

## **CHILD CARE IN ABBOTSFORD:**

Current State  
and Anticipated Needs



**2021**

Prepared by HelpSeeker





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Child care is often viewed as a luxury for many parents who are working or don't have access to care within their extended family. It is not yet widely seen as an essential service. This obscures the fact that affordable, accessible, professional child care plays a fundamental role in the 21st century economy, not only for parents and children in working families, but for the overall health, quality of life, and fiscal strength of an entire city. Child care is the engine of the modern economy.

Abbotsford does not have a current child care strategy or an up-to-date inventory of child care spaces. This **"Child Care in Abbotsford: Current State and Anticipated Needs"** report begins the process of addressing that. Based on a review of best practices around child care, a summary of current local research and existing child care data in Abbotsford, and extensive community consultations with various relevant stakeholders over the course of several months, this report:

- Explores background and economic context on child care;
- Illuminates the current state of child care in Abbotsford;
- Identifies existing gaps and anticipates needs for child care in Abbotsford; and
- Determines strategic directions, policy priorities, and suggestions for actions that would make child care in Abbotsford more affordable, accessible, and available to parents, children, and families over the next 15 years.

## Key Findings

**3,283** TOTAL CHILD CARE SPACES



available in Abbotsford as of January 2021, in

**135** FACILITIES

**\$19.67**

AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS IN ABBOTSFORD,

while a competitive wage grid in BC has been recommended as

**\$20-29 an hour**



Parents of infants and toddlers can be spending approximately

**\$9,000/yr**

per child on child care in Abbotsford



Two-parent economic families in Abbotsford spend on average about

**8%** of their total after-tax income on child care.



For lone parents, this can increase to approximately

**15%**

**CHILD CARE FOR ONE CHILD IN ABBOTSFORD CAN COST APPROXIMATELY THE SAME AMOUNT PER MONTH AS THE RENT FOR A BACHELOR'S SUITE.**

1 2 3 4 5

## Areas of Need

Through the process of developing this report, five key areas of need were identified for a prospective Child Care Action Plan. Several crucial strategies for each have been included here, and further areas of need that could be explored are located for each key area towards the end of the report.

### 1) Increasing Availability

- Ensure policies related to child care space creation are reflected in the Abbotsford Community Plan and other city documents, so future land-use and development decisions in all areas always consider the potential for inclusion of child care spaces.

<sup>1</sup> Fraser Health Authority. Public List of Licensed Child Care Facilities. Retrieved from: [https://www.fraserhealth.ca/-/media/Project/FraserHealth/FraserHealth/Health-Topics/Child-care/Licensed\\_Child\\_Care\\_Fraser\\_East.pdf?rev=dfc1c824b1934317ae8e8478e3ae063e](https://www.fraserhealth.ca/-/media/Project/FraserHealth/FraserHealth/Health-Topics/Child-care/Licensed_Child_Care_Fraser_East.pdf?rev=dfc1c824b1934317ae8e8478e3ae063e). Last accessed in January 2021. Four facilities have been added to this inventory of child care facilities in the community based on online searches.

<sup>2</sup> Supplied. Hourly rates were recorded for Abbotsford child care employees.

<sup>3</sup> Coalition of Child Care Advocates of B.C. (2020, June). Next Steps: A Competitive, Publicly Funded Provincial Wage Grid is the Solution to BC's ECE Shortage. Retrieved from

[https://www.ecebc.ca/application/files/4915/9553/5275/CCCABC\\_ECEBC\\_Wage\\_Grid\\_Report\\_June\\_2020\\_web.pdf](https://www.ecebc.ca/application/files/4915/9553/5275/CCCABC_ECEBC_Wage_Grid_Report_June_2020_web.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Fees were collected by Abbotsford CCRR staff in April 2020. 67 of 76 child care facilities/child care providers surveyed responded with their fees. Retrieved from: <http://www.godaycare.com/child-care-cost/british%20columbia>

<sup>5</sup> Fees were collected by Abbotsford CCRR staff in April 2020. 67 of 76 child care facilities/child care providers surveyed responded with their fees. Retrieved from: <http://www.godaycare.com/child-care-cost/british%20columbia>

- Explore alternative, innovative locations for child care space development, including possibilities such as converting municipal facilities and existing spaces (i.e. churches, commercial spaces, rec centres, etc.) at a below-market rate, and including child care spaces in any new facilities.



**ABBOTSFORD WOULD NEED TO CREATE APPROXIMATELY 1,632 SPACES BY 2025 TO COME UP TO THE CURRENT BC AVERAGE.**

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## 2) Improving Affordability

- Consider endorsing the provincial \$10-a-Day Plan.
- Advocate to the Ministry of Children and Family Development for \$10-a-Day prototype sites in Abbotsford.

## 3) Enhancing Accessibility

- Consider reviewing zoning bylaws and either revising or establishing land-use regulations that would serve to remove barriers to development and enable further creation of child care spaces in areas zoned as residential, commercial, and institutional.
- Develop partnerships with First Nations that are part of Sto:lo Nation, specifically focused on expanding child care provision off-reserve in the city for Indigenous children and parents, in order to improve and grow culturally-appropriate child care options and spaces.



**PUBLIC  
TRANSIT**



**FLEXIBLE  
HOURS**



**CONVENIENT  
LOCATIONS**

## **ACCESSIBILITY KEY NEEDS IDENTIFIED THROUGH THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

## 4) Fostering Talent, Training, and Retention

<sup>6</sup> \$10aday.ca. (2019). About the Plan. Retrieved from <https://www.10aday.ca/about>

- Work with the provincial government to attain a \$25 an hour (adjusted for inflation) wage for ECEs at government-funded, non-profit child care centres to allow for competitiveness, and attract and retain new talent.
- Explore, in collaboration with the Sto:lo Nation, the creation of an Indigenous ECE recruitment plan.

#### 5) Coordinating Between Sectors

- Consider creating an ongoing Child Care Committee that could serve as an expansion to the Early Years Table, with representatives from City Council, the Sto:lo Nation, social services, healthcare, school boards, local businesses, and both private and non-profit child care operators.
- Assess potential for a Child Care Coordinator role to navigate across relevant systems.



*Successful improvement of child care in Abbotsford will require a*  
**HOLISTIC, “WHOLE-COMMUNITY” MODEL**  
**TO BOTH BUILD NEW CONNECTIONS AND ENHANCE EXISTING**  
**PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN ORGANISATIONS AND SECTORS.**

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# Acknowledgement of Traditional Territory

We would like to acknowledge the unceded and traditional territories of the The Sema:th (Sumas) First Nation and the Matsqui First Nation who are Stó:lō people. S'olh Temexw is the traditional territory of the Stó:lō people, and they have lived here since time immemorial. The Stó:lō traditional territory extends from Yale to Langley, BC. It is for this reason that we acknowledge the traditional territories upon which we reside.



**Sumas  
First  
Nation**



**Matsqui First Nation**







## BACKGROUND

To better understand the socio-economic landscape in Abbotsford, and to develop strategies on how to respond to them, HelpSeeker has prepared three different reports to review current and anticipated social needs related to child care, housing, and age-friendly communities in Abbotsford. This report on **“Child Care in Abbotsford: Current State and Anticipated Needs”** aims to illuminate the current state of child care, identify existing gaps and anticipated needs for child care in Abbotsford, and lay out strategic directions, policy priorities, and suggestions for actions that would make child care in Abbotsford more affordable, accessible, and available to parents, children, and families.

The analysis and data collected for this report included a variety of strategies, such as the review of available data from primary sources, government documents, previous research and best practices, administration of surveys, and implementation of extensive community dialogues.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, subsequent global lockdown, and resulting shocks to the economy and our wider society, it is important to recognise that the needs of particular populations across the spectrum described in this report are likely to be exacerbated as a result of COVID-19 impacts, both in the present and over the long-term future.

Accordingly, the data presented here (most of which was developed prior to the pandemic) can be used as baseline data for social planners and policymakers to support planning needs, to provide evidence of need to support new applications for funding, and to provide data to guide policy and bylaw development to address social issues in the community. For community stakeholders, it can also be used as a reference point for highlighting the need for new community initiatives, such as shared intergenerational or interfaith community spaces, or grassroots programs that fill gaps and help people in Abbotsford who may be struggling or are in need of assistance.

## Methodology

For the development of this report, we looked at community data related to child care affordability, accessibility, and availability. Both primary and secondary sources were utilised in this report, which included both StatsCan and federal Census data, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)'s Housing Portal, and health, education, and service provider data. Community consultations were held through a variety of means, including expert Technical Advisory Group meetings, online surveys (held in both English and Punjabi), Design Labs with stakeholders and funders, as well as community circle dialogues featuring a variety of people of differing backgrounds, including people with lived experience of homelessness and youth.

A data summary report and a review of best practices was created, many of the findings of which have been included in this final report. As well, HelpSeeker data has been included to provide a service map of the community related to child care, along with an outline of the steps taken to create a real-time child care spaces inventory.

## Limitations

This section addresses the challenges, cautions, and limitations inherent in this project:

- Quantitative data is primarily limited to 2016, unless otherwise noted.
- Publicly-available datasets do not always group ages consistently. Please note when different age groupings (e.g. 0–14, 0–12, 0–18) are used in this report.



# INTRODUCTION

Professional child care is still frequently treated as a luxury in many communities across Canada for parents who are working or who don't have access to care within their extended networks of family or friends. It is not yet widely seen as an essential service. This obscures the fact that affordable, accessible, professional child care plays a fundamental role in the current economy, not only for working families, but also for the overall health, quality of life, and economic viability of an entire city. Child care is the engine of the modern economy.

Canada currently has the highest child care costs of any Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) country, with the average two-income family spending nearly a quarter of their net income funding child care<sup>7</sup>—an average of close to \$11,500 per child per year for licensed child care; a cost burden can reach up to \$20,000 per child per year in some parts of the country.<sup>8</sup> While British Columbia has made inroads into reducing the costs of child care since Budget 2018 due to substantial new investments in the area<sup>9</sup>, as a province, it is facing an uphill battle: child care costs in BC increased by 35% from 2007-2014,<sup>10</sup> and there are currently only enough licensed spaces for 18% of all children in the province.<sup>11</sup>

Multiple economic studies have recognised the significance of child care provision as one of the most substantial ways to fuel job creation,<sup>12</sup> increase women's labour force participation,<sup>13</sup> and improve the health and social skills of children, creating many long-term positive social and economic impacts for communities. On the social side, access to affordable, accessible, and higher-quality child care provides numerous benefits for children regarding child development (e.g. improved socialisation, emotional management, and communication skills; enhanced school readiness), as well as their families (e.g. a more stable, stress-free home environment). From an economic perspective, quality child care helps increase parental participation in the workforce (a particular benefit to single parents and low-income families), reduces economic marginalisation, and provides multiplier effects for the overall economy. However, policies and investments have not yet caught up entirely to social and economic realities.

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<sup>7</sup> Child-care costs in Canada among highest in the world, OECD says | CBC News. (2016, October 21). Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/oecd-child-care-costs-1.3815954>

<sup>8</sup> A Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System. (2017, August 24). Retrieved from <https://search.open.canada.ca/en/qp/id/esdc-edsc,HussJan2021-002>

<sup>9</sup> Government of British Columbia. Child Care B.C. Caring for Kids, Lifting Up Families: The Path to Universal Child Care. Retrieved from: [https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/childcare/2018\\_Child\\_Care\\_BC.pdf](https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/childcare/2018_Child_Care_BC.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> BC Child Poverty Report Card. (2016). Retrieved from <http://still1in5.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/2016-BC-Child-Poverty-Report-Card.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> \$10aday.ca. About the Plan. (2019). Retrieved from <https://www.10aday.ca/about>

<sup>12</sup> Fairholm, R. (2017, January). Socio-Economic Impact Analysis of the \$10aDay Child Care Plan for British Columbia. Retrieved from [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/10aday/pages/357/attachments/original/1484678670/10aDay\\_C4SE\\_economist\\_report.pdf?1484678670](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/10aday/pages/357/attachments/original/1484678670/10aDay_C4SE_economist_report.pdf?1484678670)

<sup>13</sup> Fortin, P. (2017, March). What are the Effects of Quebec's Universal Child Care System on Women's Economic Security? Brief Submitted to the Standing Committee on the Status of Women (FEWO) of the House of Commons, Ottawa. Retrieved from: <https://www.ourcommons.ca/content/Committee/421/FEWO/Brief/BR8806290/br-external/FortinPierre-e.pdf>

Although child care was vital to the economy before, if often unacknowledged, it has become even more apparent across mainstream society because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that it is an essential service in the modern economy.<sup>14</sup> At the same time that workers in other fields like medical services or transit need reliable child care services to continue serving the public, the sector itself is notably struggling. Due to shutdowns because of the pandemic, a recent survey found that 71% of licensed child care centres in Canada had laid off all or part of their workforce during the emergency response phase of the pandemic, and more than one-third of the centres across Canada are reportedly uncertain about reopening at all.<sup>15</sup>

As a result, there has been growing acknowledgement that accessible, reliable early learning and child care services must be a part of Canada's post-pandemic recovery.<sup>16</sup> Improving child care accessibility, affordability, and availability therefore presents a substantial opportunity to build the health, stability, and vibrancy of both the future generation and the economy in Abbotsford.

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<sup>14</sup> Friendly, M. (2020). Canadian child care: Preliminary results from a national survey during the COVID19 pandemic. Toronto: Childcare Resource and Research Unit; Ottawa, Child Care Now; Ottawa. Canadian Child Care Federation. Retrieved from: <https://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/Canadian-Child-Care-COVID19-Survey-Data-Report.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> Canadian Child Care Federation and Child Care Now. 2020. Canadian Child Care. Preliminary results from a national survey during the COVID19 pandemic: Highlights of a National Survey. Retrieved from: [https://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/The%20pandemic%20experience%20has%20created%20uncertain%20future%20for%20Canada%20child%20care%20services\\_Highlight%20of%20a%20national%20survey\\_FINAL\\_CRRU.pdf](https://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/The%20pandemic%20experience%20has%20created%20uncertain%20future%20for%20Canada%20child%20care%20services_Highlight%20of%20a%20national%20survey_FINAL_CRRU.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Canadian Child Care Federation and Child Care Now. 2020. Canadian Child Care. Preliminary results from a national survey during the COVID19 pandemic: Highlights of a National Survey. Retrieved from: [https://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/The%20pandemic%20experience%20has%20created%20uncertain%20future%20for%20Canada%20child%20care%20services\\_Highlight%20of%20a%20national%20survey\\_FINAL\\_CRRU.pdf](https://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/The%20pandemic%20experience%20has%20created%20uncertain%20future%20for%20Canada%20child%20care%20services_Highlight%20of%20a%20national%20survey_FINAL_CRRU.pdf)



## POLICY CONTEXT

This report draws on, and intends to align with, a variety of existing federal, provincial, and municipal policies and strategies already active, given the number of other sectors that child care impacts including housing, education, employment, transportation, etc. A brief review of relevant policies in these areas follows, along with the economic and social context around child care.

### Federal Policy

The Government of Canada is investing in early learning and child care to help Canadian children get the best start in life and have a fair chance to succeed. To better support Canadian families and communities, especially those most in need, Budget 2016 and Budget 2017 proposed federal investments totalling \$7.5 billion over 11 years to support and create more high-quality, affordable child care across the country.

As a first step, the Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Ministers Responsible for Early Learning and Child Care have agreed to a Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework. The new framework sets the foundation for governments to work towards a shared long-term vision where all children across Canada can experience the enriching environment of quality early learning and child care. The guiding principles of the Framework are to increase quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility, and inclusivity in early learning and child care.

The Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework is used to flow federal funding to provinces and territories. It is focused on creating child care services for vulnerable families, including those marginalised by geography, income, family status, language, non-standard work, disability, or culture. The framework contains a commitment to improve data collection and information about the status of child care for children under six years of age, including the number and types of licensed spaces and access to subsidies. A complementary but separate framework is in development for Indigenous early learning and child care.<sup>17</sup>

This framework is guided by the following principles and commitment by governments to work towards investments to increase quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility, and inclusivity in early learning and child care with consideration for vulnerable populations. The long-term goals for early learning and child care systems that the governments agree to work together to achieve are:<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Early Childhood Education Report. n.d. Federal Profile 2017. Retrieved from: <http://ecereport.ca/en/report/provincial-territorial-profiles/federal/>

<sup>18</sup> Government of Canada. 2018. Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/early-learning-child-care/reports/2017-multilateral-framework.html>

<b>High-Quality Early Learning and Child Care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provides rich early learning experiences and environments, viewing children as capable, competent learners who are full of potential.</li> <li>- Values the importance of building strong, responsive, and respectful relationships in which purposeful interactions support optimal learning for children.</li> <li>- Recognises the importance of qualifications and training for the early childhood workforce.</li> </ul>
<b>Accessible, Affordable, and Flexible</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High-quality early learning and child care should be flexible and broadly available to respond to the varying needs of children and families to promote early childhood development.</li> <li>- Accessible, affordable, and flexible early learning and child care also supports families participating in employment, education, or training, as well as harder-to-serve populations.</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusive</b>	<p>Inclusive early learning and child care systems respect and value diversity, which could include, but is not limited to, children and families who are experiencing vulnerability, or children with varying abilities.</p>

In support of this framework, the Government of Canada commits that the annual allocation until 2027 and 2028 will be no less than the allocation of 2017 and 2018. The provinces and territories will use investments allocated by the federal government to further build early learning and child care systems by addressing local, regional, and system priorities that have an impact on families more in need, including, but not limited to:

- Lower-income families;
- Indigenous families;
- Lone-parent families;
- Families in underserved communities;
- Those working non-standard hours; and/or
- Families with children with varying abilities.

Collaborative work will continue with provincial and territorial governments to enter into three-year bilateral funding agreements totalling \$1.2 billion and address their specific early learning and child care needs. Additionally, \$95 million will go towards closing data gaps to better understand what child care looks like in Canada and tracking progress, and \$100 million for innovative practices on early learning and child care.<sup>19,20</sup>

Four federal departments are responsible for early learning programs for Indigenous children: Health Canada, Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC), Aboriginal Affairs and Northern

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<sup>19</sup> Government of Canada. 2019. Early Learning and Child Care Innovation Program. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/early-learning-child-care.html>

<sup>20</sup> Government of Canada. 2020. Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. Funding for investing in early learning and child care innovation - tabling of the 2019–20 Supplementary Estimates (A). Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/corporate/transparency/briefing-documents-treasury-board-canada-secretariat-parliamentary-committee/reference-binder-supplementary-estimates-a-2019-20.html>

Development Canada (AANDC), and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). These departments transfer funds to: First Nations communities for on- and off-reserve school tuitions; Aboriginal Head Start; family support and maternal and child health programs; and the First Nations and Inuit Child Care Initiative. In addition, the federal government reimburses a portion of the costs for on-reserve early childhood programming through intergovernmental agreements with Alberta and Ontario.<sup>21</sup> A distinct Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework will also be co-developed with Indigenous partners, reflecting the unique cultures and needs of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children.<sup>22</sup>

As this year's progress report shows, a significant amount of work has been undertaken across the country since the agreements were signed in 2017. The most recent information from the provinces and territories indicates that, in only the first year (2017-2018) of the three-year agreement, an additional 21,205 more affordable child care spaces have been established, representing over half (53%) of the March 2020 target of 40,000 spaces. Families in need have particularly benefited.<sup>23</sup>

Annex B summarises other investments made by the federal government in early learning and child care in Canada.

## Provincial Policy

Child care is a provincial/territorial responsibility. Funds flow to the provinces and territories through bilateral agreements, which include action plans to meet the framework's objectives. Approximately \$1.2 billion over three years supports phase one of the agreements, which will be updated and renewed on their expiry. Each jurisdiction receives a base payment of \$2 million, plus a per capita allocation determined by their population aged 0–6 years. Of the \$500 million allocated in 2017–18, \$100 million went towards programs for Indigenous children living on- and off-reserve. Over the course of the framework, \$95 million will go toward research and evaluation, while \$100 million is dedicated to innovation.<sup>24,25</sup>

BC Budget 2018 delivered over \$1 billion in new investments in child care and early learning over the next three years. This included \$237 million to improve access to child care, including funding the creation of 22,000 new licensed child care spaces. Funding for the Community Child Care Space Creation Program is provided under the Canada-BC Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Agreement. This

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<sup>21</sup> Early Childhood Education Report. n.d. Federal Profile 2017. Retrieved from: <http://ecereport.ca/media/uploads/2017-report-pdfs/ece-report2017-en-feb6.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> Government of Canada. 2019. Early Learning and Child Care. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/indigenous-early-learning/2018-framework.html>

<sup>23</sup> Government of Canada. 2019. National Progress Report on Early Learning and Child Care (2017 to 2018). Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/early-learning-child-care/reports/2019-national-progress.html>

<sup>24</sup> Early Childhood Education Report. n.d. Federal Profile 2017. Retrieved from: <http://ecereport.ca/media/uploads/2017-report-pdfs/ece-report2017-en-feb6.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Government of Canada. 2020. Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat. Funding for investing in early learning and child care innovation - tabling of the 2019–20 Supplementary Estimates (A). Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/corporate/transparency/briefing-documents-treasury-board-canada-secretariat/parliamentary-committee/reference-binder-supplementary-estimates-a-2019-20.html>

agreement allocates \$153 million over three years to improve the affordability, accessibility, and quality of child care in BC.

Currently, BC does not have a coordinated child care system. The demand for licensed child care spaces in the province exceeds the existing supply, resulting in significant shortages across the province. To address this need, the Province is supporting local governments to plan and build licensed child care spaces that will best meet the needs of local families in their communities. Child care providers operate independently, and have to navigate their way through a range of provincial and municipal rules, an insufficient workforce, and rising costs. The current market-based system is not meeting the demand for spaces, resulting in higher prices, lower quality, and fewer choices for parents. Research indicates that there are many challenges associated with market-based models when there is unmet demand, leaving them fragmented and unaccountable.

In terms of quality, the lack of availability of licensed child care in BC is a major issue, with licensed spaces only available to a fraction of all children aged 0–12 years. This has left many parents without the assurance that their child’s care provider is regularly monitored and that staff have the required training to meet the needs of young kids. The expansion of licensed child care and the overall improvement of care across the province are hampered by the fact that there are not enough certified Early Childhood Educators to adequately staff existing and future child care spaces.<sup>26</sup>

Annex C summarises the strategies currently implemented by the BC government to improve affordability, accessibility, and quality of care in the province.

In addition to these particular child care strategies, British Columbia’s first-ever poverty reduction strategy—TogetherBC—aims to put the provincial government on the path to reducing the poverty rate by 25% among everyone in the province, with at least a 50% reduction among children by 2024.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Government of British Columbia. 2018. Child Care BC Caring for Kids, Lifting up Families. The path to Universal Child Care. Retrieved from: [https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/childcare/2018\\_Child\\_Care\\_BC.pdf](https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/childcare/2018_Child_Care_BC.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> Government of British Columbia. 2019. TogetherBC. British Columbia’s Poverty Reduction Strategy. Retrieved from: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/initiatives-plans-strategies/poverty-reduction-strategy/togetherbc.pdf>





## UNIVERSAL CHILD CARE PROTOTYPE SITES IN BC

In November 2018, the BC Government embarked on one of the most significant policy shifts in child care spaces in provincial history. The Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (ELCC) with the federal government allowed more than 50 sites across the province to convert 2,500 licensed child care spaces (including both non-profit and private sites) to low-cost spaces, where parents would pay no more than \$200 per month for full-time enrolment during regular business hours – with some parents classified as low-income potentially receiving child care for free.<sup>28</sup> Priority was given to infant and toddler spaces, but all care types were included. These prototypes, used to test a future potential Universal Child Care system, will run until March 31, 2021 and are still ongoing at the time of this report. Anecdotal feedback so far has been positive, with some parents reporting that they felt like they’d “won the lottery” by being included in the project.<sup>29</sup>

While the provincial government reviewed more than 300 applications for the program to get a variety of different municipal geographies, populations, operation models, etc., Abbotsford does not have a child care site as part of the project, so there is no data or information about ongoing progress of the prototypes locally. However, the outcome and results of this pilot project will impact the future of child care spaces and affordability in Abbotsford and across BC more broadly.

## Abbotsford Municipal Policies

The City of Abbotsford does not currently have a Child Care Inventory or Child Care Space Creation Plan that requires updating or amendments as a result of this report. However, the City has implemented a number of strategies to incorporate some of the child care principles and elements described in this report. In particular, three existing strategies/plans have included actions related to the improvement of park and recreation amenities, social spaces, multi-generational housing, sidewalks and streets layout, and child care spaces. The following table highlights and summarises aspects of current Municipal Plans that may be related to or would impact an eventual Child Care Action Plan.

<sup>28</sup> Ministry of Child and Family Development. (2020, May 20). Universal Child Care Prototype Sites. Retrieved from <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/running-daycare-preschool/universal-child-care-prototyp-e-sites>

<sup>29</sup> Province testing \$10-a-day child care at select centres. (2018, November 01). Retrieved from <https://bc.ctvnews.ca/province-testing-10-a-day-child-care-at-select-centres-1.4159917>

PLAN/STRATEGY	ACTIONS
<p><b>Official Community Plan</b></p>	<p><b>Children, Youth &amp; Families</b>  Recognise children and youth as citizens who contribute in their own way towards the quality of urban life. Approach their needs and the needs of families through coordinated amenities and services, transit, and public spaces; and through social development infrastructure such as health, education, employment, and housing.</p> <p><b>Social Spaces &amp; Connectedness</b>  Create neighbourhoods that are designed to encourage social interaction and community participation opportunities. This can include community hubs with shared social service delivery and places that integrate health care, child care, family services, and local economic activity.</p> <p><b>Housing Options</b>  Establish diverse housing types within all neighbourhoods, increasing the range of options in terms of affordability, tenure, size, and type that support flexible housing options, including multi-generational living and ageing in place.</p>
<p><b>Plan for 200k</b></p>	<p><b>Parks, Recreation &amp; Culture</b>  Address the needs of the very young, families, older adults, and diverse cultures.</p> <p>Playing in natural environments is essential to our children’s development of core skills, including observation, problem-solving, reasoning, categorisation, creativity, imagination, risk-identification, and emotional and intellectual development.</p> <p>Sports and play equipment boxes or lending systems are being placed in or near parks which can make it easier for children to be active and play sports.</p> <p>Universal design inclusive of all ages and abilities.</p> <p><b>Transportation &amp; Transit</b>  Develop an expanded network of sidewalks and pathways to reduce barriers and create a more walkable city for people of all ages and abilities.</p> <p>Ensure that people of all ages and abilities have convenient, safe, accessible, and enjoyable transportation options.</p> <p>Managing transportation impacts can help foster more liveable, vibrant, and safe neighbourhoods, and help to support a higher quality of life for Abbotsford residents. This is especially important for vulnerable groups including children, youth, and seniors.</p> <p>It is important that transportation infrastructure allows seniors to be mobile in their community without a vehicle and attracts children and youth to sustainable modes of transportation early in their lives, as this creates opportunity to continue walking and cycling behaviours into adulthood.</p> <p>Design to promote walking and cycling among school-aged children to help</p>

	encourage safe walking and cycling at a young age.
<b>Affordable Housing Strategy</b>	<p>More affordable ownership, rental, and supported housing including a variety of housing types for all stages of life, allowing people to stay in their neighbourhoods as they age.</p> <p>Continue to encourage diverse and mixed housing options that suit local neighbourhood character and needs, with complementary community amenities and supports (e.g. child care, cultural spaces, etc.) where appropriate and feasible to enhance livability.</p>

In addition, the Child & Youth Committee was created in Abbotsford as a group of community partners, including service providers and family members, dedicated to improving the lives of children, youth, and families in Abbotsford.

Further, the Abbotsford Early Years Centre is a one-stop location for parents to find out information about learning, health, and family services, including child care, parenting, child development, referrals for social supports, special needs services, early intervention therapies, and public health services.

There are currently 26 provincially-branded Early Years Centres located across BC, which represent a range of innovative approaches offering one-stop, convenient access to information, services, and referrals for families with young children. Each centre offers a variety of programs, services, and supports tailored to the needs of their community.<sup>30</sup>

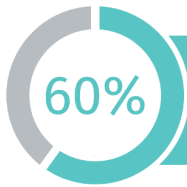
## Child Care & The Economy

In Canada, the number of families with both parents working has increased from 36% to 69% since 1976.<sup>31</sup> This social shift in the labour force has not been met with a shift in views around the necessity of professional child care to support working families, which is still commonly viewed as a luxury rather than an essential service. However, if dual-income families or single parents are unable to get child care through relatives or friends, then the lack of affordable, high-quality child care means difficult choices between expensive child care options and their careers. Some parents may lose out on retirement savings to pay for child care, while others may work fewer hours or be forced to leave their careers entirely due to unavailable or unaffordable child care options.<sup>32</sup>

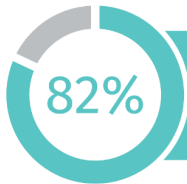
<sup>30</sup> Abbotsford School District. n.d. Early Years Centre. Retrieved from: <https://www.abbschools.ca/node/14363>

<sup>31</sup> 2 working parents are now the norm in Canada | CBC News. (2016, May 30). Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/dual-income-families-1.3607212>

<sup>32</sup> Government of Canada. 2019. Early Learning and Child Care. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/early-learning-child-care.html>



**OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 6 PARTICIPATE IN SOME FORM OF CHILD CARE, BUT ONLY 1 IN 4 HAVE ACCESS TO LICENSED CHILD CARE SERVICES IN CANADA OUTSIDE OF QUEBEC**



**OF BRITISH COLUMBIANS AGREE ACCESSIBLE CHILD CARE IS BENEFICIAL TO PARENTS**

33 34

**ACCORDING TO THE SURVEY ON EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS (SELCCA) CONDUCTED BY STATISTICS CANADA IN 2018, HAVING DIFFICULTIES FINDING CHILD CARE CAN RESULT IN ONE OR MORE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR THE PARENT:**



**reported having difficulty finding child care**



**reported that they had to change work schedules**



**reported having to work fewer hours than desired**



**reported that they had to postpone their return to work**

35

The lack of affordable, accessible, and quality child care has the strongest impact on women, who still tend to take on the brunt of responsibility for child care in many families. Research suggests that women with children return to the workforce at a much higher rate in communities with affordable child care spaces and services and that, as a result, government-subsidised child care often pays for itself.<sup>36</sup> As women still often earn lower average annual salaries than men, when families can't afford child care or cannot rely on friends or relatives, it is frequently women who are forced to stay home and leave the workforce to take care of children, as opposed to paying for care that is disproportionately expensive to the income they bring in.<sup>37</sup> This wage and earnings gap can affect women for the rest of their lives as

<sup>33</sup> Government of Canada. 2019. National Progress Report on Early Learning and Child Care (2017 to 2018). Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/early-learning-child-care/reports/2019-national-progress.html>

<sup>34</sup> \$10aday.ca. (2019). About the Plan. Retrieved from <https://www.10aday.ca/about>

<sup>35</sup> Government of Canada. 2019. Early Learning and Child Care for Children aged 0 to 5 years: A Provincial/Territorial Portrait Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-626-x/11-626-x2019013-eng.htm>

<sup>36</sup> Igluka, I. (2015) Solving BC's Affordability Crisis in Child Care: Financing the \$10 a Day Plan. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Retrieved from: <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/BC%20Office/2015/07/ccpa-bc-solving-childcare-full.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> Leonard, R. (2020) Investments in Child Care are Investments in Women's Equality. Retrieved from: <https://bcmatters.ca/investments-in-child-care-are-investments-in-womens-equality/>

they will be less likely to have retirement savings, and with the likelihood that women tend to live longer than men, can result in more older women ending up in poverty decades later.<sup>38</sup>



**Women aged 25-34 see their earnings cut in half following the birth of their first child**  
(compared to women without children)



**This earnings penalty lasts for half a decade after their child is born.**

39 40

Besides the impact on working women more generally, the lack of funding put towards child care also impacts women working in the sector itself. Child care is also one of the most proportionally female job sectors in Canada (with 97% of child care workers being women), and early childhood educators are frequently undervalued and under-paid, resulting in poor retention, low rates of job satisfaction and high burnout, and shortages in trained personnel.<sup>41</sup>

**1/4 CHILD CARE WORKERS**

*in licensed centres or home child care settings in Canada*

**NEED A SECOND JOB TO MAKE ENDS MEET**



**of early childhood educators who are women EARN 40% LESS ON AVERAGE than women with full-time positions and equivalent levels of education in other sectors.**



**A 2007 STUDY FOUND A CANADA-WIDE SHORTAGE OF 4,800 SKILLED CHILD CARE WORKERS DUE TO THE LABOUR CONDITIONS**

42 43 44

Recent studies have emphasised the significant cost-benefit effects of more accessible and affordable child care to economies. According to a study by the McKinsey Global Institute, closing the gender gap could add \$150 billion in incremental GDP in Canada by 2026, or a 0.6 per cent increase in annual GDP which amounts to a six per cent increase over the business-as-usual GDP growth forecast.<sup>45</sup> As well, socio-economic impact analysis of proposals such as BC's \$10-a-Day Child Care Plan to create a public

<sup>38</sup> The Gender Pay Gap: Wage Gap in Canada: The Facts. (2020, August 04). Retrieved from <https://canadianwomen.org/the-facts/the-gender-pay-gap/>

<sup>39</sup> The cost of having children — women lose earnings for 5 years after birth: RBC | CBC News. (2019, April 01) Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/women-children-earnings-1.5079732>

<sup>40</sup> Oxfam Canada. 2019. Why Canada needs a public child care system. Retrieved from: <https://www.oxfam.ca/publication/who-cares>

<sup>41</sup> Oxfam Canada. 2019. Why Canada needs a public child care system. Retrieved from: <https://www.oxfam.ca/publication/who-cares>

<sup>42</sup> Oxfam Canada. 2019. Why Canada needs a public child care system. Retrieved from: <https://www.oxfam.ca/publication/who-cares>

<sup>43</sup> Oxfam Canada. 2019. Why Canada needs a public child care system. Retrieved from: <https://www.oxfam.ca/publication/who-cares>

<sup>44</sup> Oxfam Canada. 2019. Why Canada needs a public child care system. Retrieved from: <https://www.oxfam.ca/publication/who-cares>

<sup>45</sup> McKinsey Global Institute. 2017. The Power of Parity: Advancing Women's Equality in Canada. Retrieved from: <https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Featured%20Insights/Women%20matter/The%20power%20of%20parity%20Advancing%20womens%20equality%20in%20Canada/MGI-The-power-of-parity-Advancing-womens-equality-in-Canada-Executive-summary.pdf>

system of integrated early care and learning<sup>46</sup> have suggested that the implementation of such strategies can generate sufficient overall government sector revenues to pay for the additional government spending required to build and operate the system. A 2017 economic analysis found that a full implementation of the \$10-a-Day Plan will have a significant and positive impact on GDP growth, and that the Plan's projected employment multipliers "are well above the benefits the province conventionally expects to receive from other investments."<sup>47</sup>



**FOR EVERY DOLLAR INVESTED IN CHILD CARE,  
BETWEEN \$1.50 AND \$6 IS RETURNED TO THE ECONOMY**

**FOR EVERY \$1 MILLION INVESTED IN CHILD CARE, NEARLY 40 JOBS ARE CREATED**

48 49 50

## Child Care in a Post-COVID World

One impact of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic that began in March 2020 has been that early learning and child care has been cast in a new light: as a necessity, not a luxury, in a well-functioning 21st century society. Government closure of non-essential workplaces resulted in many parents with young children who would usually be in school being required to work from home, while taking care of and either homeschooling or connecting their children to online schooling adaptations at the same time. Simultaneously, workers deemed essential such as medical personnel, transit workers, and grocery store employees who could not work from home required affordable and reliable child care to allow them to continue their jobs.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>46</sup> Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC. 2019. Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care & Learning. \$10aDay.ca. On our way to affordable child care. Retrieved from: [https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/10aday/pages/86/attachments/original/1551366963/10aDay\\_Plan\\_8th\\_edition\\_web\\_Feb\\_27\\_2019\\_final.pdf?1551366963](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/10aday/pages/86/attachments/original/1551366963/10aDay_Plan_8th_edition_web_Feb_27_2019_final.pdf?1551366963)

<sup>47</sup> Fairholm, R. (2017, January). Socio-Economic Impact Analysis of the \$10aDay Child Care Plan for British Columbia. Retrieved from: <http://www.c4se.com/documents/ECEBreport.pdf>

<sup>48</sup> Early childhood education pays for itself, TD says | CBC News. (2012, November 27). Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/early-childhood-education-pays-for-itself-td-says-1.1232994>

<sup>49</sup> Early childhood education pays for itself and then some, new research suggests | CBC News. (2017, October 27). Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/early-childhood-education-1.4374820>

<sup>50</sup> Fairholm, R. (2017, January). Socio-Economic Impact Analysis of the \$10aDay Child Care Plan for British Columbia. Retrieved from: <http://www.c4se.com/documents/ECEBreport.pdf>

<sup>51</sup> Friendly, M. (2020). Canadian child care: Preliminary results from a national survey during the COVID19 pandemic. Toronto: Childcare Resource and Research Unit; Ottawa, Child Care Now; Ottawa. Canadian Child Care Federation. Retrieved from: <https://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/Canadian-Child-Care-COVID19-Survey-Data-Report.pdf>

**A STUDY OF 4,000 STAY-AT-HOME MOTHERS AND WORKING PARENTS FOUND THAT MOTHERS WERE WORKING THE EQUIVALENT OF TWO FULL-TIME JOBS PROVIDING CHILD CARE DURING THE PANDEMIC.**

**IN MARCH 2020 AT THE ONSET OF THE PANDEMIC, WOMEN MADE UP 70% OF EMPLOYMENT LOSSES FOR WORKERS AGED 25 TO 54 IN CANADA.**

**AS MANY AS 25% OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP OR MANAGEMENT ROLES MAY DECREASE THEIR TIME WORKING OR EXIT THE LABOUR MARKET ALTOGETHER POST-COVID DUE TO CHILD CARE.**



52 53 54

Most provincial and territorial governments supported, to varying degrees, some child care centres and regulated family child care homes to remain open—usually with new more specific safety regulations to care for younger children, particularly those aged 0-12 years—for these essential workers.<sup>55</sup> However, an initial survey completed across the country showed substantial differences in how different areas responded to the health crisis “with respect to early learning and child care (ELCC) policy, staffing, provision funding, and parent fees.”<sup>56</sup>

These regional differences will be important to consider when trying to prevent future child care deficits and determine how to react to large-scale social changes. The growing recognition of the need for affordable, accessible early learning and child care across the country as part of a post-pandemic economic recovery<sup>57</sup> is a core purpose of this document: to help Abbotsford not only survive, but thrive in responding to the COVID-19 crisis.

<sup>52</sup> Gregory, L. (2020, October 20). Mothers taking on 'shocking' number of hours caring for children during pandemic: Study. Retrieved from <https://globalnews.ca/news/7408226/mothers-hours-child-care-pandemic-study/>

<sup>53</sup> Scott, K. (2020, April 10). Women bearing the brunt of economic losses: One in five has been laid off or had hours cut. Retrieved from <https://behindthenumbers.ca/2020/04/10/women-bearing-the-brunt-of-economic-losses-one-in-five-has-been-laid-off-or-had-hours-cut/>

<sup>54</sup> Ritzten, S. (2020, October 09). 25% Of Women In The Workplace Could Leave Due To The Pandemic. Retrieved from [https://coronavirus.nautil.us/women-in-the-workplace-pandemic/?utm\\_source=Facebook&utm\\_medium=link\\_post&utm\\_campaign=microsite](https://coronavirus.nautil.us/women-in-the-workplace-pandemic/?utm_source=Facebook&utm_medium=link_post&utm_campaign=microsite)

<sup>55</sup> Friendly, M. (2020). Canadian child care: Preliminary results from a national survey during the COVID19 pandemic. Toronto: Childcare Resource and Research Unit; Ottawa, Child Care Now; Ottawa. Canadian Child Care Federation. Retrieved from: <https://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/Canadian-Child-Care-COVID19-Survey-Data-Report.pdf>

<sup>56</sup> Canadian Child Care Federation and Child Care Now. 2020. Canadian Child Care. Preliminary results from a national survey during the COVID19 pandemic: Highlights of a National Survey. Retrieved from: [https://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/The%20pandemic%20experience%20has%20created%20uncertain%20future%20for%20Canada%20child%20care%20services\\_Highlight%20of%20a%20national%20survey\\_FINAL\\_CRRU.pdf](https://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/The%20pandemic%20experience%20has%20created%20uncertain%20future%20for%20Canada%20child%20care%20services_Highlight%20of%20a%20national%20survey_FINAL_CRRU.pdf)

<sup>57</sup> Friendly, M. (2020). Canadian child care: Preliminary results from a national survey during the COVID19 pandemic. Toronto: Childcare Resource and Research Unit; Ottawa, Child Care Now; Ottawa. Canadian Child Care Federation. Retrieved from: <https://childcarecanada.org/sites/default/files/Canadian-Child-Care-COVID19-Survey-Data-Report.pdf>



## ABBOTSFORD CONTEXT

Prior to examining the current state of child care accessibility in Abbotsford, this section will review relevant background data in a variety of areas related to child care to provide local context (such as population and ethnocultural demographics, housing, food security, etc.) as well as comparisons to BC in general.

### Population

As of 2020, the population of Abbotsford (based on the British Columbia Population Estimates) is 161,581.<sup>58</sup> Abbotsford's population increased substantially from 124,258 residents in 2006. This rapid population growth will lead to an increase in children and families in Abbotsford, necessitating an increase in child care provision as we will see below.

#### Population Growth in Abbotsford, 2006–2020.<sup>59,60</sup>

	2006	2011	2016	2020
Total population	124,258	133,497	141,397	161,581
Percentage change	-	7.4	5.9	14.3

### Age Distribution

Tracking changes in age distribution informs service providers, developers, and planners about potential needs in Abbotsford's population. About 4% of British Columbia's child population resides in Abbotsford overall. The table below shows the proportion of Abbotsford's population that is 14-years-old or younger:

#### 0–14 Age Distribution in Abbotsford, 2006–2016.<sup>61</sup>

Age Group	2006		2011		2016	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage

<sup>58</sup> Government of British Columbia. 2020. British Columbia Population Estimates. Columbia. Retrieved from: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/people-population-community/population/population-estimates>

<sup>59</sup> Statistics Canada, 2006, 2011, 2016 Census of Population. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/index-eng.cfm>

<sup>60</sup> Government of British Columbia. 2020. British Columbia Population Estimates. Columbia. Retrieved from: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/people-population-community/population/population-estimates>

<sup>61</sup> Statistics Canada, 2006, 2011, 2016 Census of Population. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/index-eng.cfm>



0–14	25,040	20%	25,320	19%	25,940	19%
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The zero-to-14 age group has remained largely static in Abbotsford over the past 10 years, with population growth driven by migration, compared to natural increase. Regardless, Abbotsford continues to have a higher proportion of younger people compared to the provincial average.

The table below shows the population distribution by age group between the ages of zero and 14 years old in Abbotsford, as well as provincially in British Columbia. While the proportion of children in Abbotsford is 3% higher than in the province, the proportion of children between the ages of zero and four, five and nine, and ten and 14 is equally distributed with 6% per group, similar to the 5% distribution in British Columbia.

#### 0–14 Age Distribution in Abbotsford, 2006–2016.<sup>62</sup>

	Abbotsford		BC	
	#	%	#	%
Total Age Groups	141,395	100%	4,648,055	100%
0 to 14 years	25,995	18%	691,390	15%
0 to 4 years	8,480	6%	220,625	5%
5 to 9 years	8,950	6%	236,900	5%
10 to 14 years	8,565	6%	233,860	5%

Given the static proportion of the zero-to-14 age group, it will be important to analyse if there are enough child care spaces in the community both currently and in planning for the future.

## Newcomers

Much of the significant population increase in Abbotsford has been driven by an increase in both international and domestic migration to the city. Children between the ages of zero to 14 years make up 21% of the total immigrant population in Abbotsford who have obtained landed immigrant or permanent resident status, with most children aged five to 14 years (14%). In 2016, this proportion of children in Abbotsford was 4% lower than in the province and accounted for 3% of the total child population being granted immigrant status in British Columbia.

#### Age at Immigration, Abbotsford, 2016.<sup>63</sup>

	Abbotsford	BC
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<sup>62</sup> Statistics Canada. 2017. Abbotsford, CY [Census subdivision], British Columbia and British Columbia [Province] (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed August 9, 2020).

<sup>63</sup> Statistics Canada. 2017. Abbotsford, CY [Census subdivision], British Columbia and British Columbia [Province] (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed August 9, 2020).

	#	%	#	%
Total Age at Immigration for the Immigrant Population in Private Households	38,225	100%	1,292,670	100%
Under 5 years	2,700	7%	112,665	9%
5 to 14 years	5,220	14%	212,710	16%

In 2016, Abbotsford gained 2,070 children compared to the previous year due to both internal migration (1,760 or 85%) and external migration (315 or 15%). The majority of new residents aged zero to 14 in Abbotsford (72% or 1,495) came from other locations in British Columbia (intraprovincial). Sixty per cent (60%) of the movers aged zero to 14 years in Abbotsford changed their place of residence within the community.

### Age Distribution and Mobility Status, Abbotsford, 2016.<sup>64 65</sup>

	0–4 years		5–9 years		10–14 years	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total – Mobility status 1 year ago	8,660	100%	11,415	100%	11,085	100%
Non-movers	6,870	79%	9,480	83%	9,700	88%
Movers	1,795	21%	1,935	17%	1,385	12%
Non-migrants	980	55%	1,190	61%	870	63%
Migrants	815	45%	745	39%	510	37%
Internal migrants	715	88%	625	84%	420	82%
Intraprovincial migrants	600	84%	520	83%	370	88%
Interprovincial migrants	120	17%	100	16%	370	88%
External migrants	95	12%	125	17%	95	19%

The primary relevance of this data for child care planning in Abbotsford is that projection of additional spaces needed in the future must factor in mobility, not just natural increase.

## Ethno-Cultural Characteristics

### Multi-generational Households

In Abbotsford, 6,940 children between the ages of zero and 14 years live in households that include at least three generations of the same family. The majority of these children (70%) are aged zero to nine years.

<sup>64</sup> Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/index-eng.cfm>

<sup>65</sup> According to Statistics Canada, mobility status refers to the status of a person with regard to the place of residence on the reference day (May 10, 2016) in relation to the place of residence on the same date 1 year or 5 years earlier. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/98-501/98-501-x2016014-eng.cfm>

### Age Distribution and Household Type, Abbotsford, 2016.<sup>66</sup>

	0–4 years	5–9 years	10–14 years
Persons in multigenerational households	2,440	2,385	2,115

It is important to keep in mind while analysing the child care space needs that spaces are not required for 100% of the children in the community given the existence of multi-generational households where grandparents or other family members can provide child care, as well as people finding child care through friends or by other informal means.

### Indigenous Households

In 2016, 3,030 children were identified as Indigenous in Abbotsford. As the table below shows, the majority of them (72%) were between the ages of five and 14 years old and identified as First Nations (54%) children, followed by Métis children (41%). Indigenous children accounted for 9% of the total children's population in Abbotsford in 2016.

### Age Distribution and Indigenous Identification, 2016.<sup>67</sup>

	0–4 years		5–9 years		10–14 years	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total – Indigenous identity for the population in private households	10,730	100%	11,415	100%	11,085	100%
Indigenous identity	840	8%	1,105	10%	1,085	10%
First Nations (North American Indian)	445	53%	580	52%	605	56%
Métis	350	42%	480	43%	425	39%
Inuk (Inuit)	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Multiple Indigenous responses	35	4%	40	4%	50	5%
Indigenous responses not included elsewhere	10	1%	0	0%	0	0%

<sup>66</sup> Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/index-eng.cfm>

<sup>67</sup> Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/index-eng.cfm>

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## SPOTLIGHT ON INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

It is highly symbolic that in the 94 Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) recommendations the first 12 recommendations—prioritised to the top of the list—deal exclusively with children, child welfare, and child education.<sup>68</sup> The impact of colonisation and racism affected children the most, removing children from their families and putting them in residential schools where many experienced physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, and many also lost their lives. This created lasting trauma to both children and families that has reverberated down generations, but also continues today in an ongoing fashion, with ongoing discrimination, inequities, and racism. Nearly 65% of children in the foster care system in BC are Indigenous despite only making up 9% of the total population.<sup>69</sup>

TRC Recommendation #12 specifically addresses the need to “develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.” As such, this report will make recommendations specific to Indigenous children and their families in line with the TRC's recommendations. As 9% of children in Abbotsford are First Nations and Métis, the City, as part of responsibilities around reconciliation, should explore collaborations with the Sto:lo Nation and other Indigenous community groups to ensure that culturally-appropriate child care that helps connect families and children to their languages

### Racialised Households

According to the 2016 Census, Abbotsford had 11,520 children identified as visible minorities,<sup>70</sup> with the majority between the ages of five and nine years (36%). Eight-thousand-three-hundred-and-fifty-five (8,355 or 73% of) children from visible minority groups were from South Asian countries. Children from visible minority groups accounted for 35% of the total child population in Abbotsford.

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<sup>68</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action. Retrieved from [http://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](http://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)

<sup>69</sup> Tracy Sherlock | News, P., February 6th 2018 Tracy Sherlock British Columbia columnist@tracysherlock, Carl Meyer | News, P., & 2018, C. (2018, March 14). B.C. working on big changes for Indigenous child welfare. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalobserver.com/2018/02/06/news/bc-working-big-changes-indigenous-child-welfare>

<sup>70</sup> This phrase is in quotations to denote that it is no longer considered appropriate, yet still used here to accurately reflect data categories from Statistics Canada.

### Age Distribution and Visible Minority Identification, Abbotsford, 2016.<sup>71</sup>

	0–4 years		5–9 years		10–14 years	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total – Visible minority for the population in private households – 25% sample data	10,735	100%	11,415	100%	11,085	100%
Total visible minority population	3,660	34%	4,085	36%	3,775	34%
South Asian	2,730	75%	2,995	73%	2,630	70%
Not a visible minority	7,075	66%	7,330	64%	7,310	66%

The implications of this growing diversity in Abbotsford are significant in terms of ensuring culturally-appropriate child care.

## SPOTLIGHT ON NEWCOMERS/RACIALISED CHILDREN

For many children, child care is the first step of the education system and can thus lay the foundation for subsequent performance. A number of studies show that formal child care during early childhood is important for child development. For children who speak a language other than the majority language in their city or region, early and intensive exposure to the language spoken by the majority can be especially crucial for educational and emotional development.<sup>72</sup>

However, child care for children who speak other languages may not always be affordable and accessible, potentially causing long-term or even life-long issues or struggles. Immigrant and refugee families are consistently over-represented in poverty and low-income statistics relative to the Canadian-born population,<sup>73</sup> limiting their access to professional child care and making

<sup>71</sup> Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/index-eng.cfm>

<sup>72</sup> Nina Drange & Kjetil Telle. 2015. Promoting integration of immigrants: Effects of free child care on child enrollment and parental employment. Retrieved from: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0927537115000329>

<sup>73</sup> Garnett Picot & Yuqian Lu. 2017. Chronic Low Income Among Immigrants in Canada and its Communities. Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11f0019m/11f0019m2017397-eng.htm>

them more likely to rely on informal types of child care from friends or older family members with whom they may live in multi-generational households.

Increasingly, Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services are called upon to assist young immigrant children from very different cultures adjust to Canada and learn English or French. However, while the quality of child care is of interest from the perspective of the development of all children, special concerns arise with respect to immigrant/refugee and minority children. Research has identified the need for greater acknowledgement of cultural practices and sensitivity in community child care centres serving children from immigrant and refugee backgrounds or minority groups and their families.<sup>74</sup>

It is critical that children of all racial, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds have affordable and appropriate access to quality early childhood programs. This would benefit immigrant children by improving their emotional and educational development as well as enable greater access to employment for immigrant parents who would be able to rely on adequate and affordable child care for their children.

Properly addressing these issues in immigrant families in Abbotsford would require the development of policies that include the implementation of Early Childhood Education (ECE) best practices<sup>75</sup> such as:

- **Establishing a supportive environment for immigrant and refugee children and their families** where children and their families feel emotionally supported and there is respect for the values of families in regards to child rearing;
- **Practicing ECE principles**, including fostering parental involvement in the children's lives;
- **Establishing a supportive environment for staff and caregivers** to provide them with increased capacity to support immigrant and refugee children and their families according to their specific needs;
- **Developing better understanding for staff of newcomer, refugee, and ESL families**, by developing curricular models for education and training that are sensitive to their vulnerabilities and experiences.

## Low-Income Households with Children

The following figures on disposable income in families with children, low-income rate in children aged zero to 14, proportion of families living below the poverty line, and the number of children using food bank services in Abbotsford are an indication of the proportion of children living or at risk of poverty in

<sup>74</sup> Gillian Doherty, Martha Friendly & Jane Beach. 2003. OECD Thematic Review of Early Childhood Education and Care Canadian Background Report

<sup>75</sup> AMSSA. 2017. Immigrant and Refugee Children: The Early Years. Retrieved from: [https://www.amssa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CW\\_EarlyYears-Summer2017.pdf](https://www.amssa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/CW_EarlyYears-Summer2017.pdf)

the community. Families in poverty may be unable to afford adequate child care, having consequences for employment for parents, as well as social ramifications and long-term physical and mental health impacts for children.

## Disposable Income

As defined by Statistics Canada,<sup>76</sup> net income or disposable income refers to the total income less income taxes of the statistical unit during a specified reference period. This disposable income is the after-tax income that individuals or households have available to spend or save.

In Abbotsford, the median and average disposable income for two-parent families (couple economic families) with children are approximately twice the disposable income in lone-parent households.

### Median and Average After-Tax Income: Households with Children, Abbotsford, 2016.<sup>77</sup>

	Couple economic families with children	Lone-parent economic families
Median after-tax income	\$92,507	\$45,899
Average after-tax income	\$101,992	\$53,548

Reduced disposable income in families with children increases their likelihood of experiencing poverty. As shown in the table below, children between the ages of zero and 17 years living in lone-parent family households are more likely to experience poverty than those in couple families in 2017.<sup>78</sup> Moreover, while the proportion of children aged zero to 17 living in low-income families in Abbotsford is 2% lower in couple families compared to the British Columbia figures, a slightly higher proportion of children living in lone-parent families and in non-census families is present in Abbotsford—families that may be in greater need of affordable child care.

### Low-Income Status in 2015 for the Population in Private Households to whom Low-Income Concepts are Applicable, Abbotsford and British Columbia.

	Abbotsford		British Columbia	
Total – Low-income status in 2015 for the population in private households to whom low-income concepts are applicable.	138,555	100%	4,477,875	100%
In low income based on the Low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT)	17,800	12.80%	694,960	15.50%
0 to 17 years	4,900	3.50%	151,880	3.40%
0 to 5 years	1,580	1.10%	46,920	1.00%
18 to 64 years	9,785	7.10%	427,085	9.50%

<sup>76</sup> Statistics Canada. 2016. Census Profile. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=5909052&Geo2=PR&Code2=59&SearchText=British+Columbia&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1&ttype=0>

<sup>77</sup> Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/index-eng.cfm>

<sup>78</sup> Statistics Canada. Table 11-10-0018-01 After-tax low income status of tax filers and dependants based on Census Family Low Income Measure (CFLIM-AT), by family type and family type composition. Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1110002001>

65 years and over	3,120	2.30%	115,990	2.60%
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Of note, low-income prevalence is about 100% in children living in a non-census-family; this is either living alone or in a group of two or more persons who live together but do not constitute a census family (married, living in common-law relationships, or lone parents).

#### Low Income Family Type, Abbotsford, 2016.<sup>79</sup>

	Abbotsford		British Columbia	
Couple families in low income	2,890	8.5%	72,070	10.6%
Lone-parent families in low income	3,900	52.2%	86,690	51.4%
Persons not in census families in low income	210	100.0%	4,970	99.0%

Overall, in 2016, 17,805 persons or 13% were considered low-income in Abbotsford. The low-income rate for persons under 18 years of age was 16% compared to 12% for persons aged 18 to 64, and 14% for persons 65 and over. Children were disproportionately affected by low-income rates in Abbotsford, with an average low-income rate of 16% compared to the overall 13% low-income rate in the city.

#### Age Distribution and Low Income Rate, Abbotsford, 2016.<sup>80</sup>

Age	Low Income Rate
0–4	15.3
5–9	16.5
10–14	16.1

The prevalence of households with children considered low-income in Abbotsford are significant in terms of ensuring affordable child care.

## Living Wage

A living wage is not the same as the minimum wage which is the legal minimum all employers must pay. A living wage reflects what earners in a family need to bring home to have a decent quality of life based on the actual costs of living in a specific community. The living wage is calculated as the hourly rate at which a household can meet its basic needs once government transfers have been added to the family's income and deductions have been subtracted. The living wage gets families out of severe financial stress by lifting them out of poverty and providing a basic level of economic security.<sup>81</sup>

<sup>79</sup> Statistics Canada. Table 11-10-0018-01 After-tax low income status of tax filers and dependants based on Census Family Low Income Measure (CFLIM-AT), by family type and family type composition. Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1110002001>

<sup>80</sup> Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population. Retrieved from: <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/index-eng.cfm>

<sup>81</sup> About Living Wage. 2013. Living Wage Canada. Retrieved from: <http://livingwagecanada.ca/index.php/about-living-wage/what/>



The living wage is the amount needed for a family of four, with both parents working full-time at this hourly rate, to pay for necessities, support the healthy development of their children, escape severe financial stress, and participate in the social, civic, and cultural lives of their communities.



**LIVING WAGE IN  
ABBOTSFORD**  
*(as of 2018)*



*proportion of families*  
**LIVING BELOW THE  
LIVING WAGE**

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Families who work for low wages can face impossible choices: buy clothing, heat the house, purchase groceries, pay the rent, or afford child care. The result can be spiralling debt, constant anxiety, and long-term health problems. In many cases, it means that parents are working long hours, often at multiple jobs, just to pay for basic necessities. They have little time to spend with their family, much less to help their children with school work or to participate in community activities.<sup>83</sup> Crucially in relation to this report, this can significantly impact their ability to afford high-quality and reliable child care which will have further negative consequences for them in other areas.

## Food Insecurity and Food Bank Use for Children<sup>84</sup>

Household food insecurity refers to inadequate or insecure access to food because of financial constraints. It is most prevalent among households with low incomes, lone-parent families, those who rent rather than own their housing, and those who identify as Indigenous or Black.<sup>85</sup> School lunch programs or child care programs that offer food options are therefore most relevant to these families.

The table below indicates the percentage of food bank users who are aged zero to 18 years of age. According to Abbotsford’s food bank data (Archway), individuals aged zero to 18 years old represent the highest proportion of the food bank users in the community. Abbotsford has an 8% higher proportion of children using food banks in the community, compared to the population distribution of food bank users across the entire province of British Columbia.

### Percentage of Food Bank Users, Abbotsford and British Columbia, 2016

	Abbotsford	British Columbia
0 to 18 years	37%	29%

<sup>82</sup>2018 Child Poverty Report Card. Sparc BC. Retrieved from:

<https://www.sparc.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/1.15-First-Call-BC-Child-Poverty-Report-Card-2018.pdf>

<sup>83</sup>Working for a Living Wage. 2018. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Retrieved from:

<https://www.sparc.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/1.15-First-Call-BC-Child-Poverty-Report-Card-2018.pdf>

<sup>84</sup> Relationship Between Food Banks and Food Security in Canada. 2019. Food Insecurity Policy Research. Retrieved from:

<https://hungercount.foodbankscanada.ca/BC-data-insights.php>; <https://www.abbotsfordfoodbank.com/about-us/>

<sup>85</sup>Household Food Insecurity in Canada. 2018. Retrieved from:

<https://proof.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Household-Food-Insecurity-in-Canada-2017-2018-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>

## Housing Situation

Housing is health, and the following data provides insight into how children may be experiencing precarious housing situations in Abbotsford. Children and families in inadequate housing situations may paradoxically be those who may benefit most from affordable child care options, but who may be least likely to afford it.

### Household Type and Tenure with Children, Abbotsford, 2016.<sup>86</sup>

	Total		Owners		Renters	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
All private households	49,040	100	34,320	100	14,720	100
Couple family household with children	15,000	30.6	11,955	34.8	3,040	20.7
Lone-parent family household	4,630	9.4	2,115	6.2	2,520	17.1
Female lone-parent family household	3,800	7.7	1,670	4.9	2,135	14.5
Male lone-parent family household	830	1.7	440	1.3	385	2.6
Multiple-family household	3,350	6.8	2,915	8.5	435	3

The data shows household composition—in which there is a second adult in the household—is related to ownership. Most couple families with children own their home (35%). Most lone parents rent their home: 15% are female lone-parents, and 2.6% are male.

### Household Tenure with Children Under 18, Abbotsford, 2016.<sup>87</sup>

	Total		Owners		Renters	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
All private households	49,040	100	34,320	100	14,720	100
Household has at least one child less than 18 years old	16,200	33	11,525	33.6	4,675	31.8
Other household type	32,840	67	22,795	66.4	10,045	68.2

There are slightly more owner households with children under 18 (34%) than renter households with children under 18. Owner households tend to have higher household incomes, and therefore may be more likely to afford child care as well—whereas renter households, with lower average and median household incomes, may struggle to access child care if a variety of affordable options are not available.

<sup>86</sup> CMHC. 2016. Population and Households. Retrieved from: [https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en#Profile/5909052/4/Abbotsford%20\(CY\)%20\(British%20Columbia\)](https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en#Profile/5909052/4/Abbotsford%20(CY)%20(British%20Columbia))

<sup>87</sup> CMHC. 2016. Population and Households. Retrieved from: [https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en#Profile/5909052/4/Abbotsford%20\(CY\)%20\(British%20Columbia\)](https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en#Profile/5909052/4/Abbotsford%20(CY)%20(British%20Columbia))

## Core Housing Need Households with Children

In coordination with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), Statistics Canada has developed the CMHC's Core Housing Need (CHN) indicator which has been in use in Canada since the 1980s. A household in Core Housing Need is one whose dwelling is considered unsuitable, inadequate, or unaffordable, and whose income levels are such that they could not afford alternative, suitable, and adequate housing in their community.

Core Housing Need is determined in two stages. The first identifies whether the household is living in a dwelling considered unsuitable, inadequate, or unaffordable. Housing suitability identifies whether the dwelling has enough bedrooms according to its size and composition. Housing adequacy is assessed based on the dwelling condition and the need of major repairs being reported. A shelter cost-to-income ratio of less than 30% was required to deem the housing affordable. The second stage establishes whether the household could be expected to have affordable access to suitable and adequate alternative housing by comparing the household's total income to an income threshold based on local housing costs. Only those households that could not afford alternative housing would be considered in core housing need.<sup>88</sup>

In Abbotsford, some households face affordability problems and may be forced to choose between appropriate housing and other necessities.

### Households in Core Housing Need, Abbotsford, 2016.<sup>89</sup>

	% Of Households in Core Housing Need		
	Total	Owners	Renters
All Households	12.7	6.3	28.1
Couple with children	7.8	5.7	16.3
Lone-parent household	32.7	16	46.9
Female lone-parent household	34.6	16.8	49.2
Male lone-parent household	22.7	12.7	35.7
Multiple-family household	5.7	3.8	16.3

Renter households face significantly greater rates of CHN than owners, with lone-parent females (49%) and lone-parent males (36%) having the highest rates. Due to the lack of a second parent, these families are often the most in need of child care.

<sup>88</sup> CMHC. 2019. Understanding Core Housing Need. Retrieved from: <https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/data-and-research/core-housing-need>

<sup>89</sup> CMHC. 2016. Core Housing Need. Retrieved from: [https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en#Profile/5909052/4/Abbotsford%20\(CY\)%20\(British%20Columbia\)](https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en#Profile/5909052/4/Abbotsford%20(CY)%20(British%20Columbia))

# Homelessness

In March 2020, the City of Abbotsford conducted a Point-in-Time homelessness count as part of the Fraser Valley Regional District (FVRD) tri-annual homelessness counts and surveys. Three hundred and thirty-three (333) people were found to be experiencing homelessness in Abbotsford during the 24-hour period on March 3 and 4, 2020. Those aged zero to 14 years of age and older constitute 0.3% of the overall responses. This represents a 2% decrease compared to the 2017 count, where five children were experiencing homelessness in the community. However, of all respondents, 13% reported being zero to 14 years of age when they first became homeless.

### Abbotsford Point-in-Time Counts.<sup>90</sup>

	2017		2020	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Homeless population aged 0 to 14	5	2%	1	0%
Reported age of first-time homelessness 0 to 14 years	-	-	30	13%

Families experiencing homelessness in the community would almost certainly have severe difficulty accessing affordable child care, or it may be entirely impossible or unrealistic. This could have several impacts in other areas of their lives as well as negatively affect their ability to transition out of homelessness and into housing as they would be entirely responsible for caring for their children while trying to navigate the system, find housing and employment, go through education or job re-training programs, etc. Homelessness would also pose other concerns for children impacted (e.g. safety, vulnerability, child exploitation). Additionally, a lack of high-quality, affordable, reliable child care spots could be a factor in families losing their housing (due to parents being unable to work, or work as many hours as they need to pay mortgages, rent, or utility bills).

Finally, in terms of long-term consequences for both young people and the community, it is important to note that children who do become homeless before the age of 14 have a much greater chance of falling into chronic homelessness as an adult.<sup>91</sup> Therefore, housing any families, children, or youth who are currently experiencing homelessness, as well as preventing children or families from falling into homelessness, is imperative for ending chronic homelessness and housing instability in a community.

<sup>90</sup> Ron Van Wyke. 2020. Abbotsford’s Homeless Persons (45 Years of age and older). Prepared for the City of Abbotsford’s Homelessness and Housing Unit. Supplied

<sup>91</sup> Putting an End to Child and Family Homelessness in Canada. 2016. Raising the Roof. Retrieved from: <https://www.homelesshub.ca/solutions/prevention/addressing-chronic-homelessness>

## Early Learning and Education

### Early Development Instrument (EDI)<sup>92</sup>

EDI data provide insights into the healthy development of children in BC across jurisdictions and over time. EDI data show that avoidable and persistent inequalities in children’s developmental health and wellbeing exist in BC and have been sustained over time. Inequalities in children’s wellbeing arise because of social inequity in the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age.

Vulnerable children are those who, without additional support and care, are more likely to experience future challenges in their school years and beyond. Vulnerability is determined using a cut-off for each EDI scale:

- **Physical Health & Wellbeing.** Children’s gross and fine motor skills, physical independence, and readiness for the school day such as: motor control, energy level, daily preparedness for school, and washroom independence.
- **Social Competence.** Children’s overall social competencies, capacity for respect and responsibility, approaches to learning, and readiness to explore new things.
- **Emotional Maturity.** Children’s prosocial and helping behaviours as well as hyperactivity and inattention, and aggressive, anxious, and fearful behaviour.
- **Language & Cognitive Development.** Children’s basic and advanced literacy skills, numeracy skills, interest in math and reading, and memory.
- **Communication Skills & General Knowledge.** Children’s English language skills and general knowledge, such as their ability to clearly communicate one’s own needs, participate in story-telling, and general interest in the world.

EDI data are collected from public schools and participating independent and First Nations schools. It provides an overview of the patterns and trends in EDI vulnerability rates for Wave 7 (2016–2019) and explores change over time from Wave 2 (2004–2007) through Wave 7, based on EDI data collected and analysed for kindergarten children between 2004 and 2019.

The table below summarises the total number of children who are vulnerable on at least one or more of the five scales of the EDI in Abbotsford and British Columbia between 2016 and 2019 (Wave 7).

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<sup>92</sup>BC EDI Wave 7 Provincial Report. 2019. Provincial Report. Retrieved from: [http://earlylearning.ubc.ca/media/edi\\_w7\\_communityprofiles/edi\\_w7\\_communityprofile\\_sd\\_34.pdf](http://earlylearning.ubc.ca/media/edi_w7_communityprofiles/edi_w7_communityprofile_sd_34.pdf)

### Number of Children by EDI Category, Abbotsford.

	Abbotsford		British Columbia	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Vulnerable on one or more scales	552	38%	14,468	33%
Physical Health & Wellbeing	247	17%	6,683	15%
Social Competence	259	18%	6,976	16%
Emotional Maturity	258	18%	7,642	18%
Language & Cognitive Development	158	11%	4,578	11%
Communication Skills & General Knowledge	282	20%	6,214	14%

The proportion of vulnerable kindergarten students in Abbotsford is higher in almost every scale or domain of vulnerability compared to British Columbia as a whole. Students are more likely to face more vulnerability in one or more scales and particularly be more prone to face vulnerabilities related to communication skills and general knowledge in Abbotsford compared to the provincial estimates.

### Middle Years Development<sup>93</sup>

The Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI) is a self-report questionnaire completed by children in grade 4 and grade 7. It is a unique and comprehensive, population-based measure that provides a deeper understanding of children's health and wellbeing during middle childhood. Domains include:

- **Physical Health & Wellbeing.** Children evaluate their own physical wellbeing in the areas of overall health including body image, nutrition, and sleeping habits.
- **Connectedness.** Children are asked about their experiences of support and connection with the adults in their schools and neighbourhoods, with their parents or guardians at home, and with their peers.
- **Social & Emotional Development.** Children respond to questions about their current social and emotional functioning in seven areas: optimism, self-esteem, happiness, empathy, prosocial behaviour, sadness, and worries.
- **School Experiences.** Children are asked about their school experiences in four areas: academic self-concept, school climate, school belonging, and experiences with peer victimisation (bullying).
- **Use of After-School Time.** Children are asked about the time they spend engaged in organised activities after school, such as sports, music, and art, as well as the time they spend watching TV, doing homework, and playing video games.

<sup>93</sup>Middle Years Development Instrument. Human Early Learning Partnership. Retrieved from: <http://earlylearning.ubc.ca/maps/mdi/nh/>

From 2015/2016 to 2019/2020 in Abbotsford’s School District, the MDI data reported significant findings for children in grades 4 and 7. These main findings are summarised below:

1. Overall decrease in wellbeing.
2. In 2019/2020, the majority of grade 4 and grade 7 students reported strong assets.<sup>94</sup> Most of the assets have remained relatively stable from 2018/2019 to 2019/2020. However, for both grade 4 and 7 students, the “Nutrition and Sleep” asset<sup>95</sup> declined from 2018/2019.
3. There were positive changes in the “Number of Important Adults at School” that students reported from 2018/2019 to 2019/2020:
  - A higher percentage of grade 4 and 7 students reported “2 or more adults” important to them at school;
  - A lower percentage of grade 4 and 7 students reported that there were “no” important adults at school.
4. Help-seeking:
  - The majority of grade 4 and 7 students reported that they would seek help from a family member.
  - Both grade 4s and grade 7s reported that they would seek help from friends (slightly higher for grade 7s).
  - More grade 4s than grade 7s reported that they would seek help from an adult at school.
  - More grade 7s than grade 4s reported that they would “prefer to handle it on their own.”
5. Transportation:
  - Most students reported travelling to and from school by car.
  - Many students reported that they wished they could use active transportation methods to travel to school.

These results from the MDI can be used to understand the factors that promote children’s social-emotional health and wellbeing. In addition, the MDI is being used to inform policy and practice and support collaboration across education, health, and community sectors.

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<sup>94</sup> Assets are positive experiences, relationships or behaviours present in children’s lives. Assets are considered actionable, meaning that schools and communities can focus their efforts in these areas to create the conditions and contexts where children can thrive.

<sup>95</sup> The “nutrition and sleep” asset refers to eating breakfast, having meals at home with family and the frequency of good sleep.

## Elementary Enrolment<sup>96</sup>

Typically, elementary schools in BC enrol students in kindergarten (age 5) and grades 1 to 7 (ages 6–12). As the table below shows, the number of students in elementary schools in Abbotsford has increased by almost 2% between 2015/2016 and 2019/2020.

From the 2018/2019 to the 2019/2020 school year, enrolment for elementary schools in Abbotsford is starting to decline (-0.3%).

### Elementary School Enrolment by School Year, Abbotsford.

School Year	# Students	% Increase	# Schools
2015/2016	8,802	-	30
2016/2017	9,074	3.1%	30
2017/2018	8,905	-1.9%	30
2018/2019	8,963	0.7%	30
2019/2020	8,934	-0.3%	30

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<sup>96</sup> Schools-Government of BC. 2016. Retrieved from:  
[https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/1670260a-2a57-4e32-9a53-48bfa728810c/resource/f00a14bf-4e99-450c-b7ad-eac1aa544c2b/download/student\\_headcount\\_by\\_grade\\_range-1991\\_92-to-2019\\_20.xlsx](https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/1670260a-2a57-4e32-9a53-48bfa728810c/resource/f00a14bf-4e99-450c-b7ad-eac1aa544c2b/download/student_headcount_by_grade_range-1991_92-to-2019_20.xlsx)





# CURRENT CHILD CARE LANDSCAPE IN ABBOTSFORD

## Inventory of Child Care Facilities in Abbotsford

As of January 2021, the City of Abbotsford had a total of 3,283 child care spaces available in the community offered in 135 facilities.<sup>97</sup> The table below shows the distribution of spaces and programs by service type and hours of operation.

**Distribution of Child Care Spaces by Service Type and Hours of Operation, Abbotsford.**

Service Type	Child Care Programs/Spaces		Times Facilities Offer Child Care <sup>98</sup>					
	Programs	Spaces	On Weekdays	On Weekends	On Statutory Holidays	Overnight	On Weekdays Before 6:00 a.m.	On Weekdays After 7:00 p.m.
Group Child Care (Birth to 36 Months)	18	320	10	0	0	0	0	1
Group Child Care (30 Months to School Age)	29	729	18	1	0	0	0	0
Preschool (30 Months to School Age)	41	758	31	0	0	0	0	0
Group Child Care (School Age)	32	1,005	27	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total All Age Groups</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>2,812</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
Multi-Age Child Care	28	240	7	0	0	0	0	0
Family Child Care	25	175	4	0	0	0	0	0
In-Home Multi-Age Child Care	7	56	1	0	0	0	0	0

<sup>97</sup> Fraser Health Authority. Public List of Licensed Child Care Facilities. Retrieved from: [https://www.fraserhealth.ca/-/media/Project/FraserHealth/FraserHealth/Health-Topics/Child-care/Licensed\\_Child\\_Care\\_Fraser\\_East.pdf?rev=dfc1c824b1934317ae8e8478e3ae063e](https://www.fraserhealth.ca/-/media/Project/FraserHealth/FraserHealth/Health-Topics/Child-care/Licensed_Child_Care_Fraser_East.pdf?rev=dfc1c824b1934317ae8e8478e3ae063e). Last accessed in January 2021. Four facilities have been added to this inventory of child care facilities in the community based on online searches.

<sup>98</sup> Information on the time of child care offered in the community was obtained from each facility's website. However, the information presented here should be used with caution as approximately 42% of Child Care facilities in Abbotsford did not have any public information regarding their hours of operation.

<b>Total with Multi-Age Programs</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>3,283</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
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Primarily, child care spaces available in Abbotsford are intended for group child care for school-age children (1,005 or 31%), preschool care for children between 30 months and school age (758 or 23%), and group child care for children between 30 months of age and school age (729 or 22%).

A similar pattern is followed in the number of programs available by service type with the majority of them being available for preschool care for children between 30 months and school age (41 or 23%), group child care for school-age children (32 or 18%), and group child care for children between 30 months of age and school age (29 or 16%). As shown in the previous table, the vast majority of child care programs in Abbotsford are offered during weekdays, predominantly for preschool and group child care programs for school-age children.

In terms of the location of the spaces in Abbotsford, the majority of them (2,521 or 77%) are located in the south east (1,275 or 39%) and south west (1,246 or 38%) parts of the city.<sup>99</sup>

#### **Distribution of Child Care Spaces by City Area, Abbotsford.**

Type of Service	East	South East	South West	West	Total
Group Child Care (Birth to 36 Months) Spaces	20	124	124	52	320
Group Child Care (30 Months to School Age) Spaces	53	339	232	105	729
Preschool (30 Months to School Age) Spaces	96	257	317	88	758
Group Child Care (School Age) Spaces	175	421	350	59	1,005
<b>Total all age groups</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>1,141</b>	<b>1,023</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>2,812</b>
Multi-Age Child Care Spaces	40	48	136	16	240
Family Child Care Spaces	35	70	63	7	175
In-Home Multi Age Child Care Spaces	16	16	24	0	56
<b>Total with multi-age programs</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>1,275</b>	<b>1,246</b>	<b>327</b>	<b>3,283</b>

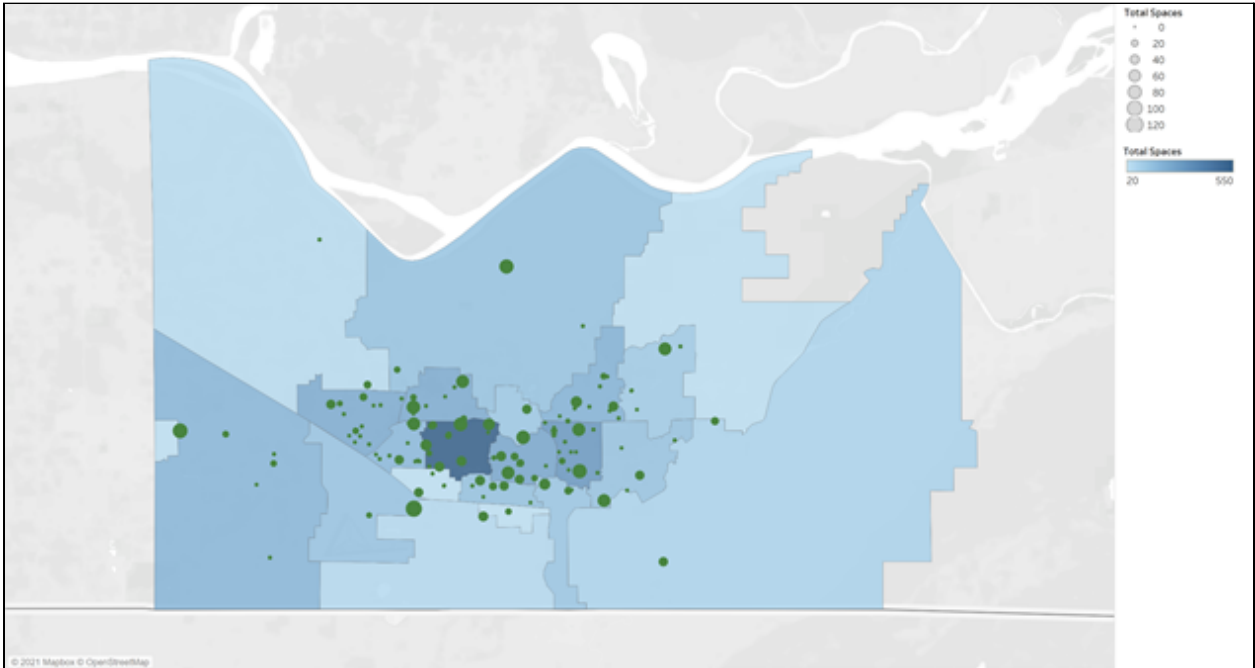
As seen above, the type of child care with the most spaces available in the community (group child care for school-age children, preschool care for children between 30 months and school age, and group child care for children from 30 months of age and school age) are concentrated in the south east and south

<sup>99</sup> The location of these spaces has been determined according to their postal code.

west of the city. In particular, 77% (1,916) of the total spaces offered through these three types of services are primarily located in those two areas in the community.

The map below portrays a density heat map of child care spaces, by area, in Abbotsford. The darker the blue, the more spaces offered in that area. The green bubbles represent the number of spaces at the specific location. The highest concentration of child care spaces is found in the communities of Clearbrook and Fairfield. Communities outside of the urban area such as Sumas Prairie, South Poplar, Aberdeen, Bradner-Mt. Lehman, Matsqui Prairie and Sumas Mountain are the communities with lower numbers of child care spaces in Abbotsford.

**Facility Location with Number of Child Care Spaces and Density/Neighbourhood, 2021**





## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

In preparation of this “**Child Care in Abbotsford: Current State and Anticipated Needs**” report, it was crucial that key stakeholders from a wide variety of areas in the community were consulted to ensure their concerns and needs were heard, addressed, and included in this report, so that the City’s actions are aligned with what the community wants and needs.

### How We Engaged

In the writing of this report, the Abbotsford community was engaged in four ways:

1. Technical Advisory Groups
2. The “Let’s Talk” Survey
3. Stakeholder & Funder Design Labs
4. Community Circle Dialogues

Each of these engagement methods serves a unique purpose, and all of them are treated as input and considerations to this final report.

#### **Technical Advisory Groups**

Over the course of June–November 2020, over 20 technical advisory group meetings were held virtually (due to COVID-19) with expert advisors in various sectors, including the Abbotsford Early Years Table.

#### **Let’s Talk – Survey**

A wellbeing survey, offered in both English and Punjabi, was conducted in Abbotsford throughout August and September 2020 to understand the current state of wellbeing in Abbotsford. More than 250 responses were received.

#### **Expert Design Labs**

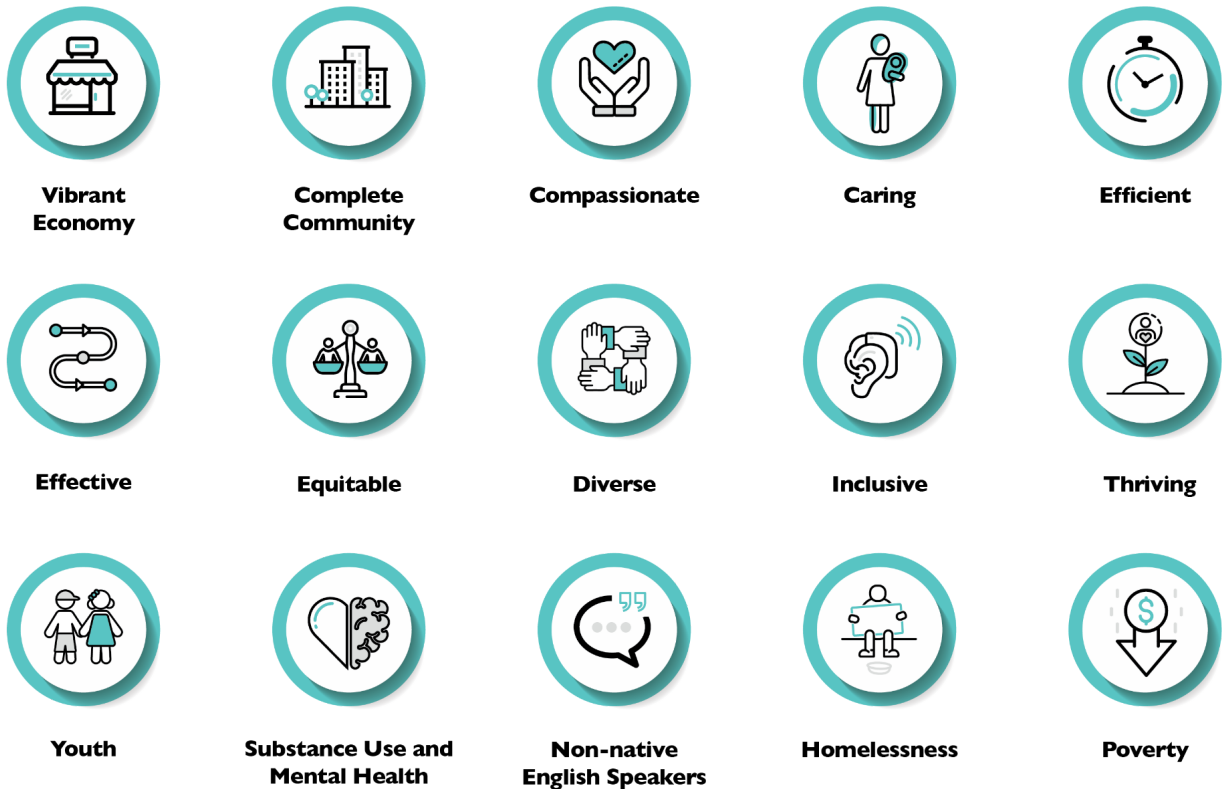
Four expert design labs engaging funders and stakeholders from multiple sectors were conducted, asking participants to consider the systematic nature of community infrastructure and social issues. Participants explored the problems collectively and proposed potential solutions.

#### **Community Circle Dialogues**

Community Circle Dialogues are discussions hosted and facilitated by local, trained community leaders in Abbotsford with residents experiencing different forms of vulnerability. Community Circle Dialogues encourage residents to reflect on their lived experiences with these social issues, and use their collective knowledge and experiences to generate potential solutions. Residents also considered social issues from

an equity, inclusion, reconciliation, and restorative justice perspective. After, community leaders then reported the concerns and ideas of residents back as a key input. Participants and community leaders were compensated appropriately for their time.

Twenty-three circle dialogues were held with over 120 participants with many intersecting identities and experiences, including experiences related to:



## Key Themes

Throughout each of the engagements, there were some key themes that arose several times regarding child care:

1. **Accessibility, Affordability & Availability:** Although distinct, the unequal distribution of affordable, accessible, and available child care services was cited as a top issue. This not only relates to income, but also the planning and coordination of these services to meet families' unique needs and socio-economic situations.
2. **Shared Benefits and Responsibilities:** Many comments were made regarding how child care is a shared responsibility of the community as it carries not only benefits to the child, but also to

family wellbeing and the economic development of Abbotsford. Neither families, schools, government, nor formal child care providers can be solely responsible for providing appropriate child care spaces.

## **Availability**

When it comes to the availability of child care spaces, there were two points of interest for participants. First, child care needs to exist in higher supply overall. Second, child care not only needs to exist in greater abundance, but also must meet certain standards of quality. While participants recognised that child care efforts need to be widespread, they did see institutions as a catalyst for starting these efforts:

*“We cannot expect the city or institutions to do all the work, though they can create some structure to support. The initial effort lies with the individual, who can arise to reach out to those around them, seeing our fellow neighbours as more than just that—as members of one common family, of which we all have to take care of one another.”*

Regarding quantity, participants reported that the “shortage of licensed daycares forces families to use informal ones, which have no oversight,” and that there should be an “increase in the number of aged individuals who need work and love children to provide child care.” Again, income and affordability came up as an issue, as “most of the onus of child care is on women, who sacrifice a career if the child care is unaffordable.” According to one circle dialogue report, “without adequate and affordable child care, one parent—usually the mother—will find it difficult to engage in meaningful work and contribute to the household income at a level she is otherwise capable of doing.”

Second, child care “needs to provide an environment that fosters security and learning for the child.” Participants wanted to see child care spaces with open spaces to facilitate free play, more outdoor education for pre-school and school-age kids, more pre- and post-natal care, and more groups for parents that have a child care component to give single parents a break.

One way to mitigate the issue of availability for immigrant families suggested was the ability to sponsor extended family, as doing so “can greatly increase the overall wellbeing and security of the family because it means that the parents have support in child rearing, and they have the emotional support to go reach higher.” In fact, participants asserted that extending the idea of family to “create opportunities and friendships where possible” is a very plausible option.

## **Affordability**

When prompted to think about the ideal future of child care, one dialogue group responded, “the ideal future would be to have it be affordable.” As simply put by one group of participants, “child care expenses are too high.” As well, the affordability of child care was viewed as a barrier to child care, not

just in terms of the direct child care fees, but also in terms of other costs associated with families. Particularly, transportation and taxation were cited as the two largest issues outside of direct child care fees. It was noted that:

*“...if a parent stays at home and loses their income, they don’t have any tax credit for paying for child care. And then there are parents who really want to stay at home with their kids but aren’t able to access child care space.”*

Affordability is also important because “adequate and affordable child care is the single biggest roadblock for financial stability for poor families, and almost a guarantee that single mothers will not be able to reach beyond poverty.” One proposed solution was to increase the minimum wage, so that one parent might be able to stay at home. Income inequality also plays a role in the ability to afford child care, as income affects people’s ability to access financial assistance:

*“High-income parents can afford child care, and low-income parents receive moderately good assistance. The ones who have the most difficulty affording child care are the lower middle-income earners, who are not eligible for financial help. Subsidy for this group would help a great deal.”*

When families do receive financial assistance such as child tax credits, participants advocate that the credits should be raised and that parents should be able to choose how they spend it. For example, a family may choose to spend it by offsetting the costs of staying home, paying a grandparent, or using more formal child care supports.

Other recommendations that participants proposed included having the “city underwrite child care spaces, in return for a lower child care cost to parents,” and “having places of employment have available child care on site.” In addition, it was suggested that some centres that the government runs could be more affordable for lower- and middle-income earners, and having “the lower income available centres simply get more subsidy from the government...like a graduating scale of subsidies.”

## **Accessibility**

In terms of accessibility, participants found accessibility to be an issue, overlapping with issues around coordinated access and family situations. For some seniors, participants reported, taking care of grandchildren is not possible because they cannot find child care while they go to medical appointments, for example. Additionally, children without extended family or parents who both have to work full-time are particularly vulnerable, which serves to expose the link between income and child care.

Parenting was a point of contention for participants. Participants noted that “there are many young parents who do not know how to ‘parent,’” and suggested “more courses to teach parenting skills.” However, these comments suggest that parenting is simple and can be done rightly or wrongly, when in

fact, parenting is highly cultural and subjective to the needs of the child and community. Some viewed the ideal future of child care as one in which parents were the sole provider of child care, while others advocated for a more communal approach to child care.

However, regardless of who takes care of children, income was a common theme that participants agreed was the base for thriving families, as families cannot be successful without basic needs. One circle dialogue group noted:

*“...the family of humanity, with subsets within the neighbourhood, can facilitate this same kind of mutual assistance and cooperation. Where we create and bond together as families in a neighbourhood, we can know intimately one another's situations and needs and draw together to create schedules that allow for pods of child care to take place and rotate, allowing mothers in particular the opportunity to be with their children and also seek employment to support their families that way as well.”*

To help with access, participants suggested community models (e.g. neighbours helping), affordable quality day care centres, higher wages for child care workers, and better access to Child Development Centres.

## **Talent, Training & Retention**

Higher wages and incentives to enter child care fields of work was the top-cited recommendation participants had to increase the supply of quality talent in the child care sector:

*“We need more people trained in Early Childhood Education and people in this field should also receive higher wages. A higher wage would give an increased incentive to enter this field.”*

Other examples of incentives included flexible time for care options (shift work, part time), benefits, and providing opportunities for individuals who need work and who love children to join the sector. Participants wanted to see “specialised training in [early childhood education],” and “incentives for early childhood education workers.”

Capacity building in the child care sector cannot be done without well-informed, sustainable funding which will allow the sector to be more flexible and resilient. Professional accreditation and the coordination of knowledge and training standards can help ensure that child care providers are regulated, provided with appropriate training, and supported to work.



## **Coordinating Between Sectors**

Finally, when it comes to planning and coordination of child care, participants viewed this issue mostly through the lens of continuity between different institutions, including schools, businesses, and other community organisations. Particularly, bureaucracy and coordination between licensing bodies was mentioned as a point of difficulty. Coordination of child care spaces is key. As one circle dialogue group mentioned, we need to “aid in child care in a way that does not overburden any one person...as they draw together for this common goal.” Circle dialogue participants echoed this as they proposed children who are well taken care of will ease the mind of parents and boost productivity in the places of their employment.

Coordination and planning can also happen between less formal entities. For example, multi-generational programming was suggested as a solution to advance community wellbeing, such as a senior centre linked with young children in a supervised and trained manner, allowing interactions that are beneficial for all involved.



# ANTICIPATED NEEDS AND GAP ANALYSIS

The following pages summarise the identified needs for improving the availability, affordability, and quality of child care in Abbotsford using existing available data as well as the feedback received from the community consultations.

## Availability

In Abbotsford, limited availability of child care options, as well as inconvenient program type offered or hours of service, appear to be the most challenging situations faced by families with young children in the community.

Using population projections from BC Stats for 2020 for Abbotsford School District<sup>100</sup> and the number of current child care spaces available in the community described before, the current space availability of child care in Abbotsford is as follows:

### Number and Proportion of Child Care Spaces by Age Range, Abbotsford, 2021.

Ages	2020 Population Projections	Current Number of Spaces	% of Children in Child Care
0 to 2	5,104	320	6%
3 to 5	5,545	1,487	27%
6 to 12	13,392	1,005	8%
0 to 12	24,041	471	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,041</b>	<b>3,283</b>	<b>14%</b>

As of 2021, it is estimated that the current number of child care spaces in Abbotsford is available for 14% of children given the total population of children in the community. The best coverage is available for children aged three to five with 27% of this population with available child care spaces. However, significant gaps are found by age groups particularly in ages ranges of zero to two, and six to 12, where the number of spaces available for these age groups is only available for 6% and 8% of the existing children's population, respectively.

To assess these values, it is useful to look at other national and international standards for comparison. One such standard is provided by The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA), an independent and non-partisan research institute in Canada.<sup>101</sup> They use the Forward Sortation Area (FSA), the first

<sup>100</sup> BC Stats. Population Projections. Retrieved from: <https://bcstats.shinyapps.io/popProjApp/>

<sup>101</sup> Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. 2018. Childcare Deserts in Canada. Retrieved from: <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2018/06/Child%20Care%20Deserts.pdf>

three letters of a postal code, as the basis for separating areas and created an assessment solely based on availability of spaces, irrespective of affordability. A “child care desert”—referencing the concept of “food deserts”, where healthy, nutritious food is neither affordable nor available—is an FSA with more than 50 non-school-age children, but fewer than one licensed child care spot for every three children—a coverage rate of 33%. This is in line with other international standards; for example, in 2002, all European Union member states committed to having a space for 90% of children who have turned three when they went to school, and for 33% of children who haven’t turned three (referred to as the “Barcelona targets”). Based on this standard, Abbotsford presently would be considered a child care desert.

As shown in the table below, in comparison to other Canadian provincial and national child care coverage rates, Abbotsford’s proportion of child care spaces available, with respect to the total child population (14%), sits 13% below the national average—almost 5% lower than British Columbia’s rate, and 41% below the highest provincial proportion of child care spaces available in Canada registered in Quebec.

**Number of Regulated Spaces for Children 0–12 in Canada by Province and Territory and Percentage of Children with Child Care Space Available, Abbotsford, 2016.<sup>102</sup>**

Province/Territory	Total Number of Regulated Spaces for Children 0–12	% of Children 0–12 Years with Regulated Child Care Space Available
Newfoundland and Labrador	8,159	12.9%
Prince Edward Island	4,642	23.2%
Nova Scotia	19,145	17.0%
Ontario	405,570	21.3%
Mantoba	34,261	17.9%
Saskatchewan	14,546	8.4%
Alberta	109,482	16.0%
British Columbia	105,902	18.4%
Northwest Territories	1,776	22.2%
Nunavut	1,044	10.9%
Yukon Territory	1,145	22.0%
<b>Abbotsford</b>	<b>3,283</b>	<b>13.7%</b>
<b>QC</b>	<b>617,864</b>	<b>55.1%</b>
<b>Canada</b>	<b>1,350,387</b>	<b>27.2%</b>
<b>Sweden</b>	<b>No info</b>	<b>73%</b>

<sup>102</sup> Metro Vancouver Regional Planning. 2019 Survey of Licensed Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver. Retrieved from [http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/2019\\_Survey\\_of\\_Licensed\\_Child\\_Care\\_Spaces\\_Policies\\_Metro\\_Vancouver.pdf](http://www.metrovancouver.org/services/regional-planning/PlanningPublications/2019_Survey_of_Licensed_Child_Care_Spaces_Policies_Metro_Vancouver.pdf)

Quebec has substantially better coverage than other provinces across the country, sitting at 55.1% overall, with some cities at 70% coverage or better.<sup>103</sup> Looking to international examples of child care coverage, Sweden emerges as a gold standard for high-quality child care, expanded with the aim of providing full coverage with the municipalities as the main organisers and financed out of public funds. Their system is universal, affordable, and educational with current coverage at 73%.

This brings three different scenarios for the community to consider in order to increase child care availability in a gradual, step-wise manner with targets bringing coverage to at least 25% of the total children’s population in Abbotsford (to reach Canadian average), 50% (in line with Canada’s highest provincial rate and some of BC’s best cities), and 75% (to become a national leader, reaching coverage rates of the best cities in both Canada and internationally).

### Child Care Spaces by Age Demographic to Reach 25%, 50%, and 75% Coverage Targets.<sup>104</sup>

Type of Service	Age	Current Spaces	2025 Population	2025 Target (25%)	New Spaces Needed by 2025	Total Spaces by 2025	2030 Population	2030 Target (50%)	New Spaces Needed by 2030	Total Spaces by 2030	2035 Population	2035 Target (75%)	New Spaces Needed by 2035	Total Spaces by 2035
Group Child Care (Birth to 36 months)	0 to 2 Years	320	5,030	1,258	938	1,258	5,147	2,574	1,316	2,574	5,157	3,868	1,294	3,868
Group Child Care (30 months to School Age)	3 to 5 Years	1,487	5,136	1,284	0	1,284	5,252	2,626	1,342	2,626	5,335	4,001	1,375	4,001
Group Child Care (School Age)														
Group Child Care (School Age)	6 to 12 Years	1,005	13,180	3,295	2,493	3,295	12,660	6,330	3,035	6,330	12,762	9,572	3,242	9,572
<b>Total All Age Groups</b>	-	<b>2,812</b>	<b>23,346</b>	<b>5,837</b>	<b>3,431</b>	<b>5,837</b>	<b>23,059</b>	<b>11,530</b>	<b>5,693</b>	<b>11,530</b>	<b>23,254</b>	<b>17,441</b>	<b>5,911</b>	<b>17,441</b>
Multi-Age Child Care, Family Child Care & In-Home Multi Age Child Care	0 to 12 Years	471	-	992	521	992	-	1,960	968	1,960	-	2,965	1,005	2,965
<b>Total With Multi-Age Programs</b>	-	<b>3,283</b>	-	<b>6,829</b>	<b>3,952</b>	<b>6,829</b>	-	<b>13,490</b>	<b>6,661</b>	<b>13,490</b>	-	<b>20,405</b>	<b>6,916</b>	<b>20,405</b>

Using the population projections for Abbotsford’s school district for the years 2025, 2030, and 2035, achieving a 75% coverage by 2035 will require the creation of 15,035 new licenced child care spaces for a total of 17,441 spaces created by 2035. This would require an increase in the number of current child care spaces in the community to guarantee coverage to 25% (5,837) and 50% of the total children’s population (11,530) by 2025 and 2030, respectively. In other words, addressing the shortfall of 15,035

<sup>103</sup> Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. 2018. Childcare Deserts in Canada. Retrieved from:

<https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2018/06/Child%20Care%20Deserts.pdf>

<sup>104</sup> To estimate the total number of spaces needed in Abbotsford to reach the targets described in the following pages, we use the total number of children projected by BC Stats and assume a similar distribution to the current share of spaces available in the community by service type.

spaces will require investments aimed at the creation of approximately 1,074 new spaces per year from 2021 to 2035.

However, this shortfall increases if additional spaces want to be created for multi-age programs to continue with the current 17% proportion of these spaces available for all age groups in Abbotsford. If this is the case, an additional 2,494 spaces will be needed for these types of programs by 2035 approximately 178 extra spaces per year.

Alternative to these longer-term projections and targets, the table below indicates the number of spaces that would be required in the next five years in order to reach the current BC average of 18%:

**Child Care Spaces by Age Demographic to Reach 18% Coverage Targets by 2025.**

Type of Service	Age	Current Spaces	2025 Population	2025 Target (18%)	New Spaces Needed by 2025
Group Child Care (Birth to 36 months)	0 to 2 Years	320	5,030	905	585
Group Child Care (30 months to School Age)	3 to 5 Years	1,487	5,136	924	0
Group Child Care (School Age)	6 to 12 Years	1,005	13,180	2,372	804
<b>Total All Age Groups</b>	-	<b>2,812</b>	<b>23,346</b>	<b>4,201</b>	<b>1,389</b>
Multi-Age Child Care, Family Child Care & In-Home Multi Age Child Care	0 to 12 Years	471	-	714	243
<b>Total with Multi-Age Options</b>	-	<b>3,283</b>	-	<b>4,915</b>	<b>1,632</b>

By 2025, the total children’s population in Abbotsford is expected to reach a total of 23,346, 4,201 of which represent 18% of the children’s population that would need to be the target of new child care spaces in the community. This suggests an initial shortfall of 1,389 child care spaces in Abbotsford to cover 18% of the total zero to-12 year-old population in the community through programs tailored to each specific age group by 2025. As shown in the table above, these new spaces are most required in children between the ages of zero and 36 months and school-age children.

As only 924 child care spaces are needed to reach 18% coverage of children from 30 months to school age by 2025, the 563 extra child care spaces available to this group age could be reallocated to school-age children where the majority of new spaces are needed in Abbotsford by 2025.

However, as mentioned before, this shortfall increases if additional spaces want to be created for multi-age programs to continue with the current 17% proportion of these spaces available for all age groups in Abbotsford. In this case, an additional 243 spaces would be needed for these types of programs by 2025 - approximately 61 new spaces per year from 2021 to 2025.

## Affordability

In Abbotsford, the cost of paying for child care is a major consideration for most families. A large part of family income is needed to pay for high-quality child care programs. There are many reasons why child care can be so expensive. Some of the reasons include high ratios of adults to children, provider qualifications, location of care and costs of space, insurance, equipment, and special programs. Quality care for infants and toddlers can be especially expensive due to small group sizes.

As shown in the table below, on average, child care for children in Abbotsford between the ages of 0 to 5 is about \$300 more expensive than child care for children aged five to 12 years. Similarly, licensed child care is more affordable than services offered through unlicensed care providers.

### Monthly Child Care Fees in Abbotsford, 2020.<sup>105</sup>

	0–3 Years	3–5 Years	5–12 Years
Licensed Group Child Care	\$823	\$739	\$464
Multi-Age Child Care	\$726	\$753	\$482
Licensed Family Child Care	\$703	\$794	\$482
Registered licence-not-required Child Care	\$844	\$825	-

Affordable child care is out of reach for many families in Abbotsford, particularly lone-parent economic families. In fact, while on average, child care costs account for 8% of the total after-tax income in couple economic families with children, in families led by lone parents, these costs account for 15% of their total average annual income (table below). Put into perspective, for some families, child care expenses equal the average rental price of a bachelor-sized unit (\$766) and almost accounts for 50% of the average rental price of a 3+ bedroom sized household in the community (1,553) in 2020.<sup>106</sup>

### Child Care Costs As Share of After-Tax Income in Abbotsford.

Family Type	Average After-Tax Income	Child Care Cost as Share of After-Tax Income		
		0-3 Years	3-5 Years	5-12 Years
Couple Economic Families with Children	\$101,992	9%	9%	6%
Lone-Parent Economic Families	\$53,548	17%	17%	11%

<sup>105</sup> Fees were collected by Abbotsford CCRR staff in April 2020. 67 of 76 child care facilities/child care providers surveyed responded with their fees. Retrieved from: <http://www.godaycare.com/child-care-cost/british%20columbia>

<sup>106</sup> CMHC. Primary Rental Market Statistics — Abbotsford (CY). Retrieved from: [https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en#Profile/5909052/4/Abbotsford%20\(CY\)](https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmip-pimh/en#Profile/5909052/4/Abbotsford%20(CY))

These annual fees are high relative to census economic family incomes in Abbotsford, and especially in comparison to the income of the main caregiving parent, who may have to sacrifice employment and pay if child care is unaffordable.<sup>107</sup> Further, the lack of affordable care can be bad for businesses because they lose access to skilled workers.<sup>108</sup>

## Talent, Training & Retention<sup>109</sup>

Highly skilled, knowledgeable people are required at every level of an early childhood system and, collectively, they have a significant impact on the quality of programs and outcomes for children and families. Early childhood educators and assistants (ECE/As) are the people who have the most direct impact on child care programs; they are the frontline staff, centre directors, and family child care providers who work with children and families on a daily basis.<sup>110</sup>

As stated by the Government of British Columbia, the backbone of quality child care is quality staff. Yet, the early care and learning sector faces chronic challenges, including high employee turnover and workforce shortages, especially in licensed, centre-based programs.<sup>111</sup> Low wages have been consistently identified as the primary reason for the recruitment and retention challenges experienced in the child care sector,<sup>112</sup> and appear to be of significant importance in Abbotsford’s child care sector.

The following table outlines the hourly rates for child care staff in Abbotsford.<sup>113</sup>

### Hourly Wage Rate for Child Care Staff, Abbotsford.

Position	Hourly Rate
Manager	\$23.25
Special Needs/Infant Toddler	\$21.68
Early Childhood Educator	\$19.67
Responsible Adult	\$15.94
Early Childhood Educator Assistant	\$16.70

<sup>107</sup>Affordable for All. 2018. Making Licensed Child Care Affordable in Ontario. Retrieved from: [http://www.childcarepolicy.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/AFFORDABLE-FOR-ALL\\_Full-Report\\_Final.pdf](http://www.childcarepolicy.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/AFFORDABLE-FOR-ALL_Full-Report_Final.pdf)

<sup>108</sup>Child Care B.C. Caring For Kids, Lifting up Families. The Path to Universal Childcare. Retrieved from: [https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/childcare/2018\\_Child\\_Care\\_BC.pdf](https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/childcare/2018_Child_Care_BC.pdf)

<sup>109</sup> While broadly speaking quality in child care may refer to the existence of adequate health and safety procedures, programming, staff-child ratio, physical space and caregiver training and support (<https://findingqualitychildcare.ca/>), available data in Abbotsford allows us to only refer to the child care quality related to the employment compensation to their staff.

<sup>110</sup> Halfon, S. (2014, October). Canada’s childcare workforce. Retrieved from [https://movingchildcareforward.ca/images/policybriefs/MCCF\\_canadas\\_childcare\\_workforce.pdf](https://movingchildcareforward.ca/images/policybriefs/MCCF_canadas_childcare_workforce.pdf)

<sup>111</sup> Childcare B.C Caring for Kids, Lifting up Families. The Path to Universal Childcare. Retrieved from: [https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/childcare/2018\\_Child\\_Care\\_BC.pdf](https://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/childcare/2018_Child_Care_BC.pdf)

<sup>112</sup>Canada’s Childcare Workforce. 2014. Retrieved from: [https://movingchildcareforward.ca/images/policybriefs/MCCF\\_canadas\\_childcare\\_workforce.pdf](https://movingchildcareforward.ca/images/policybriefs/MCCF_canadas_childcare_workforce.pdf)

<sup>113</sup> Supplied. Hourly rates were recorded for Abbotsford child care employees.

Compared to a living wage estimated at \$16.28 per hour in Abbotsford-Mission, front line workers are predominantly only meeting or slightly above the living wage, which has the potential to impact the recruitment and retention of qualified staff.

As outlined by Halfon (2014),<sup>114</sup> all the available data and research indicates that if wages and working conditions improve, there are real opportunities to improve and sustain the quality of the child care workforce and, therefore, the quality of child care programs. Evidence indicates that with enhanced resources and on-going training and support, the child care workforce is fundamental to delivering high quality child care.

Addressing quality challenges in the child care sector should begin with the recognition that quality programs are delivered by well-trained staff who deserve to earn a competitive wage for their work.

Moreover, while tax credits and grants may create child care spaces in the short term, more is needed to make the province's child care sector sustainable, affordable, and higher quality. The availability of child care spaces is a function of the availability of qualified child care staff who can earn a competitive wage in their chosen profession. Building long-term child care spaces means building the staff resources needed to sustain them.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Halfon, S. (2014, October). Canada's childcare workforce. Retrieved from [https://movingchildcareforward.ca/images/policybriefs/MCCF\\_canadas\\_childcare\\_workforce.pdf](https://movingchildcareforward.ca/images/policybriefs/MCCF_canadas_childcare_workforce.pdf)

<sup>115</sup>What we Heard. Alberta's Consultation on the Creation of Child Care Spaces. Retrieved from: <http://www.assembly.ab.ca/lao/library/egovdocs/2006/alchs/157401.pdf>





# CHILD CARE PRIORITIES & OPPORTUNITIES

This section will provide strategic directions and suggest potential opportunities, priorities, and actions that Abbotsford can take based on the key theme areas that came out of the community consultations. These priorities are informed by the data and research presented throughout this report. As well, key best practices that were found in reviewing child care policies already in place in other cities in BC and across the country have been incorporated.

## The Vision

*A Child- and Family-Friendly Abbotsford, with:*

- *Affordable, accessible, culturally-appropriate child care for those who want it;*
- *Provided by well-trained, well-compensated early childhood educators, caregivers, and daycare providers;*
- *Supporting healthy children in the enhancement of their physical, mental, social, and emotional growth;*
- *Autonomy for working families to power the economy and connect the community.*

## Guiding Principles



**Vibrant  
Economy**



**Complete  
Community**



**Compassionate**



**Caring**



**Efficient**



**Effective**



**Equitable**



**Diverse**



**Inclusive**

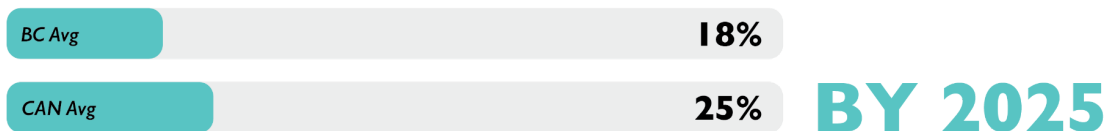


**Thriving**

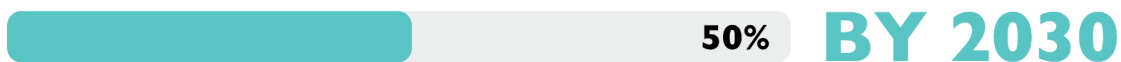
## Space Creation

This Plan suggests the short, medium, and long-term targets that, if implemented, would allow for a progressive increase to 25%, 50%, and 75% coverage in the number of child care spaces in Abbotsford over the next 15 years. This would create early childhood educator and daycare providers jobs locally as well as develop capital investments that could create new centres and retro-fit existing buildings, which would spur economic growth in the community. If the priorities are followed, by 2035, this would mean that Abbotsford would have approximately 17,441 licensed child care spaces, with child care spaces for 75% of the children’s population aged zero to 12, and additional 2,965 multi-age spaces. The community would become a national leader in the area of child care provision.

The projected number of spaces that would be created based on these suggestions is as follows:



By 2025, Abbotsford would have approximately **5,837 spaces** to achieve 25% coverage based on population estimations. This goal would put Abbotsford approximately on track to reaching the Canadian average of 27%. Conversely, if the target was changed to reflect the BC average of 18%, Abbotsford would need to have approximately **4,201 spaces** by the same year, with additional 714 spaces for multi-age programs.



By 2030, Abbotsford would have approximately **11,530 spaces** to achieve 50% coverage, in line with some of the best areas currently in the province.



By 2035, Abbotsford would have approximately **17,441 spaces** to achieve 75% coverage, which would make it one of the top cities for child care coverage in the country, in line with national and international leaders, and completing a transformation for the city into a Child- and Family-Friendly City within 15 years.

## Types of Spaces

The table below breaks down the targets above into projected types of spaces that would be created for each age demographic to progressively achieve those goals:

### Current and Target Child Care Spaces by Age Group, Abbotsford.

Type of Service	Age	Current Spaces	2025 Population	2025 Target (25%)	New Spaces Needed by 2025	Total Spaces by 2025	2030 Population	2030 Target (50%)	New Spaces Needed by 2030	Total Spaces by 2030	2035 Population	2035 Target (75%)	New Spaces Needed by 2035	Total Spaces by 2035
Group Child Care (Birth to 36 months)	0 to 2 Years	320	5,030	1,258	938	1,258	5,147	2,574	1,316	2,574	5,157	3,868	1,294	3,868
Group Child Care (30 months to School Age)	3 to 5 Years	1,487	5,136	1,284	0	1,284	5,252	2,626	1,342	2,626	5,335	4,001	1,375	4,001
Group Child Care (School Age)														
Group Child Care (School Age)	6 to 12 Years	1,005	13,180	3,295	2,493	3,295	12,660	6,330	3,035	6,330	12,762	9,572	3,242	9,572
<b>Total All Age Groups</b>	-	<b>2,812</b>	<b>23,346</b>	<b>5,837</b>	<b>3,431</b>	<b>5,837</b>	<b>23,059</b>	<b>11,530</b>	<b>5,693</b>	<b>11,530</b>	<b>23,254</b>	<b>17,441</b>	<b>5,911</b>	<b>17,441</b>
Multi-Age Child Care, Family Child Care & In-Home Multi Age Child Care	0 to 12 Years	471	-	992	521	992	-	1,960	968	1,960	-	2,965	1,005	2,965
<b>Total with Multi-Age Programs</b>	-	<b>3,283</b>	-	<b>6,829</b>	<b>3,952</b>	<b>6,829</b>	-	<b>13,490</b>	<b>6,661</b>	<b>13,490</b>	-	<b>20,405</b>	<b>6,916</b>	<b>20,405</b>

The primary focus would be on creating group child care spaces for zero- to two-year-olds as well as school-age children (six- to 12-year olds), as those are the areas that require the most attention based on the data and research. Group Child Care for three- to five-year-olds, as noted, would require investments as well, but at lower levels than the other areas.

As well, the below chart details the number of spaces that would need to be created by 2025 in order to reach the current BC average:

### Child Care Spaces by Age Demographic to Reach 18% Coverage Targets by 2025.

Type of Service	Age	Current Spaces	2025 Population	2025 Target (18%)	New Spaces Needed by 2025	Total Spaces by 2025
Group Child Care (Birth to 36 months)	0 to 2 Years	320	5,030	905	585	905
Group Child Care (30 months to School Age)	3 to 5 Years	1,487	5,136	924	0	924

Group Child Care (School Age)						
Group Child Care (School Age)	6 to 12 Years	1,005	13,180	2,372	804	2,372
<b>Total all age groups</b>	-	<b>2,812</b>	<b>23,346</b>	<b>4,201</b>	<b>1,389</b>	<b>4,201</b>
Multi-Age Child Care, Family Child Care & In-Home Multi Age Child Care	0 to 12 Years	471	-	714	243	714
<b>Total with Multi-Age Options</b>	-	<b>3,283</b>	-	<b>4,915</b>	<b>1,632</b>	<b>4,915</b>

## Areas of Need

<p>Need #1</p> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Increasing Availability</h3>	<p><b>Trends and Learning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a clear desire for more licensed spaces from Abbotsford community members as seen in survey data and heard in community consultations.</li> <li>• There is a lack of licensed child care spaces for all age demographics based on provincial and national standards, and parents want to see a wider variety of different options.</li> <li>• Indigenous people, as well as growing populations of newcomers and racialised people particularly in the large South Asian community, require spaces that are culturally-specific and provided in languages other than English.</li> </ul>
<p><b>By increasing the number of spaces and the types of spaces available, parents and families in Abbotsford would have more choice and more freedom.</b></p>	

<b>Opportunities</b>
<b>A. Number of Spaces</b>
Actions
<p>Ensure policies related to child care space creation are reflected in the Abbotsford Community Plan and other city documents, so future land use and development decisions in all areas (such as population growth, housing creation, commercial and economic development, immigration, children’s health, etc.) always consider the potential for inclusion of child care spaces.<sup>116</sup></p>
<p>Explore alternative, innovative locations for child care space development, including possibilities such as converting municipal facilities and existing spaces (i.e. churches, commercial spaces, rec centres,</p>

<sup>116</sup> Let's Talk Child Care in Chilliwack. City of Chilliwack. Retrieved from: <https://www.chilliwack.com/main/page.cfm?id=2851>

etc.) at a below-market rate, and including child care spaces in any new facilities.
Consider adopting policies that would prioritise or incentivise leases to providers that would address key areas (i.e. under-served groups such as newcomers or Indigenous people, providers with flexible hours of operation, etc.). <sup>117</sup>
Look into options and incentives for existing unlicensed providers to become licensed through available BC provincial grants.
Consider grants or tax exemptions to encourage home-based space creation, retrofits, or new construction.
Discuss with federal and provincial housing bodies the potential to more directly integrate child care spaces in new housing projects. <sup>118</sup>
Evaluate expansion of school-based possibilities for older children with school boards, as this can ease transportation issues and improve convenience for parents.
Consider preparing and distributing outreach information for local non-profits to encourage them to consider adding child care spaces to their buildings when possible, which could include information on benefits to both themselves and the wider community, explain licensing requirements, and address any potential concerns. <sup>119</sup>
Explore developing and constructing new licensed child care centres, contingent on additional needs and location assessments (see suggestions below).
<b>B. Types of Spaces</b>
Consider commissioning a secondary needs assessment that reviews and recommends (based on the projections in this report): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● number of culturally-specific spaces for Indigenous and South Asian populations;</li> <li>● required spaces for children with diverse or complex needs; and</li> <li>● desired number of non-profit versus for-profit spaces.</li> </ul>
Explore creation of child care spaces with:

<sup>117</sup> Childcare Action Plan-Township of Langley. Retrieved from: <https://www.tol.ca/your-township/social-sustainability/children-and-youth/child-care-action-plan/>

<sup>118</sup> Let's Talk Child Care in Chilliwack. City of Chilliwack. Retrieved from: <https://www.chilliwack.com/main/page.cfm?id=2851>

<sup>119</sup> Let's Talk Child Care in Chilliwack. City of Chilliwack. Retrieved from: <https://www.chilliwack.com/main/page.cfm?id=2851>

- More open spaces to facilitate free play;
- More outdoor education for pre-school and school-age kids;
- More pre- and post-natal care; and
- More groups for parents that have a child care component to provide support and respite for lone parents.

Look for opportunities for intergenerational interaction, particularly with groups for seniors, where older adults would be able to share skills, wisdom, and stories with younger children and youth.

## BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

In 2017, Durham Region (in Ontario) launched Journey Together, a project that aims to enhance access to culturally-relevant, Indigenous-led early years programs and services off-reserve, including child care, and child and family programs. Within the recommendations, the region committed to the development of a centrally-located, land-based Indigenous Child Care and Early Years Centre of Excellence, and the creation of an Indigenous Early Years Certification.<sup>120</sup>

Need #2

### Improving Affordability

To make high-quality, professional child care affordable to all families who need it.

### Trends and Learning

- Parents report that child care in Abbotsford can be prohibitively expensive and the need for greater affordability was a key theme heard from the community.
- Lone-parent economic families currently pay a substantial proportion of their income to afford child care.
- Improving affordability will help community members with lower incomes, so they can access high-quality child care and improve their overall quality of life.

<sup>120</sup> Durham Region. 2018. Early Learning and Child Care Service Plan. Retrieved from: [https://www.durham.ca/en/living-here/resources/Documents/Child-Care-and-Early-Learning/2018-to-2022-Early-Learning-and-Child-Care-Plan\\_LowRes.pdf](https://www.durham.ca/en/living-here/resources/Documents/Child-Care-and-Early-Learning/2018-to-2022-Early-Learning-and-Child-Care-Plan_LowRes.pdf)

Opportunities
Actions
Consider endorsing the provincial \$10-a-Day Plan.
Advocate to the Ministry of Children and Family Development for \$10-a-Day prototype sites in Abbotsford.
Continue to advocate to provincial and federal governments to increase investments in child care and provide other incentives in other areas, such as flexibility on child tax credit spending use.

<p>Need #3</p> <p><b>Enhancing Accessibility</b></p>	<p><b>Trends and Learning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Some areas of Abbotsford have higher rates of child care access than others.</li> <li>● Community members noted a desire for a greater variety and flexibility in service provision in terms of hours of operation and before- and after-school programming to help parents who work non-standard hours or shift work.</li> <li>● Families may not be able to easily access child care via public transportation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>By improving access, more families would be able to find child care options that are easy to find and that suits their needs.</b></p>	

Opportunities
A. Location of Spaces
Action
Explore commissioning a location-based needs assessment and gap analysis, using the above space creation targets and in coordination with City Planning and current Master Plans, to ensure that spot creation occurs in locations most needed in the city.

Consider examining parking stall requirements for child care space regulations, which can be a barrier to space creation.
Consider reviewing zoning bylaws, and either revising or establishing land use regulations, that would serve to remove barriers to development and enable further creation of child care spaces in areas zoned as residential, commercial, and institutional. <sup>121</sup>
Prioritise new child care facilities in neighbourhoods with larger populations of children or that are frequented by families, as well as around existing and future-planned family service hubs, schools, seniors' centres, parks, and recreation centres to create and strengthen child care hubs. <sup>122,123</sup>
<b>B. Flexibility of Hours and Program Diversity</b>
Develop partnerships with First Nations that are part of Sto:lo Nation specifically focused on expanding child care provision off-reserve in the city for Indigenous children and parents in order to improve and grow culturally-appropriate child care options and spaces.
Explore ways to establish family-friendly policies for employees (e.g. compressed work weeks; flexible scheduling to accommodate employees' child care needs).
Encourage, in collaboration with the local school district, creative expansion of before- and after-school programs to alleviate stress on the child care system, and provide families with more options.
Investigate Neighbourhood Network models that would better allow families to find child care within their social circles and local communities.
Assess integration possibilities between child care and other systems in Abbotsford (food systems; business and child care licensing integration; housing; multi-generational services and seniors services; etc.).
<b>C. Transportation</b>
Regularly review Master Transportation Plan with consideration for accessibility of public transport to daycares and child care providers, including transportation out to rural areas, and ensuring flexible

<sup>121</sup> Let's Talk Child Care in Chilliwack. City of Chilliwack. Retrieved from: <https://www.chilliwack.com/main/page.cfm?id=2851>

<sup>122</sup> Let's Talk Child Care in Chilliwack. City of Chilliwack. Retrieved from: <https://www.chilliwack.com/main/page.cfm?id=2851>

<sup>123</sup> Hardwired for Adventure. District of Squamish. Retrieved from: <https://squamish.ca/business-and-development/home-land-and-property-development/childcare/>



operation times, allowing people in more remote areas or who work non-traditional hours (i.e. overnight, weekends, early mornings, evenings) to increase access to child care spaces.

## BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

As part of their Early Years Service System Plan, Bruce County (ON) created OneList, an online child care application system that simplifies the process of finding and applying for child care. It connects families with all registered child care providers in their chosen area and lets them apply to one or more programs with one simple application.<sup>124</sup>

Need #4

### Fostering Talent, Training & Retention

By making child care work well-paying and an attractive career path, more parents would have higher-quality care, and more workers would stay longer and maintain higher standards.

#### Trends and Learning:

- Child care workers often make less than a living wage which can lead to high staff turnover and burnout rates, as well as recruitment and retention issues
- Community members desired to see early childhood educators making competitive wages with benefits as this would enhance recruitment and retention of high-quality workers and improve incentives to increase educational and training standards

### Opportunities

#### Action

Work with the provincial government to attain a \$25 an hour (adjusted for inflation) wage for ECEs at government-funded, non-profit child care centres to allow for competitiveness, and attract and retain new talent.

<sup>124</sup> Bruce County. 2019 . Bruce County's Child Care and Early Years Service System Plan for 2019-2024. Retrieved from: [https://brucecounty.on.ca/sites/default/files/COB0004%20Children%20Service%20Plan\\_WEB.pdf](https://brucecounty.on.ca/sites/default/files/COB0004%20Children%20Service%20Plan_WEB.pdf)

Explore, in collaboration with Sto:lo Nation, the creation of an Indigenous ECE recruitment plan.
Work on implementation of diverse hiring practices to foster equitable and inclusive hiring to ensure key communities are represented within child care
Look at ways to increase training opportunities, including through advocacy to the provincial government.
Explore creating affordable housing options for ECEs that are proportionate to cost of living and sector wages, and assess the possibility for inclusion of such options in future Abbotsford Affordable Housing Strategies.
Consider providing informational sessions for post-secondary graduates exploring career options to bolster ECE recruitment efforts.



## BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES

The Town of Comox is developing ECE talent and retention strategies such as: introducing wages and benefits that align with the workload; providing free and/or subsidised training, bursaries for education, and funded practicums; recognising other related training equivalencies; and offering paid training days and mentorship programs.<sup>125</sup>

<p>Need #5 <b>Coordinating Between Sectors</b></p>	<p><b>Trends and Learning:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community members recognised that child care was a shared responsibility, requiring input, collaboration, and</li> </ul>
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<sup>125</sup> Comox Child Care Action Plan. 2019. Retrieved from: [http://agendaminutes.comoxvalleyrd.ca/Agenda\\_minutes/CVRDBoard/BRD/17-Dec-19/Comox%20Valley%20Child%20Care%20Action%20Plan%20Final%20Report%20-%20December%206,%20202019.pdf](http://agendaminutes.comoxvalleyrd.ca/Agenda_minutes/CVRDBoard/BRD/17-Dec-19/Comox%20Valley%20Child%20Care%20Action%20Plan%20Final%20Report%20-%20December%206,%20202019.pdf)

<p><b>Ensuring that the future action plan is coordinated between all key stakeholders in Abbotsford, and that there is accountability in its implementation.</b></p>	<p>coordination from a wide variety of different organisations and institutions, including government, Indigenous organisations, the business sector, school boards, for-profit and non-profit child care providers, and more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful improvement of child care in Abbotsford will therefore require a holistic, “whole-community” model to both build new connections and enhance existing partnerships between a variety of sectors and organisations.</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Recommendations and Strategic Directions</b></p>
<p><b>Action</b></p>
<p>Consider creating an ongoing Child Care Committee that could serve as an expansion to the Early Years Table with representatives from: City Council, the Sto:lo Nation, social services, health care, school boards, local businesses, and both private and non-profit child care operators. This committee would be responsible for the development of a Child Care Action Plan that meets UBCM requirements (based on this report), the implementation and ongoing revisions of the Plan, and be accountable for the ongoing development and improvement of child care in Abbotsford.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore opportunities to collaborate with Sto:lo Nation to create an Indigenous child care working group.</li> <li>• Explore opportunities to collaborate particularly with leadership in the South Asian community to ensure culturally-specific child care needs in that community are being met.</li> </ul>
<p>Assess potential for a <b>Child Care Coordinator role</b> to navigate across the relevant systems. This position could work regionally (across Abbotsford-Mission), and liaise with neighbouring districts (when possible) for regional child care through a joint agreement between local government partners, and funded proportionately based on population and tax base.</p>
<p><b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b></p>
<p>Explore potential for cross-sectoral planning and coordination groups from Child Care Committee members to: monitor the development of new spaces; advocate with higher levels of government; streamline processes for providers; seek input from families and other stakeholders; collaborate on applications for new child care facilities; promote public and non-profit partnership, etc.</p>

Assess ways to utilise a Real-Time Child Care Inventory. The HelpSeeker Systems Mapping platform is currently being configured to create a real-time Child Care Inventory for Abbotsford.

This service will allow individuals to find the appropriate child care option for their children while also providing insights about programs and services demands, gaps and opportunities to policy makers, as well as facilitating keeping track of available child care spaces in the community.

For more information on the creation of the Inventory, please refer to [Annex E](#).



## CONCLUSION

Abbotsford is committed to a bright, vibrant, and healthy future for parents, families, and children—one in which children get the support they need to grow and flourish. The COVID-19 pandemic has cast early learning and child care in a new light: as an essential service necessary not only to assist families, but also to rebuild a well-functioning economy. However, at the same time, the sector finds itself at risk. For a rapidly-growing and diversifying city like Abbotsford, investments in child care are essential to create jobs, to allow parents to get back to work, and to foster the social and emotional development of children to live happy, healthy lives. While there is much work to be done, improving child care is the right choice at the right time in history for Abbotsford, and presents an exceptional opportunity for the city and an investment in its collective future.

# Annex A: Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements (SELCCA) by Statistics Canada<sup>126</sup>

In 2019, the Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements (SELCCA) found that in Canada about 60% of children under the age of six participated in some form of formal or informal child care in the previous three months. This represents almost 1.4 million young children. The type and quality of non-parental child care in the early years has been linked to healthy childhood development and school readiness. Moreover, about two-thirds of one- to three-year-olds (68%) and four- to five-year-olds (65%) were in child care, compared with about one-quarter of children under the age of one (24%). The lower participation rate of infants reflects the fact that some parents have access to parental leave.

Daycare centres, preschools, or centres de la petite enfance (CPE) were the most commonly-used types of arrangements (52% of children in child care), followed by care by a relative other than a parent (26%), and a family child care home (20%). Some parents used multiple arrangements to meet all of their child care needs.

Differences in the type of care were also found to be based on the child's age. Children who were under the age of one were most likely to be cared for by a relative (46% of infants in child care), while children aged one and older were more likely to be in a daycare centre, preschool, or CPE (58% of children aged one to three years, and 47% of children aged four to five years). About one-quarter (24%) of children aged one to three who were in child care were in a family child care home, compared with 14% of children aged four to five years. Finally, about 25% of four- and five-year-old children in child care participated in a before- or after-school program.

Parents/guardians reported a variety of reasons for using the main type of child care, that is, the one used for the most hours per week. More than half of parents/guardians of children aged zero to five years said that the choice was based on location (61%) and/or based on the characteristics of the individual providing care (53%). Many parents/guardians also chose their main arrangement because of the hours of operation (41%) or because it was affordable (40%).

Almost two-thirds (64%) of parents/guardians who had a child in child care reported that they had no difficulty finding an early learning and child care arrangement. However, some parents/guardians of children aged zero to five years did report challenges, which may relate to availability, cost, flexibility, or quality. Among all parents of children aged zero to five years, 12% had difficulty finding child care in their community, 11% had difficulty finding affordable child care, 8% had difficulty finding care that fit their work or study schedule, and 8% had difficulty finding the quality of care that they desired.

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<sup>126</sup> Government of Canada. 2019. Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements. Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190410/dq190410a-eng.htm>

According to this survey, early learning and child care arrangements include any form of care for children, formal or informal, by someone other than their parent or guardian. Examples include the use of daycare facilities, in-home care by a relative or non-relative, as well as before- and after-school programs. Occasional babysitting or kindergarten were excluded from the survey.

Not all parents need or choose to use non-parental child care arrangements. Results from the survey suggested that almost two in ten children aged zero to five (17%) had a parent/guardian who had decided to stay at home, 11% had a parent at home on maternity or parental leave, and 6% had a parent who was unemployed. Approximately 6% of children were not participating in child care because they were in kindergarten.

Other reasons for not using child care included that the cost was too high (10% of all parents of children aged zero to five), and/or that there was a shortage of spaces or a waiting list (3%).

This survey is part of the Government of Canada's investment in early learning and child care. Information will be used to provide a current snapshot of the use of child care and of barriers to child care access. The results of this survey can be used to inform research, policies, and programs aimed at improving the accessibility and affordability of high-quality early learning and child care in Canada.

## Annex B: Other Federal Investments in Early Learning and Child Care<sup>127</sup>

Canada Social Transfer	Over \$1.3 billion was transferred to provinces and territories to support families with young children in 2016–2017 through the Canada Social Transfer. This is a national allocation for early childhood development, early learning and child care, and child care spaces.
Canada Child Benefit	Canada Child Benefit payments began in July 2016, replacing the Canada Child Tax Benefit, including the National Child Benefit supplement and the Universal Child Care Benefit. The Canada Child Benefit provides a maximum of \$6,400 per child under the age of 6 years and \$5,400 per child aged 6–17 years.
Disability Tax Credit	Families caring for a child with a severe disability are eligible for the Disability Tax Credit, which provides an additional maximum of \$2,730 per child. The payment is included in the Canada Child Benefit. The phase-out rates are aligned with the Canada Child Benefit.
Child Care Expense Deduction	Parents may claim child care costs to a maximum of \$8,000 per child up to age 7; \$5,000 per child between the ages of 7 and 16 years and infirm dependent children over age 16; and \$11,000 for a child eligible for the Disability Tax Credit, regardless of their age. The deduction is available to parents who are employed, self-employed, or in school or job training. The deduction may not exceed two thirds of earned income for the year (not applicable to single-parents or students), and is generally claimed by the parent with the lower income except in cases of illness, disability, or separation. About 1.3 million individuals claimed the deduction in 2014.
GST Exemption	Child care services provided for periods of less than 24 hours to children 14 years of age or younger are generally exempt from GST.
Investment Tax Credit for Child Care Spaces	Available to eligible businesses to create new child care spaces, the measure provides a non-refundable tax credit of 25 per cent to a maximum credit of \$10,000 per space in new or existing licensed child care facilities. Due to the low uptake (fewer than 20 corporations claim the credit each year), it was discontinued in 2017.
Teacher and Early Childhood Educator School Supply Tax Credit	Qualified teachers and early childhood educators can claim a 15 per cent refundable tax credit based on personal spending of up to \$1,000 in eligible program supplies per year. Eligible supplies include games, craft supplies, books, and educational software. Annual payouts totalling \$25 million are projected starting in 2017.

<sup>127</sup> Adapted from: Early Childhood Education Report. n.d. Federal Profile 2017. Retrieved from: <http://ecereport.ca/media/uploads/2017-report-pdfs/ece-report2017-en-feb6.pdf>

# Annex C: BC's Current Strategies to Improve Affordability, Accessibility, and the Quality of Care in the Province<sup>128</sup>

Dimension	Strategy	Description
Affordability	Child Care Fee Reductions	<p>Starting on April 1, 2018, parents with children in licensed care will be eligible for the following fee reductions if their child care provider opts in to the program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Up to \$350/month for group infant/toddler care</li> <li>- Up to \$200/month for family infant/toddler care</li> <li>- Up to \$100/month for group care for children aged 3–5</li> <li>- Up to \$60/month for family care for children aged 3–5.</li> </ul> <p>These fee reductions are expected to benefit up to 50,000 families.</p>
	New Affordable Child Care Benefit	<p>In addition to directly lowering fees for families with children in licensed care, Budget 2018 will also fund a new affordable child care benefit to help bring more relief to parents.</p> <p>This new benefit, which families will be able to apply for beginning in September 2018, will significantly lower the cost of child care for more BC families. Families with pre-tax incomes of \$45,000 or less will receive the full benefit, up to the cost of care, while those who make up to \$111,000 will receive a reduced amount, scaling according to income.</p>
Accessibility	Licensed Child Care for More Kids	<p>As part of Budget 2018, the province is investing \$237 million to improve access, including delivering more than 22,000 new spaces throughout the province. Combined with the new spaces, the province is creating with the federal government as part of the Early Learning and Child Care agreement, room for 24,000 more children to access quality, affordable child care, and laying a strong foundation for universal child care in BC</p>
	Improving Flexibility for Families	<p>This strategy aims at making it easier for family child care providers to receive support for their operations and to accelerate the availability of child care that is co-located on school grounds, so we can deliver more spaces in more neighbourhoods and more communities. This includes bringing in full-day early care and learning centres at up to eight existing StrongStart BC Centres.</p>

<sup>128</sup> Adapted from: Government of British Columbia. 2018. Child Care BC



	Improving Access for All Children	<p>Recognising that one size doesn't fit all, and with the support of the federal government, the province is taking action to make child care supports more inclusive for every family.</p> <p>By providing additional funding to reduce waitlists for Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Development programs, the province is helping children access the services they need to succeed.</p> <p>The province is also lifting up vulnerable families by increasing supports for young parents as they complete their secondary-school education, including providing access to no-fee child care.</p>
	Indigenous-Led Child Care	<p>While Indigenous children and families are expected to have full access to the enhancements made to the provincial child care system, there is also recognition that we have an obligation to ensure that Indigenous kids, their families, and their communities have access to child care that meets their specific needs.</p> <p>The BC government is guided by its commitment to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP –supporting Indigenous peoples' rights to self-determination and governance. In addition, staff in all ministries are reviewing policies, programs, and legislation to implement the principles of the Declaration and the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. These steps are especially important when it comes to designing services for Indigenous children.</p>
Quality of Care	Supporting Early Childhood Educators Through Recruitment and Retention	<p>The backbone of quality child care is quality staff. Like most Canadian provinces, British Columbia's early care and learning sector faces chronic challenges, including high employee turnover, and workforce shortages, especially in licensed, centre-based programs.</p> <p>Early Childhood Educators are critical to the quality of care and learning in licensed facilities. Budget 2018 provides \$136 million over three years to enhance quality of care, including important new supports for training and development, as well as a workforce development strategy. Working with partners in child care, the province will establish the human resource strategies needed to attract and retain skilled and experienced early learning and child care workers, including consideration of appropriate remuneration.</p> <p>As part of Government's Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy,<sup>129</sup> front-line Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) working in licensed child care facilities may be eligible to receive a \$2-per-hour wage enhancement. Additional funding for statutory benefits is also provided at a rate of 18.73%.</p> <p>Participation in the Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement (ECE-WE) is optional, and child care providers can apply at any time.</p>

<sup>129</sup> Ministry of Child and Family Development. (2021, January 14). Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement. Retrieved from <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/running-daycare-preschool/child-care-operating-funding/wage-enhancement>

	<p>Helping Existing Child Care Providers Become Licensed</p>	<p>One of the most efficient and effective ways to expand licensed child care across British Columbia is to help existing providers become licensed.</p> <p>Recognising the cost of this change, the province will provide start-up grants to offset the cost of becoming licensed for these providers. Once they become licensed, they will be able to pass on a child care fee reduction to parents using their services, as part of our affordability commitments under Child Care BC</p> <p>Family providers will also be supported with a new training model to deliver quality care.</p>
	<p>Protecting Kids with Enhanced Accountability</p>	<p>One of the biggest benefits to moving to universal child care will be enhanced safety and improved accountability from child care providers.</p> <p>As our licensed system grows, the province must scale up our efforts to maintain the quality of care offered to kids. To do that, the BC government will increase capacity in Health Authorities to license new spaces, conduct investigations, and monitor compliance.</p> <p>BC's laws will also be strengthened to make sure that unlicensed child care providers who are acting outside of their legal operating mandate are identified and held accountable.</p>
	<p>Joining Providers in Continuous Improvement</p>	<p>As part of improvements to quality, the province will update the Early Learning Framework that guides programs for children up to the age of eight years in both early care and learning facilities and in schools. This will help children be better prepared for the transition to kindergarten and ensure that they are well-supported once they get there.</p> <p>Child Care Resource and Referral programs are already doing valuable work to improve the quality of child care available in BC, and the province will work closely with these community organisations as the child care system improves.</p> <p>Quality decisions are guided by quality information. The province will upgrade and enhance data collection through the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) to help us better understand the child care and early learning system as it currently exists and make evidence-informed policy decisions moving forward.</p>

	<p>Building Partnerships, Delivering Care</p>	<p>The province is working closely with other governments, child care providers, parents, and communities to strengthen early childhood development and early learning care, laying the groundwork for universal child care.</p> <p>The federal government is a valuable partner in child care. They are investing \$153 million into Child Care BC as part of the Early Learning and Child Care Framework. This funding will be put towards increasing the number of infant and toddler child care spaces in areas of highest need and providing low-cost infant and toddler care spaces, supporting culturally-appropriate care for Indigenous families, as well as other initiatives meant to support vulnerable families.</p> <p>Local governments can also be valuable partners. They know their communities well and they are well-placed to help plan the expansion of licensed child care. Through grants, the province will support them to build more spaces and create plans to inform their local needs and priorities for child care. By enhancing collaboration between provincial and local governments, the province will streamline the process of creating child care for families in communities that need it.</p>
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# Annex D: Child Care Action Plans in BC Communities

## Report Highlights

### *City of Chilliwack.*<sup>130</sup>

The Plan is complete and available on the City of Chilliwack website. The four strategic directions that emerged from the research to improve and strengthen access to quality and affordable child care spaces in Chilliwack are as follows:

- Strategic Direction 1: Identify Opportunities for Advocacy, Partnerships, and Collaboration Related to City Child Care Systems;
- Strategic Direction 2: Support the Creation of Additional Child Care Spaces;
- Strategic Direction 3: Improve Access for all Families to 'Child-Centric' Child Care throughout the City;
- Strategic Direction 4: Establish a Child Care Monitoring, Reporting, and Information Framework.

### *District of North Vancouver.*<sup>131</sup>

Work to prepare the Plan got underway in October 2019, and is currently anticipated to conclude in Spring 2020. The District is posting updates on the website as the plan develops.

### *District of Sechelt, Town of Gibsons and Sunshine Coast Regional District.*<sup>132</sup>

The Plan is complete available on the District of Sechelt website. The Plan makes five recommendations:

1. Endorse the Targets for Child Care Spaces
2. Advocate for a Universal Child Care System
3. Continue to Develop Initiatives to Attract and Maintain Early Childhood Education Workers
4. Create a Streamlined Process for Child Care in BC
5. Create a Joint Child Care (JCC) Council for the Sunshine Coast

### *District of Squamish.*<sup>133</sup>

The Plan is complete and available on the District of Squamish website. The Plan focuses on tangible, actionable strategies for advancing the highest priority recommendations in the Squamish Child Care Needs Assessment & Strategy 2018-2023. Actions include:

- Implement preliminary amenity space creation guidelines;
- Provide affordable housing for Early Childhood Educators;
- Update District of Squamish resources and requirements;
- Provide child-minding service;

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<sup>130</sup> Let's Talk Child Care in Chilliwack. City of Chilliwack. Retrieved from: <https://www.chilliwack.com/main/page.cfm?id=2851>

<sup>131</sup> District of North Vancouver. District of Goldstream. Retrieved from: <https://www.dnv.org/programs-services/child-care-action-plan>

<sup>132</sup> Sunshine Coast Child Care Action Plan. Retrieved From: <https://www.sechelt.ca/Live/Current-District-Projects/Sunshine-Coast-Childcare-Action-Plan>

<sup>133</sup> Hardwired for Adventure. District of Squamish. Retrieved from: <https://squamish.ca/business-and-development/home-land-and-property-development/childcare/>

- Improve middle years (ages seven to12) programming; and
- Build partnership between the District of Squamish and School District 48.

*Greater Vernon.*<sup>134</sup>

The Plan is complete and available on the greater Vernon website. The Plan summarises:

1. Child Care Spaces Targets and Predicted Need Trends
2. Affordable Child Care

And further details specific recommendations for each of the following stakeholders:

- Provincial Government
- City of Vernon
- District of Coldstream

*Township of Langley.*<sup>135</sup>

Work to prepare the Plan got underway in October 2019, and is currently anticipated to conclude in July 2020, with the implementation phase to follow. The Township of Langley is posting updates on the website as the plan develops.

## Annex E: HelpSeeker Analytics and Real-Time Inventory

### HelpSeeker Analytics

The City of Abbotsford is using HelpSeeker, a systems mapping platform that generates real-time insights for better decision making for funders and policy makers while connecting vulnerable people to the right services. HelpSeeker offers an interactive platform/app with information about programs and resources for mental health, counselling, addictions, housing, and other services available in your community. This platform/app is a free resource to connect people to over 100,000 help services across Canada.

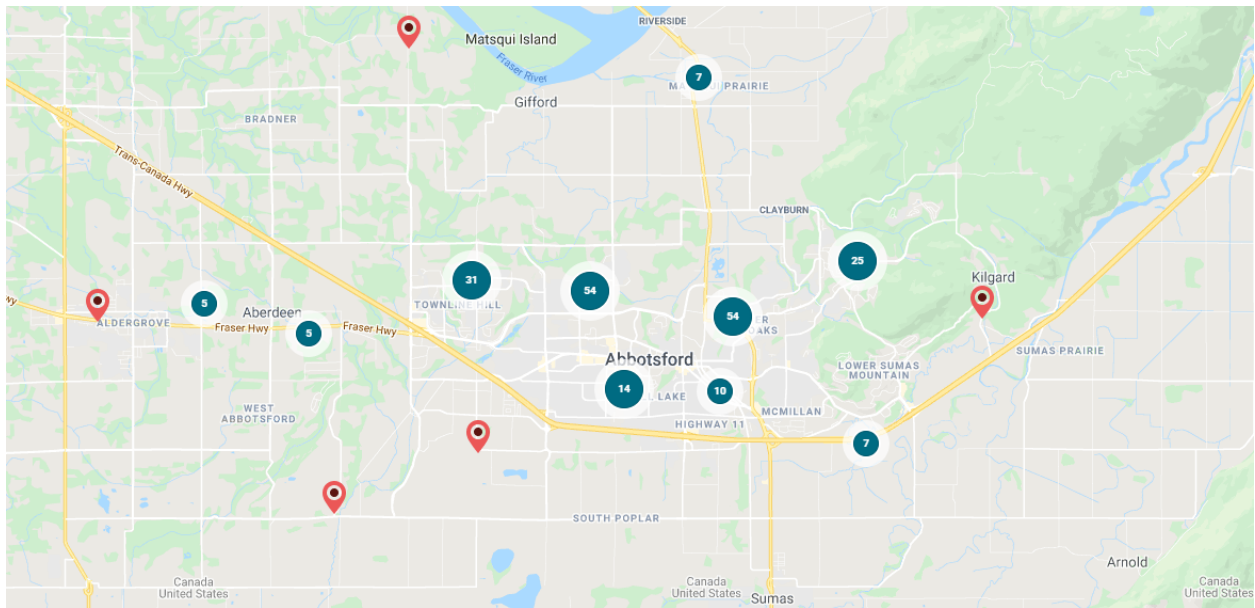
As of February 28th, 2020, HelpSeeker has listed 215 child care services (135 locations and 80 programs) in Abbotsford, accounting for approximately 39% of the total services available for families and parenting in HelpSeeker. The image below outlines the location of these services in the community.

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<sup>134</sup> Greater Vernon. Childcare Space Action Plan. Retrieved from: [https://www.vernon.ca/sites/default/files/docs/recreation/child\\_care\\_space\\_action\\_plan\\_final.pdf](https://www.vernon.ca/sites/default/files/docs/recreation/child_care_space_action_plan_final.pdf)

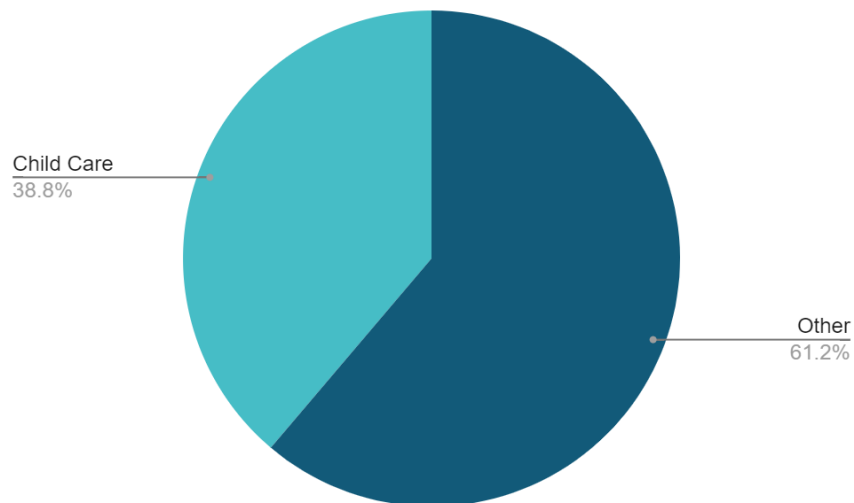
<sup>135</sup> Childcare Action Plan-Township of Langley. Retrieved from: <https://www.tol.ca/your-township/social-sustainability/children-and-youth/child-care-action-plan/>

## Child Care Services in Abbotsford



In terms of interactions,<sup>136</sup> during the first two months of 2021, child care listing interactions accounted for 39% of the total number of interactions for families and parenting services registered in HelpSeeker during the same period of time.

### HelpSeeker Families and Parenting Interactions, January & February 2021.



<sup>136</sup> Interactions include searches, visits, calls, reviews, phone calls, and ratings made in HelpSeeker's platform/app. Given the ongoing rollout of HelpSeeker in Abbotsford, the interaction patterns presented here will need to be updated as longer-term use becomes available.

## HelpSeeker Real-Time Inventory Process

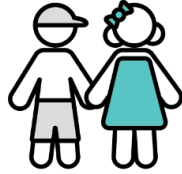
The following process was undertaken to create a Child Care Inventory for for-profit, affordable, accessible child care for infant/toddlers, three- to five-year-olds, and before- and after- school care spaces:

### **Child Care mapping process:**

1. Gather resources and direction from communities on which community and social services they would like mapped.
2. Compare our listings to new listings identified and make any necessary changes and updates.
3. Enter all pertinent details, including funding sources if available.
4. Mapping is complete when all resources have been entered and web searches for local resources and QA have been completed.
5. Six-to-nine months after the initial mapping, system mapping analysts will go through the area again and map any new resources identified.

### **Onboarding Child Care Providers:**

1. Next phase of the mapping process is engagement with service providers to “claim” their listing(s).
2. Agencies receive a free account and gain access to their information.
3. Individual agencies are then responsible for ensuring the data in the system is accurate and up-to-date.
4. We work with community partners on a marketing strategy involving sending out a series of emails to claimed and unclaimed listings with individualised messaging.
5. Systems mappers phone unclaimed agency listings to help service providers sign up, provide further information, and offer marketing materials.



## **CHILD CARE IN ABBOTSFORD:**

Current State  
and Anticipated Needs



**HelpSeeker**  
Technologies