

A caregiver who cares for only 1 or 2 children unrelated to her does not require a licence. Sometimes the caregiver accompanies the children between the school and her home, but often the family needs to make their own arrangement. The family child care provider must be a responsible adult aged 19 or older and have a clear criminal record. Many license-not-required family child care providers are registered with their local Child Care Resource and Referral Program.

Other Options

Some families make kindercare arrangements with friends, or relatives or hire an in-home caregiver. If you are looking for someone to provide child care in your home, you can place advertisements in the local newspaper, or on the bulletin board at a nearby community centre, library, or other public place. The secretary or principal of the school your child will be attending may also have information about caregivers.

You might find the pamphlet (*Selecting an In-home Caregiver*) helpful.

PLANNING AHEAD

It is important to plan your child's care well before school starts. Since schools are closed over the summer, it is a good idea to gather information in the early spring. Find out which school your child will attend and what the gradual entry and regular schedules are.

To find out more about choosing child care or to receive a set of child care listings in your community, contact your local Child Care Resource and Referral Program or Health Unit.

Call Enquiry BC
at
1.800.663.7867
604.660.2421
or visit the
following website
[www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/
childcare/index.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/index.htm)

When Your Kindergarten Child Needs Child Care

This pamphlet is available in:
Chinese, English, Farsi, French,
Spanish and Vietnamese

Kindergarten Child Needs CC rev. October 2009



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Funded by
Province of British Columbia

WHAT IS KINDERCARE?

Kindercare is child care for children who require care before or after kindergarten hours. Since kindercare is not part of the school system, parents are required to pay fees. Subsidies are available to eligible families to help with the cost of care. Kindercare is very different from kindergarten.

Kindergarten

Kindergarten is a program for 5 year olds that introduces them to the school setting. It operates from September through June of each year. To attend kindergarten in B.C., your child must be 5 years old by December 31st of the year in which they are enrolled. Kindergartens that are part of the public school system charge no fees. Kindergarten in private schools usually do have fees. Although it is optional, most parents do send their child to kindergarten.

Most kindergartens are half day programs in either the morning or afternoon. Some are full day programs. If your child attends a half day kindergarten, you may find that the time of the program changes half way through the year. For example, children in a morning kindergarten

program in September might switch to afternoon kindergarten in February.

Contact your local school or school board for information about Kindergarten registration. The school your child will attend depends on where you live. If you would like your child to attend another school, you will need to talk with the local school district office.

Gradual Entry

Kindergarten programs often begin with a gradual entry period. Children might attend part-time for the first while in order to become acquainted with the kindergarten program. Ask the school what the schedule is for gradual entry and when the child will begin attending the kindergarten program on a regular basis. This is important information for you to share with your child's caregiver.

School Closures

Schools have several days during the year when the children do not attend. These include statutory holidays, Winter Break, Spring Break, Summer Vacation and professional days. Caregivers and child care programs generally offer care for these times at an additional cost. Ask the caregiver or program about this.

OPTIONS FOR KINDERCARE

Parents may have several options to choose from when planning care for their children before or after kindergarten.

It is important to find out which types of kindercare are available in your community and which option best meets your child's needs and your family situation.

School Age Care Programs

Kindercare may be offered as part of a licensed school age child care program which serves children from 5 - 12 years of age. Typically, school age programs are close to a school or often are located in a school. Program staff usually assume responsibility for taking the children to and from Kindergarten. Ask the program staff if they take the children into their classroom. Program staff must be responsible adults aged 19 years or older and must have a clear criminal record. The staff to child ratio is 1 adult for every 10 children.

Group Child Care Programs

Kindercare is sometimes offered as part of a licensed group child care program that serves 3-5 year old children. The kindergarten children attend the child care program with the younger children during the times that they are not in school. It is important to ask if child care staff take the children to and from school. Staff in group child care programs are trained in Early Childhood Education and have a clear criminal record. The staff to child ratio is 1 adult for every 8 children.

Family Child Care

Kindercare may also be available in a family child care home. In this setting, care is provided in the caregiver's own home for children of various ages from birth to 12 years. A licensed caregiver may have as many as 7 children on the premises at any one time, depending on the license capacity. This includes the caregiver's own children 12 years of age or younger. Most license-not-required (LNR) child care arrangements include the caregiver's own children and one or two children not related to the caregiver.