
STATEMENT

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Ministry of Children and Family Development

Ministers' statement on Child Care Month in B.C.

VICTORIA – Katrine Conroy, Minister of Children and Family Development, and Katrina Chen, Minister of State for Child Care, have issued the following statement recognizing the importance of Child Care Month in B.C.:

“May is Child Care Month in B.C., an opportunity to highlight the importance of improving access to affordable, quality child care throughout the province. Under the new Childcare BC plan — which aims to create more licensed spaces, while improving quality and affordability for families — the first step has been to lower child care costs to provide some relief to families.

“April was just the first month of the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative. We’re happy to say that, so far, child care providers have applied to lower fees for 39,384 of 49,136 eligible spaces. Already, 25,309 of those spaces have been approved. This means parents have already begun benefiting from lower child care fees, with even more families expected to benefit as April applications continue to be processed and approved. Through our work with thousands of child care providers who have opted in to the program, we have put more than \$2.2 million back in parents’ pockets in this first month alone. More and more B.C. parents will see savings as providers continue to sign up in future months.

“The list of child care providers who are participating is now posted online, so parents can see if their provider has opted in and find out more about Childcare BC.

“In addition, we want to make sure that we’re addressing the shortage in child care, so parents can find licensed spots for their children. That’s why we’re investing \$237 million to fund more than 22,000 new, licensed child care spaces over the next three years. During the coming weeks, we will begin to announce more details about enhanced and redesigned programs — like major and minor capital funding — that will help B.C. families find licensed child care in their communities.

“We are also committed to making sure that B.C. children can benefit from the highest quality care and early learning experiences. Early childhood educators (ECEs) are key to building a system of quality care and early learning. As we build more spaces, we need more qualified ECEs to staff new facilities. We’re working on a labour market study that will help identify key challenges in the sector and inform government’s response, as early as this summer.

“We know that the recruitment and retention of ECEs is a major issue in child care right now. ECE workers have a vital role in shaping young children’s lives, and they need to be better valued and supported. Preliminary details about the study will be released this week, along with more information about professional development and educational supports that are available to ECEs throughout the province.

“Child Care Month, and Child Care Provider Appreciation Day on May 17, 2018, also give us another opportunity to thank child care professionals, who work hard every day to support B.C. families and set our children on a lifelong path to success. If you know an outstanding child care provider in B.C., you can nominate them for a Child Care Award of Excellence. Nominations close on July 29, 2018.

“We can’t achieve our ambitious child care goals unless we work together — with parents, child care providers and communities. From May 21 to 25, 2018, we’re each touring different regions of the province, dropping in to child care centres that have joined the fee reduction initiative, and talking to community members about child care. These face-to-face discussions will complement a series of telephone town halls we’re hosting towards the end of the month — in the Lower Mainland, on Vancouver Island, up North, in the Interior and on the coast — to talk to parents about child care and answer their questions.

“Child Care Month will lay a strong foundation leading up to September, when parents will be able to save even more money through the new Affordable Child Care Benefit, which will be available to B.C. families with incomes up to \$111,000 a year.

“We look forward to continuing to work with all of our partners in the child care sector, and moving in the right direction to fix the system for parents and businesses by implementing universal child care in B.C. and building an economy that works for everyone.”

Learn More:

Childcare BC: www.childcare.gov.bc.ca

To see a list of the child care providers who are participating in the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative, visit: www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/running-daycare-preschool/child-care-operating-funding/child-care-fee-reduction-initiative-info-for-parents/child-care-fee-reduction-initiative-provider-opt-in-status

Child Care Awards of Excellence: www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/child-care/child-care-awards-2018

Child care improvements under Budget 2018: www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/child-care/child-care-improvements

Childcare BC Blueprint: www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/child-care/childcare_web.pdf

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