langley); full-day and part-day programs.
Website: <http://www.cefa.ca>

Note: According to its website, CEFA™ has offered franchising opportunities since 2003.

Happy Campers Daycare

Owner/operator: Lucy-Ann Smith
Eight locations (Victoria)
Website: <http://www.happycampers.ca>

Wind and Tide Preschools

Director/principal/spokesperson: Rachel Cram
Preschools, kindergarten, school-age programs, summer, independent kindergarten
19 locations (eight in Surrey, six in Langley, one in White Rock, one in Coquitlam, one in Delta, one in Chilliwack, one in Abbotsford)
Website: <http://www.windandtide.com>

Smaller chains (five or fewer locations)

Animal Crackers

Five locations (Four in Delta and one in Tsawwassen)

Jolly Giant Childcare Ltd.

Owner/operator: John Wilson
Four locations (Three in Nanaimo and one in Victoria)
Website: <http://www.jollygiant.ca>

Kinder Kampus

Owners: Andrew and Safia Barr
(Kinder Kampus Children’s Services of British Columbia Ltd.)
Five locations (Port Moody/Coquitlam)
Website: <http://www.kinderkampus.ca>

Note: According to the Kinder Kampus website, there are also three related locations in Ontario (GTA).

¹ The content of this section was compiled using the best information that is publicly available. Using these sources, every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate and comprehensive. Ownership of two centres was not included as a “chain”.



Little Rascals Daycare Ltd.

Owner: The Lightfoot Family
Three locations, multiple programs
Website: <http://www.littlerascals.ca>

**Monkey's Playhouse Early Learning
Childcare Centre**

Owners: Linda Aquilini and
Reaghan Garneau
Five locations (Port Moody, Coquitlam,
Westbank, Maple Ridge and Kelowna)
Website: <http://www.monkeysplayhouse.ca/index2.html>

Reference

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