

Chilliwack Child Care Needs Assessment & Strategy



2019-2029



CITY OF
CHILLIWACK

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The information in this report is accurate and used with permission to the best of our knowledge. All data was captured later in 2019 and please note that information may not have been available and in that case we had to rely on similar studies or secondary sources. If you have issues or concerns or corrections please do contact cherie.ennsconsulting@gmail.com

Acknowledgments

Chilliwack Child Care Space Creation Vision

The 2019-2029 Chilliwack Child Care Space Creation Action Plan was created using funds provided by the B.C. Ministry of Children and Family Development, through the 2019 Community Child Care Planning Program and overseen by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM). This project was made possible due to significant input from the parents, children, child care providers, community partners, businesses, and other stakeholders in child care from the community. A special thank you to...

...The **581 parents** who shared their own child care experiences, challenges and suggestions by completing the parent survey, engaging with staff at community events, and by participating in informal interviews.

...The **69 child care providers and ECE professionals** who provided a wealth of insight into Chilliwack's current child care needs, helping to identify the specific challenges, gaps, and opportunities, all of which were imperative to the development of this report. Your passion and dedication to the success and well-being of the children and families in our community was overwhelmingly evident. Thank you for the important work that you do.

...The Municipalities who completed their assessments as we were able to build on this knowledge in the completion of the plan.

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This project could not have been possible without the commitment and dedication of the project's Steering Committee. The committee oversaw the project's overall development, provided valuable consultation, and performed a detailed review of the draft report. Your commitment and dedication to facilitating the assessment of local child care needs and improving the access to child care in our city is truly appreciated and commendable.

Thank you to all who were involved in this project.

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Glossary of Terms

Affordable Child Care Benefit (ACCB) is a monthly payment to help eligible families with the cost of child care based on income, family size, and type of care, which replaced the Child Care Subsidy on September 1, 2018. Families need to renew their application every year.

BC Early Childhood Tax Benefit (BCECTB) is a tax-free monthly payment made to eligible families to help with the cost of raising children under the age of six. Benefits are combined with the Federal Canada Child Benefit (CCB) and the BC Family Bonus Program (BCFB) into a single monthly payment.

Canada Child Benefit (CCB) is a federally funded tax-free financial benefit, adjusted according to income, disbursed to families with children under 18 years, intended to help families with the cost of raising children.

Child is in this report a person under the age of 13.

Child Care as referenced in this report, is a licensed child care program that complies with the BC Community Care & Assisted Living Act and the BC Child Care Licensing Regulation. Programs provide care for three or more children, meeting specific requirements for health and safety, license application, staff qualifications, quality space and equipment, staff to child ratio, and program standards.

Childcare BC New Spaces Fund is a provincial initiative that supports the creation, expansion and relocation of child care facilities throughout B.C.

Childcare BC Plan is a provincial child care initiative that aims to ensure that families in B.C. have access to affordable, quality child care that meets their needs by implementing programs that reduce child care fees for parents, build more licensed spaces, and increase supports for those working in the sector.

Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) is intended to enhance childcare affordability for families by offering funding to eligible,

licensed child care providers to reduce and stabilize monthly parent fees. Providers enrolled in CCFRI through the Ministry of Children and Family Development (the Ministry) receive Parent Fee Reduction Payments and an Administrative Top-up Payment in addition to their Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) base funding, which they are required to pass along to parents in the form of reduced parent fees, up to the following amounts for full-time care:

- \$350/month for group infant/toddler care (under 36 months);
- \$200/month for family infant/toddler care (under 36 months);
- \$100/month for group care for children aged three years to Kindergarten; and
- \$60/month for family care for children aged three years to Kindergarten.

Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) helps child care providers with the day-to-day costs of running a licensed child care facility, reduce fees for parents, and enhance Early Childhood Educator wages. CCOF is available for eligible licensed providers through CCOF Base Funding, the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) and the Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement (ECE-WE). Participation in CCOF Base Funding, CCFRI and ECE-WE is optional, however enrolment in CCOF Base Funding is required to be eligible for CCFRI and ECE-WE.

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) is a provincially funded local support service to enhance the availability and quality of child care by:

Maintaining a registry of licensed and/or regulated child care options in the community;

- Supporting family and group child care providers with information, support and training;
- Helping parents find child care that best meets their unique needs;
- Assisting parents in accessing and completing the Affordable Childcare Benefit application; and
- Advertising, recruiting and assessing potential family child care providers when a license is not required.

Chilliwack's Child Care Resource and Referral is operated by Chilliwack Community Services and located in their main office.

Child Care Provider (Child Care Operator) is a person who provides child care



on an ongoing basis, either in the child's own home, in the child care provider's home or as an employee in a licensed group child care facility.

Child(ren) with Extra Support Needs are children who are experiencing, or who are at risk of, developmental delay or disability and who require support beyond that required by children in general, in one or more of the following areas: physical, cognitive, social, emotional, communicative, or behavioural.

Chilliwack Child and Youth Committee (CYC) represents a variety of community groups, governmental and nongovernmental, that provide leadership and advocacy in the delivery of human/social services to children, youth and their families. The committee works collaboratively, in liaison with clients/consumers, in the design, implementation and evaluation of the continuum of services that enhance the well-being of children, youth and their families. The CYC has numerous sub-committees, including the Early Years Committee (EYC) and the Young Parent Committee (YPC). The CYC has agreed to take on a leadership role in the newly formed Chilliwack Child Care Stakeholder Group.

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is a course of study that is required for those wishing to become Registered Early Childhood Educators. Post-basic training may lead to an Infant/Toddler or Special Needs certificate.

Early Childhood Educator (ECE) has completed an approved Early Childhood Education training program, demonstrated related work experience, provided character and work references, and is licensed to practice through the Early Childhood Educator Registry of B.C. An ECE certificate expires every five years; to renew a person must demonstrate 400 hours of relevant work experience, provide references and complete 40 hours of professional development training. ECEs can have a profound impact on a child's success in development, as the first years of a child's education are among the most important.

Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ECEA) has completed one early childhood education class in child growth and development, health, safety and nutrition or child guidance, demonstrate related work experience, provide character and work references and is certified through the Early Childhood Educator Registry of BC. An ECEA certificate expires every five years; to renew a person must demonstrate 400 hours of relevant work experience, provide references and complete a post-secondary class related to ECE.

Early Years Committee (EYC) See Chilliwack Child and Youth Committee.

Fraser East Region refers to one of three Health Service Delivery Areas (HSDA) within the Fraser Health Authority boundaries, which includes Hope, Chilliwack, Abbotsford, Mission, Agassiz, and Harrison.

Family Child Care – Licensed is care that is provided by the operator in her or his own home to children from birth to age 12, for a maximum of seven children. Care providers set their own hours. Some provide full-day care, others provide before or after school care for kindergarten and school age children, part-time spaces and flexible hours. .

Fraser Health Authority (FHA) is one of five regionally based Health Authorities of B.C. FHA is responsible for administering the Community Care Licensing program for Chilliwack and the East Fraser region, delivering services related to the licensing and safe operation of child care facilities, monitoring to ensuring facilities continue to meet provincial regulations, and investigating complaints. Anyone with concerns about a licensed child care facility should contact the local Health Authority Community Care Licensing program.

Group Child Care is the provision of licensed child care to children in a non-residential group setting. Group child care providers must have Early Childhood Education training and must be licensed with Community Care Facilities Licensing.

Group Child Care – Under 36 months is group child care for a maximum of 12 children under 36 months (known as infant/toddler care), year-round, full-day care or typically opening between 7:00/8:00 a.m. and closing between 5:00/6:00 p.m. Part-time spaces may be available in some centres.

Group Child Care – 30 months to School-Age serves children from 30 months to school entry (Grade 1 and is also referred to as Group Child Care 3-5. Group child care can be provided for a maximum 25 children, aged 30 months to school-age with no more than two children younger than 36 months. Part-time spaces may be available in some centres.

Group Child Care – School-age (5-12 years) serves school-age children (including kindergarten) who require care outside normal school hours. Some provide full-day care on days when school is not in session and full-day summer programs. The maximum group size is 30 if all children are in Grade 2 or higher or 24 if there are children in Kindergarten or Grade 1.

In-Home Multi-Age Care is similar to family child care. Childcare is provided by the operator in a provider’s own home, but for a maximum of eight children (birth-12 years) and the licensee must be a certified Early Childhood Educator. Care providers set their own hours and most provide full-day care. Some offer before or after school care for kindergarten and school age children, part-time spaces and flexible hours.

Infants are children younger than 18 months.

Infant Toddler Educator (ITE) holds an Early Childhood Educator certificate and has successfully completed a specialized, post-basic program that includes 250 hours of instruction in advanced child growth and development, working with infants and toddlers, working with families, administration, advanced health, safety and nutrition, and a 200-hour infant/toddler practicum. This training is done through a post-secondary educational institution recognized to offer the post-basic program.

Licensed Child Care Facility is a child care facility that meets the requirements of the Community Care and Assisted Living Act and the Child Care Regulation including health and safety requirements, licence application requirements, staffing qualifications, staff to child ratio, space and equipment, and program standards.. The provision of licensed child care can take place in a group centre (non-residential setting) or in a child care provider's own home. The child care provider must have Early Childhood Education training and the facility must be licensed with Community Care Facilities Licensing.

License-Not-Required (LNR) is unlicensed child care provided by the operator in the care provider's home, which is not registered with the Child Care Resource and Referral Centre. Care may only be provided for two children or a sibling group, of any age, who are not related to the care provider. LNR care providers may or may not have had formal child care training or previous child care experience and parents are solely responsible for assessing and monitoring the quality of care. A LNR operator is not required to obtain a license through Community Care Facility Licensing authorities; however, they may choose to register with a Child Care Resource and Referral Centre to become a Registered License-Not-Required operator after completing a minimum of 20 hours of family child care training (or responsible adult training) and after meeting a number of requirements, such as a criminal record check and first aid training.

Multi-Age Child Care is a program that provides, within each group, care to children 0-12 years.

Occasional Care is a program that provides occasional or short-term child care to children who are at least 18 months for a maximum of eight hours a day and for no more than 40 hours per calendar month.

Overnight Care is a program that provides care to cover shift-based work hours.

Parent as referenced in this report is the parent of a child, the child's guardian, the person legally entitled to custody of the child, or the main caregiver.

Preschool is for children who are at least 30 months old and who are not in Grade 1. Preschool provides part-day programming, which typically operates during the school-year (September to June) for a maximum of four hours. Some preschools may require parents to participate in the program some of the time. Preschools have a maximum group size of 20 and staff holds Early Childhood Education certificates.

Registered license not required (RLNR) is a care provider who has registered with the local Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) program and met a number of important requirements, such as a criminal record check (for everyone over age 12 living in the home), character references, home safety assessment, first aid training, and participation in child care training courses or workshops.

Responsible Adult is a person who provides care and guidance to children, is 19 years of age or older, has completed a course, or a combination of courses or workshops equaling 20 hours in the areas of child development, guidance, health and safety, or nutrition, and has relevant work experience.

Supported Child Development (SCD) is a program that is funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development and delivered by community agencies and helps families of children with developmental delays or disabilities gain access to inclusive child care. SCD programs serve families with children from birth to 19 years by partnering with community licensed child care programs to offer a range of options for children require additional supports to attend child care programs of various age groups.

Toddlers are children between the ages of 18 and 36 months.

Universal Prototype Sites test provincial child care funding and operational models of a proposed universal child care system. Parents with children enrolled at a prototype site will pay \$200 a month – or less – per child for full-time enrolment during regular business hours. For low-income families, child care may be free. When the report was written, Elm Drive YMCA Child Care was the only Universal Prototype Site in Chilliwack.

Young Parent Program (YPP) provides parents under the age of 25 who did not yet finish high-school access to quality child care at or near the school the parent is attending, to support parents while they finish high school. Chilliwack does not currently have a Young Parent Program. In recent years a Young Parent Program was located at the Neighbourhood Learning Centre, located at the Chilliwack Secondary School, which was operated by Chilliwack Community Services, and previous to that, the program was located in the Chilliwack Education Centre, which was run by the YMCA.

Young Parent Committee (YPC) See Chilliwack Child and Youth Committee (CYC).

Executive Summary

Access to quality and affordable child care is essential for the economic growth of the region as it affects employee recruitment and retention as well as the overall economic and social well-being of families¹. Currently, the Province of British Columbia, through various initiatives, is working towards universal child care and an integrated family support system. Within the context of the City of Chilliwack, child care opportunities have increased, but these have not kept pace with population growth and the increasing need for child care across the age spectrum and throughout the community. The City of Chilliwack has recognized the challenges faced by many families and is addressing the well-being of the community through various initiatives, including this plan and 2040 Official Community Plan, which presents a long term vision and growth strategy that embraces all aspect of community development, including social and cultural initiatives.

Noting the importance of access to child care for the community, The City of Chilliwack applied for and was awarded a \$25,000 grant under the UBCM's 2019 Community Child Care Planning Program, funded by the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development for the development of a Community Child Care Space Creation Action Plan. These funds have been made available to local governments to support the child care assessment and planning activities needed to create additional child care spaces in communities across the province.

A project steering committee was formed to support the overall development of the project, including child care assessment, an engagement strategy, action plan, and a written report. The committee provided valuable community context at each stage of the project, ensuring all activities were in line with the project's objectives and funding requirements, including specific considerations of typically underserved populations. The committee consisted of stakeholders in child care, including city staff, community partners, the school district and local child care providers.

Various forms of information gathering were used to complete the assessment of child care spaces and to inform the overall development of the child care action plan. These methods include the completion of a child care spaces inventory and extensive engagement with child care stakeholders and community partners. Child care stakeholders were identified as parents and caregivers, child care providers and operators, and children.

An assessment of Chilliwack's child care inventory reveals a shortage of child care spaces for children 0-12, with significant gaps in child care available to children 0-36 months of age and suitable for children of school age. Current child care access rates in Chilliwack are lower than both the Metro Vancouver and Canadian averages, noting that with increased use of child care subsidies and additional population growth issues, child care access rates are anticipated to worsen.

1. 2019 Survey of Licensed Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver

A review of the current child care supply and observations shared by parents, child care operators and stakeholders highlights a myriad of challenges and this information triangulated with long waitlists, low access rates and projected population growth highlights the need for an additional 1627 spaces over the next 10 years to meet provincial average access rates and if access rates were to increase to levels of 50 spaces per 100 children an additional 7000 spaces would be required.

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; and

Strategic Direction 4: Establish a Child Care Monitoring, Reporting and Information Framework.

The report recommends actions within each strategic direction to address the limited access families have to quality and affordable child care within the City of Chilliwack. One key recommendation is elevating the role of an existing committee to oversee and champion the recommendations outlined in this report. New provincial funding presents an opportunity to improve access rates to child care. More inclusionary child care zoning at the time of new development within the City is also necessary to consider. However, without addressing the challenge of a lack of qualified employees and staff retention, the shortage of child care within the region will continue to affect the social and economic well-being of Chilliwack. It is noted that the primary responsibility for additional new spaces belongs to the provincial government. The government of BC working with all community stakeholders, including educational institutions and the city, will go a long way toward furthering the healthy development of children, gender wage parity and community economic development within the City of Chilliwack.

Part 1: Introduction

Chilliwack is located in the Lower Mainland area of the Pacific Coast of Canada in south west British Columbia. It is about 100km from the city of Vancouver and part of the Fraser Valley Regional District. Chilliwack is a rapidly growing community with many young families. Families are attracted to the Chilliwack region due to economic opportunities, relatively more affordable housing and access to outdoor recreation. However, increasing wait lists and limited access to child care is a challenge for families with young children. The programming and funding available through ChildCare BC and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) presents the opportunity for the City of Chilliwack to work with stakeholders to address local challenges in child care, increase the number of child care spaces and improve the future delivery of child care throughout the community.

The City of Chilliwack applied for and was awarded a \$25,000 grant under the UBCM's 2019 Community Child Care Planning Program, funded by the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development for the development of a Community Child Care Space Creation Action Plan. These funds have been made available to local governments to support the child care assessment and planning activities needed to create additional child care spaces in communities across the province. The assessment of local child care and action plan for creating new spaces will be used to inform and address the need for improved accessibility to child care at the community level and be a platform on which agencies can apply for additional funding.

The purpose of this report is to complete research related to access to child care including documentation on existing child care spaces, assessment of community child care needs and gaps and estimates related to space creation targets. The report concludes with a list of actionable items that various stakeholders in child care can take to meet identified goals and targets.

Local Context

According to official city documents Chilliwack has a high number of children between 0-19 years of age; 26.5% compared to 22% in BC. Chilliwack is also the fastest growing city in the East Fraser Region. Since 2011, the City has experienced a population growth of 18.7%, notably higher than the population increase of the region and province³. According to Statistics Canada, the City's population is expected to surpass 100,000 by 2021, promoting Chilliwack to metropolitan city.⁴

There is a need for adequate child care spaces in order to accommodate the current unmet needs for child care, projected development of the region, the City's growing population of families and to strengthen the social well-being of the city through even greater support families and children. The number of child care spaces has not kept pace with population growth and according to a recent report on School Capacity for SD33 the schools are at over-capacity. The population growth is being fueled in part by relatively more affordable housing prices, birth rates and immigration trends. While the upward mobility of the Chilliwack community is evident in employment and housing statistics, there is also considerable poverty within the community.

2. "Community Child Care 2019 Planning Program - UBCM." Union of BC Municipalities 3. Statistics Canada. "Census Profile, 2016 Census." Government of Canada, Statistics Canada 4. Ministry of Citizens Services. "Population Projections." Province of British Columbia.

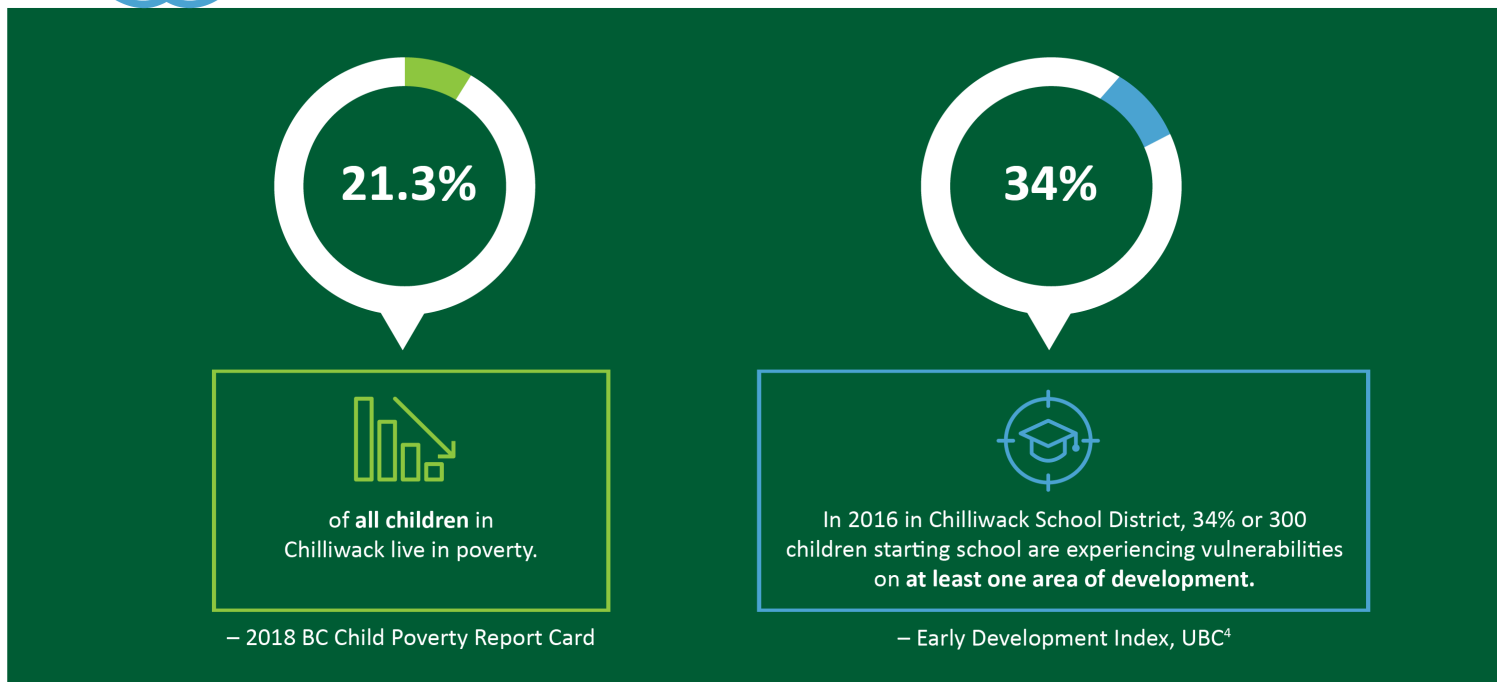
The 2018 BC Child Poverty Report Card revealed that 21.3% of children in Chilliwack live in poverty. This is higher than the average child poverty rates for the East Fraser region (18%), in B.C. (20.3%) and in Canada (19.6%). In six out of the 31 census tracts in Chilliwack, as many as 40% of children were living in poverty. The highest poverty rates were found in downtown Chilliwack (57.5%) and within First Nations reserves. Furthermore the numbers of teen births and numbers of children in ministry care are disproportionately high compared to British Columbia⁵

The City of Chilliwack recognizes the importance of addressing current and future child care needs of the community. Accessible, high quality and affordable child care is critical is for the reduction of poverty experienced by children and families, as it reduces barriers to meaningful employment and education opportunities, and helps to address early childhood vulnerabilities by improving early supports and structures available to families.



30% of food bank users in Chilliwack are **children**.

– Salvation Army Chilliwack, September 2018



Sources for Infographic Adapted from Selected Sources as Noted Below⁶

5. Adapted From "2018 BC Child Poverty Report Card." First Call, November 2018. Chilliwack Early Years Committee "Chilliwack 2018 State of the Child Report." East Fraser Early Years Framework Advisory Committee, March 2019
6. Chilliwack Early Years Committee "Chilliwack 2018 State of the Child Report." East Fraser Early Years Framework Advisory Committee, March 2019

1.1 Methodology

The approach to this report included a range of research and engagement strategies. These strategies included a review of best practices in other communities, the development of a child care spaces inventory and extensive engagement with child care stakeholders and community partners. Child care stakeholders are identified as parents and caregivers, child care providers, and children. Please see a summary list of engagement and research methods below.

Community Child Care Planning Inventory

The Community Child Care Planning Inventory was developed with information from MCFD, local child care providers, and the Fraser Health Authority’s most current Public List of Licensed Child Care Facilities. The inventory provides a snapshot of all child care spaces in Chilliwack by program type and age group, as well as data related location type, extended hours of operation, and number of closures per year.

Project Steering Committee

A project steering committee was formed to support the overall development of the project, including the child care assessment, engagement strategy, action plan, and written report. The committee provided valuable community context at each stage of the project, ensuring all activities were in line with the project’s objectives and funding requirements, including specific considerations of typically underserved populations. The committee consisted of 12 stakeholders in child care, including community partners, the school district and local child care providers. The committee met four times over an eight-month period, participated in a focus group session, engaged in correspondence with City staff, and contributed to the review of this report.



Steering Committee Meeting Dates

- June 24, 2019
- September 23, 2019 – Focus Group Session
- November 25, 2019
- January 27, 2020

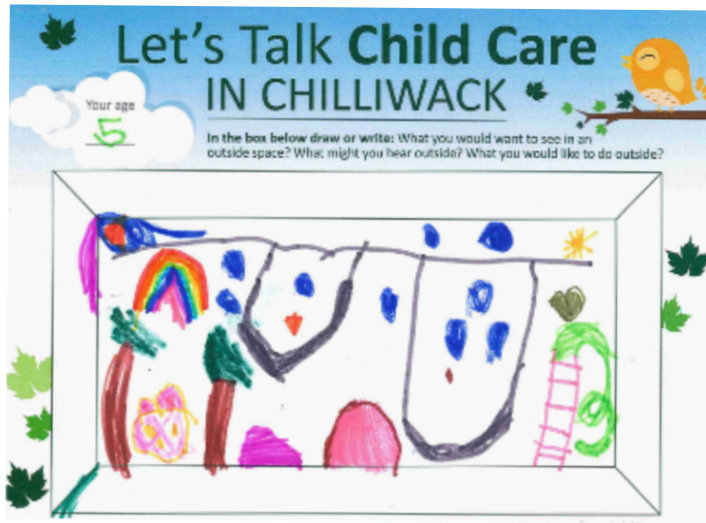
Parent Survey

An online survey for parents and caregivers of children aged 0-12 was used to engage both working and non-working parents. The survey asked parents to reflect on their past, present, and anticipated child care needs, and to share their thoughts on the quality, availability, and affordability of child care in their community. The survey received 343 responses from parents and caregivers during the 12-week period of July 7th - October 1st. The survey was promoted by the City through social media platforms and in-person at community events.

Public Consultation at Events: Post-It Note Comment Board

The City facilitated engagement with parents and caregivers at three popular community events during July, the Stó:lō Children's Festival on July 9th, and Party in the Park, on July 19th and 26th. Dialogue with the public helped to build awareness for the project, promote the parent survey, and identify key child care issues and themes from the perspective of parents and caregivers. Parents and caregivers were invited to use Post-It Notes to write a response to the question, "What would like to tell us about Child Care in Chilliwack?" or like existing comments on the board using a sticker. There were a total of 236 comments and comment likes, which were later categorized by topic, key issue or theme. Children also contributed Post-It Note Comments while in the accompaniment of their parents, however they were asked what they liked about child care. Children's comments and drawings helped to identify the physical features and experiences the children most valued about child care. A total of 25 children's comments and drawings were collected, which were also categorized into themes for analysis.





Children's Drawing Activity

A drawing activity was used to gain the child's perspective in a meaningful and appropriate way, consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and in adherence to privacy and ethical standards. Children were asked to draw what they liked or valued about their child care space. Activity sheets were available at community engagement events and distributed to child care providers for implementation with the children in their care. Thirty-two drawings were completed and returned for analysis.

Child Care Provider Survey

An online survey was used to obtain information from local child care providers and child care operators related to Chilliwack's unmet child care needs, helping to identify the underlying issues and potential opportunities to improve the conditions required to grow the number of child care spaces needed. Survey questions were designed to identify key challenges, potential limitations, and opportunities from the perspective of the child care provider. There was a total of 60 respondents to the child care-provider survey during the four-week period of October 6th - October 31st.

Child Care Provider: Informal Interviews

Child care facilities in Chilliwack were sent a letter with information regarding the opportunity to participate in the informal interview process. Nine informal phone interviews were conducted with child care providers and ECE professionals during the month of November. Engagement of this nature provided the opportunity for follow-up questions, providing a deeper understanding of complex issues, and supplemental information to the themes already uncovered in the child care provider survey.

Key-Informant Interviews

Informal interviews with community partners and stakeholders provided a deeper understanding of local child care issues in relation to; the community as a whole, families of typically under-served populations, the child care workforce, and educational institutes that provide ECE training programs. Eight interviews were conducted in person, on the phone and by email, providing an insider's perspective on complex issues and valuable insights into potential opportunities and solutions which are examined in this report.




Part 2: Child Care Inventory Findings

In this section the inventory of existing licensed child care spaces is documented. It is important to note that this report does not provide an inventory or assessment of the myriad of child care arrangements that families access for their children including grandparents, au-pairs, friends, older siblings among many other arrangements. These non-licensed arrangements are critical to the child care systems within Chilliwack and can also be strengthened through the recommendations proposed in the assessment plan.

Summary of Licensed Child Care in Chilliwack, 2019

There are 2,473 licensed child care spaces in Chilliwack, within 162 programs, provided by 116 licensed child care providers, of which 20 are non-profit and 96 are privately owned. Eighteen child care providers operate out of schools and seven are located in churches. Chilliwack also has 14 registered license-not-required child care operators which provides 28 spaces however for the purposes of this report this data will not be included in the child care inventory or assessment.



 <p>2,423 licensed child care spaces in Chilliwack</p>	<p>162 Programs</p>	<p>116 licensed child care providers <i>(20 non-profit and 96 private)</i></p>	 <p>14 registered license-not-required child care operators, with 28 spaces</p>	<p>No publicly owned child care facilities</p>
<p>11 public elementary schools and 5 Independent Schools share their space with 18 child care providers.</p>	 <p>7 operate out of churches.</p>	<p>No Young Parent Program in operation</p>	<p>1 Universal Child Care Prototype Site</p>	<p>3 First Nations Child Care Centers</p> <p>1 facility in Chilliwack, operated by Aboriginal Head Start Society & hosted by Mamele'awt Qweesome Housing Society</p> <p>1 on Sto:Lo Nation (A:Imelhawtxw Early Education Centre)</p> <p>1 on Skwah Nation</p>

2.1 Child Care Spaces Inventory

Table 1 below illustrates the distribution of licensed child care programs and spaces in the community. The majority of programs and spaces in Chilliwack are found in centre-based child care facilities as opposed to in-home facilities.

- The largest number of child care spaces are in group centres for children who are of school age (26.5%), followed by group care for 30 months to school-age (21.9%), & preschool (21.9%).
- Thirty-six percent of spaces are provided by non-profit child care providers, including community schools, independent/private schools, local churches, the YMCA, Chilliwack Community Services Society, Aboriginal Head Start Society and Stó:lō Service Agency.
- For the purposes of understanding the availability of child care for working parents or parents in educational programs, spaces related to preschool will be excluded from much of the analysis.

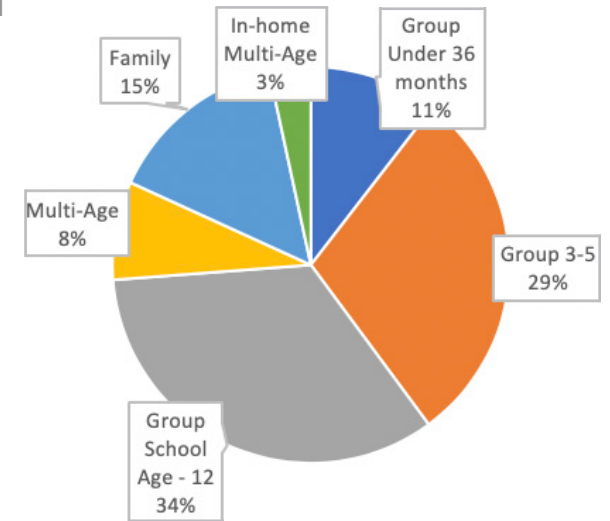


Table 1: Distribution of Licensed Child Care in Chilliwack

Facility Type	Program Type	# of Programs	% of Programs	# of Spaces	% of Spaces
Centre-Based	Group (Under 36 months)	17	10.5%	198	8.2%
	Group (30 months to school-age)	25	15.4%	557	23%
	Group (School age)	26	16%	642	26.5%
	Preschool	29	17.9%	530	21.9%
	Multi-Age	18	11.1%	152	6.3%
Total Centre-Based		115	71%	2,079	85.8%
In-Home	Family	39	24.1%	280	11.6%
	In-home Multi-Age	8	4.9%	64	2.6%
Total In-Home Based		47	29%	344	14.2%
Total		162	100%	2,423	100%

Percentages rounded to one decimal point.

2.2 Identifying Gaps in Child Care Supply

Even though not all families choose or require licensed child care, many families do rely on child care provided by someone other than the child’s own parent in order to attend work and school. A 2019 national report on child care found that almost 60% of all children under six in Canada, and 57.6% of children in B.C. had participated in formal or in-formal child care⁸. Child care utilization rates and access rates of licensed child care spaces, in combination with local child care conditions are used to determine the greatest need (if any) for additional child care spaces needed to meet current and future demand.

Utilization Rates

The utilization rate of a single child care facility is determined by dividing its total enrollments for the month by the number of times a child care space can be used in a month. A facility’s utilization rates can determine efficiency as well as demand. Combined utilization rates of all child care facilities within a specific region or community can be used to determine how accessible child care is for those who may need it. While high utilization rates indicate an efficient use of existing child care spaces, rates above 80-85% are associated with increased difficulties for parents in accessing spaces, resulting in lengthy search times, unmet child care needs, and often higher costs for parents. Lower utilization rates are typically associated with better accessibility, however local child care conditions may still prevent families from finding child care that meets their individual needs and preferences.⁹

The most current child care utilization rates are for Chilliwack as part of the East Fraser Region and for the province of B.C. is comprised of data collected from April 2016 to March 2017 and are summarized in Table 2. Across all program types, the monthly child care space utilization rate for the East Fraser region is 67.1%, which is 3.9% higher the previous year, indicating increased demand for the supply of child care spaces.¹⁰

Table 2: Child Care Space Utilization Rates of 2016-2017, Compared to 2015/2016

Service Delivery Area	Group Infant/Toddler	Group Age 3 to 5	Group School Age	Total Group	Family	Total Group & Family
East Fraser	75.4% (+2.3%)	76.6% (+7.3%)	41.5% (+1.8%)	58.7% (+3.3%)	74.7% (+5.0%)	67.1% (+3.9%)
B.C.	85.2% (+1.4%)	73.8% (+2.5%)	47.6% (+1.7%)	70.3% (+2.2%)	71.9% (+1.9%)	71% (+1.9%)

Source: Ministry of Children and Family Development Performance Management Report, Volume 9

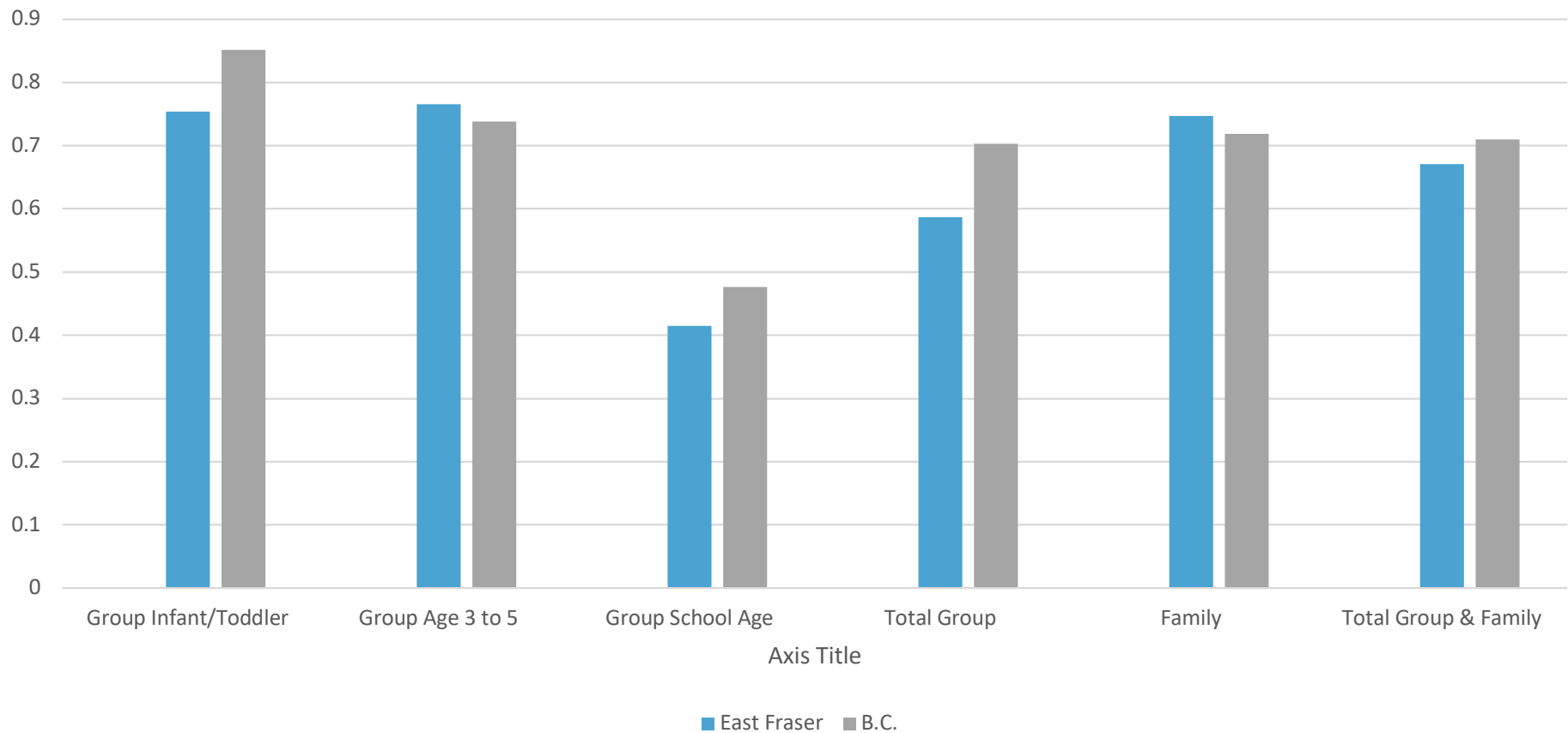
8. Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements, 2019.

9. Ministry of Children and Family Development Performance Management Report, Volume 9

10. Ibid.

Utilization rates assume that full operational capacity is based on the number of spaces that a child care provider is licensed for. However, many child care providers in Chilliwack reported that the capacity in which they operated was based on available staff, which is lower than the total number of spaces they are licensed for. Utilization rates for Infant and Toddler spaces are most likely to be underestimated due to the increased difficulties of staffing programs which require higher staff to child ratios. Based on this understanding of current child care conditions, the utilization rates for Chilliwack, must be looked at in combination with access rates, and consider the findings from all engagement with stakeholders.

**Figure 2: Comparison of Child Care Space Utilization Rates by Program Type
April 2016 - March 2017**



Source: Ministry of Children and Family Development Performance Management Report, Volume 9

Child Care Access Rates

Child care access rates are indicators of how accessible child care is within a region or community. The rate is determined by the percentage of children in the community for whom a licensed child care space is available. Lower rates are an indicator of lower access to child care spaces. Predications can be made about future child care accessibility rates using the current child care inventory alongside population projections, helping determine a community’s need for additional child care spaces.¹¹

Table 3: Child Care Accessibility Rates for Chilliwack

Age Range	2016 Census Child Population	Total Number of Spaces	Access Rate
Under 36 months	2,950	421*	14.3%
3 to 5 years (excluding pre-school)	3,135	780*	24.9%
3 to 5 years (<u>only</u> preschool spaces)	3,135	530	16.9%
School age - 12 years	7,790	692*	8.2%
All Children 0 to 5 years	6,085	1,201	19.7%
All Children 0 to 12 years	13,875	1,893	17.8%

* Under 36 months includes 45% of all multi-age (group and in-home) and family child care spaces (223 spaces), 3-5 years includes 45% of all multi-age (group and in-home) and family child care spaces (223 spaces), School age – 12 years includes 10% of all multi-age (group and in-home) and family child care spaces (50 spaces)

Table 3 illustrates the child care access rates for Chilliwack based on the 2019 child care inventory completed for the purpose of this report and the 2016 child population census data as recommended in the project funding guidelines.

In Chilliwack there are currently 1,893 spaces for all children aged 0-12, resulting in an access rate of 13.6% or 13.6 spaces per 100 children. This is below the 2016 Canadian average of 27.2 spaces per 100 children, and below Metro Vancouver’s average of 18.6 spaces per 100 children in 2019.¹² Child care access rates were lowest for children under 3 years, as well for children who were of school age. It is significant to note that between 2016 and 2020 the access rates for infant and toddlers has increase from 5 to almost 8% but this is still far below current need and provincial standards.

Note:

In order to assess the demand for child care which allows parents to be employed or attend school outside of the home, preschool spaces were excluded from the analysis, and multi-age spaces were distributed according to their presumed use.

Group multi-age, in-home multi-age, and family child care providers are licensed to provide child care to children from 0-12, however in Chilliwack these spaces are largely utilized by children under the age of five rather than by children who are of school age. For this reason, 90% of the spaces associated with multi-age child care and all in-home child care have been allocated to spaces for under 36 months and 3-5, with the remaining 10% allocated to spaces for school age children.

11. “2019 Survey of Licensed Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver.” August 2019.
 12. Ibid

2.3 Summary

The documentation of child care spaces within Chilliwack highlights critical gaps including low access rates for children aged 0-36 months and of school age. Currently access rates for child care in Chilliwack are lower than both the Metro Vancouver and Canadian averages, noting that with increased subsidies for families and population growth that exacerbated issues pertaining to accessibility are anticipated.



Part 3: What We Heard from the Community


The research approach for this assessment included, as noted in Part 1, various forms of engagement with child care stakeholders and community partners. The intersection of data from other municipalities within British Columbia, research reports on child care, and the findings from the surveys, interactive boards, child drawings and graphic recording session in Chilliwack have all informed the recommendations of the child care action plan.



3.1 What Parents Had to Say

Engagement with parents in Chilliwack, through in-person public consultation and an online survey, identified a multitude of challenges being experienced by parents, including a significant shortage of available child care spaces. The parent survey was completed by over 340 parents, representing approximately 5% of census households with children (2016 Statistics Canada). Additional engagement with parents on interactive boards at community events further increased household participation in the needs assessment of child care in Chilliwack.

A shortage of spaces for children under three years old and for children 5-12 years old (before and after school care) was most frequently reported by parents. In addition to a lack of available child care, parents reported significant concern about the lack of affordable child care options, and issues related to location, hours of operation, quality, and supports. These challenges often resulted in unmet child care needs due to a lack of suitable choices, which can have significant impact on the entire family.

	Affordability Issues	Shortage of Spaces	Hours & Location
	Lack of Choice	Quality & Supports	Impact on Families

Shortage of Child Care Spaces

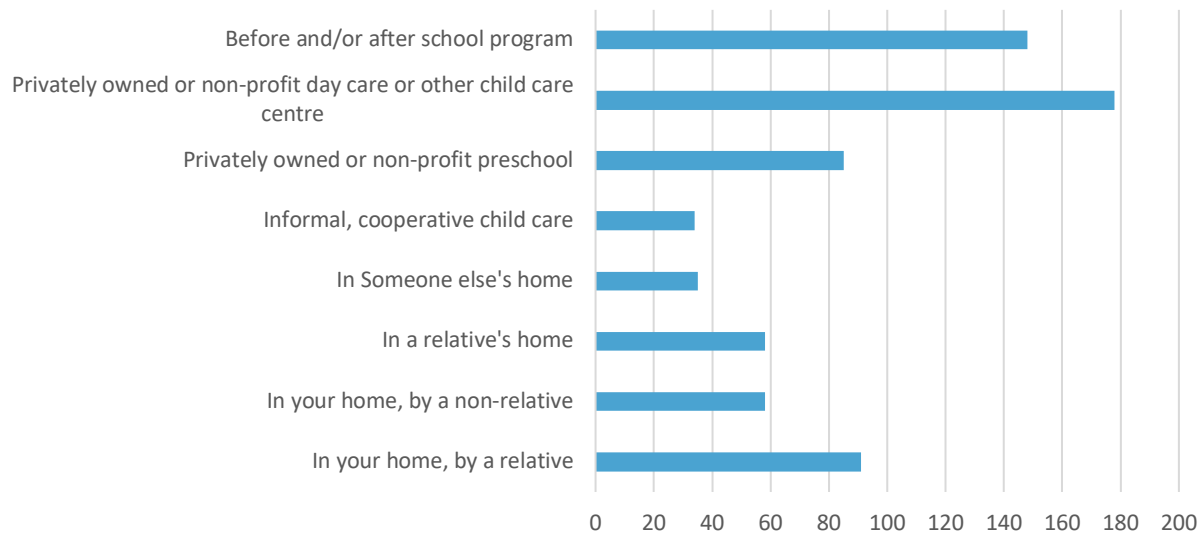
A lack of child care spaces was the largest issue identified in both the survey findings and in-person engagement with parents. A shortage of local child care supply was evident in the number of parents who reported not being able to secure child care as well as their reported experiences with waitlists and lengthy searches for child care. A lack of spaces for infant and toddler care and before and after school care were most noted by parents in the survey and through in-person engagement.

- 46% of parents surveyed who required child care were unable to access appropriate child care for at least one of their children
- 91% of parents surveyed, who required child care, had experienced at least one barrier to securing child care
- 41% of all in-person responses/comments to the question, “tell us about your experience with child care” were related to a lack of child care spaces;
- 89 out of 302 parents surveyed reported having at least one child currently on a waitlist for child care;
- Of surveyed parents with children currently accessing child care, 52% had found child care in less than six months, 27% found child care in six months – one year, and for 21% of parents it took more than one year to find child care;
- 69% of surveyed parents said there were simply not enough child care spaces available, or no formal child care within their community; and
- Of parents surveyed who had child(ren) on waitlists for child care, 38% were waitlisted for group infant/toddler care and 23% were waitlisted for before and/or after school care.

“By the time I return to work I will have been searching for child care for 14 months.
The closest I’ve gotten is being put on a waitlist.”

“It’s an enormous uphill battle... makes you want to give up being a working mom.”

Figure 3: Preferred Child Care Types Indicated by Survey



The highest need for child care identified in the survey was for infant toddler spaces and before and after school programming, followed by care for children age 3-5.

In response to the survey question, “Which type(s) of child care would be ideal for your child(ren)?” parents demonstrated a greater preference for centre-based child care as well as before and after school programming.

Table 4: Child Care Needs Expressed in Parent Survey by Area and Program Type

Area of Chilliwack	Total References	Infant/Toddler	Ages 3-5	Preschool	Before/After School
North Side	54	11	8	0	14
South Side	121	49	20	1	32
No reference Neighbourhood	13	5			8
Total	188	65	28	1	54

The need for infant/toddler spaces, before/after school care was expressed by parents in all areas of the City.

Lack of Affordable Care Options

A lack of affordable child care options was commonly reported by parents. It was often the reason some parents decided not to access child care or work outside the home, especially if they required child care for more than one child, or if they did not qualify for child care subsidy. Table 5 reflects the child care fees paid per child as reported by parents in the survey.

- 61% of surveyed parents reported the unaffordable fees as barrier to securing child care;
- Of parents surveyed currently accessing child care, 37% were currently or had previously utilized the Affordable Child Care Benefit; and
- 30% of all in-person responses or comments to the question, “tell us about your experience with child care” were about cost-related challenges.

Table 5: Monthly Child Care Fees Paid Per Child Reported by Parents in Survey

	Under 3 years old	3-4 years old	6-12 years old
Average	\$704	Average \$656	Average \$392
Median	\$700	Median \$720	Median \$400
Mode	\$650	Mode \$800	Mode \$400
Highest	\$1,400	Highest \$1200	Highest \$1140
Lowest	\$200	Lowest \$125	Lowest \$60

Data regarding fees likely includes subsidized fees, as well unregulated child care

Data reported for 5-year old children was removed as it could not be determined if reported fees were for full day child care or partial days child care (before and after school care).

“When our children attended full time daycare one of our entire pay cheques went directly to pay for childcare.”

Hours and location of Child Care

The accessibility of child care in Chilliwack is also dependent on the days and times that child care is offered. Parents who did not work a typical 9-5 work schedule, shift workers, or those who had long, or unpredictable commute times had a difficult, if not impossible time securing child care. These parents expressed an unmet need for flexible child care options, such as drop-in child care, part time care and weekend care. Many reported paying for a full-time space even though they did not require it, but for many parents this would not be a financially feasible option.

- 7% of all in-person engagement was related to difficulties finding care that matched the parent's work or school schedule;
- 12% of parents reported a need for child care in the evenings and/or on weekends; and
- 44% of parents experienced barriers associated with finding child care which suited the days (12%), times (21%), and frequency (11%) in which they required child care.

“If you only need part-time care, it is a struggle to secure a spot, as full-time care gets preference.”

“We use an Au-Pair because we can't find child care for all of our kids at one place and no child care centre is open early or late enough for our work hours.”



Many parents reported challenges related finding child care in a suitable location. Parents who had child care in an inconvenient location reported increased stress in their daily routines and overall lower satisfaction with current child care arrangements. This is especially true for parents who needed to pick up and drop off at more than one child care location because there was not a single child care option which was suitable for all children.

- Surveyed parents preferred child care located near their home, as well as work, and their child’s elementary school;
- 36% of surveyed parents described transportation issues to/from full time child care (18%); and
- 39% of surveyed parents felt they would benefit from child care which had transportation services.

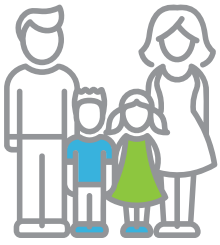
Table 6 captures the responses to the survey question, “what neighbourhoods or areas would you like to see additional child care facilities and for which age groups?” The responses confirm the desire for child care located close to where families live, as well as where children attend school.

Table 6: Parent Survey Response to Desire or Need for More Child Care Spaces

Neighbourhood	Total References	Infant/Toddler	Ages 3-5	Preschool	Before/After School
Sardis/Vedder	71	37	18		20
Cultus Lake	3			1	
Eastern Hillside	11	1			4
Promontory	24	5	2		5
Garrison	4	1			1
Greendale	3	1			
Yarrow	5	4			2
Downtown/North Side	31	4	3		11
Fairfield Island	9	3	3		
Little Mountain	5	1	1		
Rosedale	9	3	1		3
No Reference to Neighbourhood	13	5			8
Total	188	65	28	1	54

Securing before and after-school is especially difficult for parents when there is no child care the child's school, in which case parents need to coordinate safe transportation to the program or secure child care that provides transportation services. Programs with transportation services are often in high demand, so parents are required to coordinate transportation, find other arrangements, or go without child care.

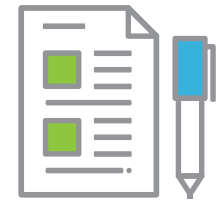
- 18% of surveyed parents cited transportation difficulties to/from before/after-school care.



"After-school care is juggled between my husband, friends and a high school student. It can be tricky to always ask others for help. I would love to have a program on site at the school again."

"Older kids still need care and supervision. Even though I can have the school bus transport them, I do not have supervision for them afterschool and this is a huge challenge."

"Transportation between school and before and after school care is the biggest hurdle to securing child care for my five-year-old"



Lack of Choice

Parents often reported being dissatisfied with their current child care arrangements. When there is a shortage of available child care spaces, parents simply have fewer choices or sometimes no choice at all. If they want to access child care, parents often need make compromises related to their family's child care needs and preferences.

“Transportation is difficult in a single car household.”

“I do not drive, so my childcare choices are very limited as there is only 1 in-home centre in my neighborhood.”



“I am utilizing unlicensed daycare because I had to return to work earlier than planned. I would prefer a centre, but I didn’t have time to wait for a space.”

“I feel forced to use what is available versus what I feel meets my needs.”

Quality & Supports

Parents often referred to the challenges of accessing quality care, or reported a lack of affordable quality child care. Programs that cost more were often considered better quality, while more affordable options were associated with lower quality. Child care provided by a child care provider in their own home was more likely to be seen as lower quality, while newly constructed centres, as well as programs located in schools, were often associated with higher levels of care.

- 16% of all in-person engagement was about the need for quality child care
- Many parents preferred centre-based facilities over licensed child care provided in a private residence. Parents often perceived centre-based facilities as better regulated, more trust-worthy and more likely to provide quality care.



“High quality childcare is very hard to find in Chilliwack. There are a lot of “cheap” places for three-year olds to attend but very little high end (includes food, nice clean locations with adequate staffing)”

“I feel more follow up needs to be done in at home child care. I removed my children from two at home centres (licenced) due to unsatisfactory care.”

Parents with children who required extra supports reported additional hurdles in attempting to access child care, such as added costs, unsatisfactory child care arrangements, reduced ability to participate in the workforce, and unmet child care needs.

- 11% of surveyed parents reported difficulties finding adequate child care for their child who required extra supports, and for many this prevented their ability to stay in the workforce;
- 29% of surveyed parents of children with extra support needs reported difficulties securing child care which met their child's needs or provided appropriate supports;
- 17% of surveyed parents of children with extra support needs has been refused an open spot or had their child removed from a program (survey); and 7 parents reported difficulties finding child care that met their own or their child's mobility needs.

“My daughter has autism, even when a place has a space open, they tell me they do not have adequate staffing.”

“I have children with ADHD and anxiety, these are considered disabilities to daycare providers but yet I am unable to get government support for these disabilities.”

Impact on Families

Parents often reported significant impacts to their careers, finances and family's well-being due to the challenges associated with accessing affordable and suitable child care.

Parents who received child care provided by a member of their extended family (often a grandmother) or those who identified as a stay-at-home parent were less likely to report child care difficulties. However, many stay-at-home parents cited the high cost of child care as the primary reason for not returning to work, particularly if they had two or more children.

Women were more likely to report negative impacts to their careers, such as needing to take longer, unpaid maternity leave, being forced to switch careers, or leave the workforce completely. Women in two income households often weighed the cost of child care to their own income, as opposed to their shared income.



“It is disappointing that I have to stay at home after doing eight years of university because I can’t afford daycare.”

“We need childcare for part time working moms. Many daycares are full days, five days a week.”

3.2 What Child Care Providers & Operators Had to Say

Engagement with a total of 69 child care providers, over 15% of all licensed providers and ECE professionals, through nine informal interviews and 60 survey responses confirmed the experiences reported by parents, including the critical shortage of spaces for children under three, and a lack of before and after school programming which adequately meets the needs of children and families. Engagement with child care providers and ECE professionals highlighted the factors contributing to current child care conditions in Chilliwack and throughout the province.

A Need for More Spaces, but at what cost?

Though child care providers and ECE professionals confirmed the shortage of child care spaces in Chilliwack, they were also quick to point out that simply increasing the number of licensed spaces in existing or newly built facilities will not solve this problem, not unless there was an increased supply of qualified staff. Many child care providers explained that a significant number of licensed child care spaces remain empty due to a lack of staff to run existing programs at full capacity.

Many child care providers commented on the pressures they feel to hire individuals who only meet the minimum requirements despite their own concerns about the applicant’s ability, work history, or passion for the work. Similarly, many ECE professionals shared their concerns about the recent practice and increased prevalence of hiring minimally trained staff to work in child care centres, a practice they believed few parents were aware of.

- 65% of surveyed child care providers and ECE professionals reported having waitlists, with an average of 17 children on each waitlist, and some with over 300 children waiting for a space.



“To get an infant or toddler space, they (parents) have to contact us when their child is in the womb.”

“Chilliwack will just keep growing and growing, this will only continue to be a problem.”

“It’s great that there is money to make spaces, but who is going to work there? We already feel the stress, the crunch, right now... When staff are sick, there is no one to cover. We are already stretched so thin and not able to self-care.”

“Some of the stories we have heard from parents are awful – unprofessional. Parents don’t know that they can contact Fraser health or interview providers.”



“Centres are having to hire people that they would normally not hire, and that is not okay. It blows me away, that there is not more thought and consideration about the people who are working in these centres.”

“Child care is not something you can fudge your way through. If you don’t know how to connect with children, you shouldn’t be in the field.”

Critical Staffing Shortage

The main challenge identified by local child care professionals was the critical staffing shortage, which has direct impact on the community's ability to access existing or increased child care spaces, as well as many other aspects of providing quality child care.

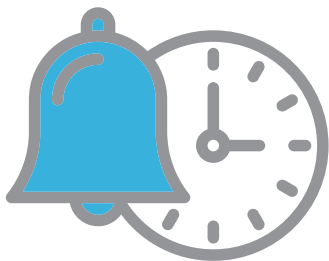
48% of surveyed child care providers reported that increased staffing would allow them to create additional child care spaces at their current location and over 50% of all surveyed child care providers (including facilities that don't require more than one staff to operate) reported being impacted by a limited supply of applicants for all position types (full-time, part-time, casual and ECE-special needs.)

“ I am working in a centre that operates with lower ratios and I find that we are able to provide so much more!
We can be more present and involved with the children. There is more growth in the children.
More confidence in staff. We can promote more learning in the field. ”

Staffing shortages are due to the difficulties in retaining qualified ECE professionals and attracting new people to the field. Challenges related to staffing retention are reportedly due to low wages, high-burn-out, and poor work satisfaction, partly caused by the sense that the profession is undervalued by parents and the public. Low enrollment in local ECE training programs are also believed to be due to low compensation, as well as barriers to accessing educational programs, such as tuition fees.

Based on the findings in the survey, Chilliwack's current staffing levels are in jeopardy;

- Only 57% of surveyed ECE' professionals anticipated that they would remain in child care;
- 14% anticipated they would leave the field;
- and 30% were uncertain.



“Children should have the very best. Some facilities are working under exemptions. It takes time for staff to train those employees There is a lot to learn – licencing, rules, regulations. When people are not trained, and children's needs are not getting met – they are not getting the support.”

“We need to feel like professionals. I appreciate the staff I have. I treat them well. I support them. I give them recognition. Parents are quick to point out faults, the child doesn't finish their juice, or a dirty jacket. My staff wear their hearts on their sleeves. My biggest guilt is that I know they are not earning what they deserve.”

Location and Physical Space

Secondarily, child care providers reported challenges related to location as barrier to the provision of child care, including the difficulty of finding and securing a suitable location for a child care facility, which is also affordable, as well as a lack of suitable physical space(s), or nearby child-friendly spaces at their current location.

- 52% of surveyed child care providers indicated that increased space suitable for the provision of child care would be needed to increase spaces at their current location; and
- 17% anticipated they would be required to relocate in the next two years.

“We need more child care spaces near schools because that is where families live – it is difficult because there are no nearby buildings built for the purpose of childcare.”

“My lease is up in two years; I will lose my location and I don’t know where to go.”

Some child care providers reported a desire for more child-friendly spaces in close proximity, as well as improved indoor and outdoor play spaces onsite.

- 22% of surveyed child care providers reported that the child care’s current location and nearby child-friendly spaces or amenities are perceived as unsafe;
- 16% of survey respondents indicated a need for improvements to their facilities to accommodate children, parents or staff requiring accessibility considerations (ramps, handrails, wider doorways); and
- 19% of surveyed child care providers reported difficulties in the ease of pick/drop-off and parking availability.

“Industrial areas are not ideal – the cost is higher, less safe and without places to play. Safety comes first.”

“If Cities would allow you to expand based on the size of the facility and allow more kids in residential areas, than there would be more spaces.”



3.3 What Children Had to Say

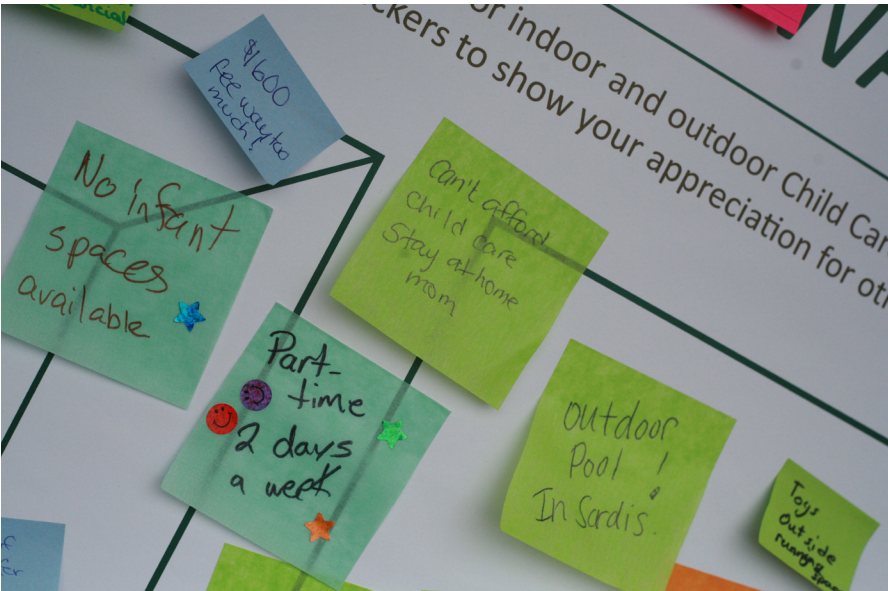
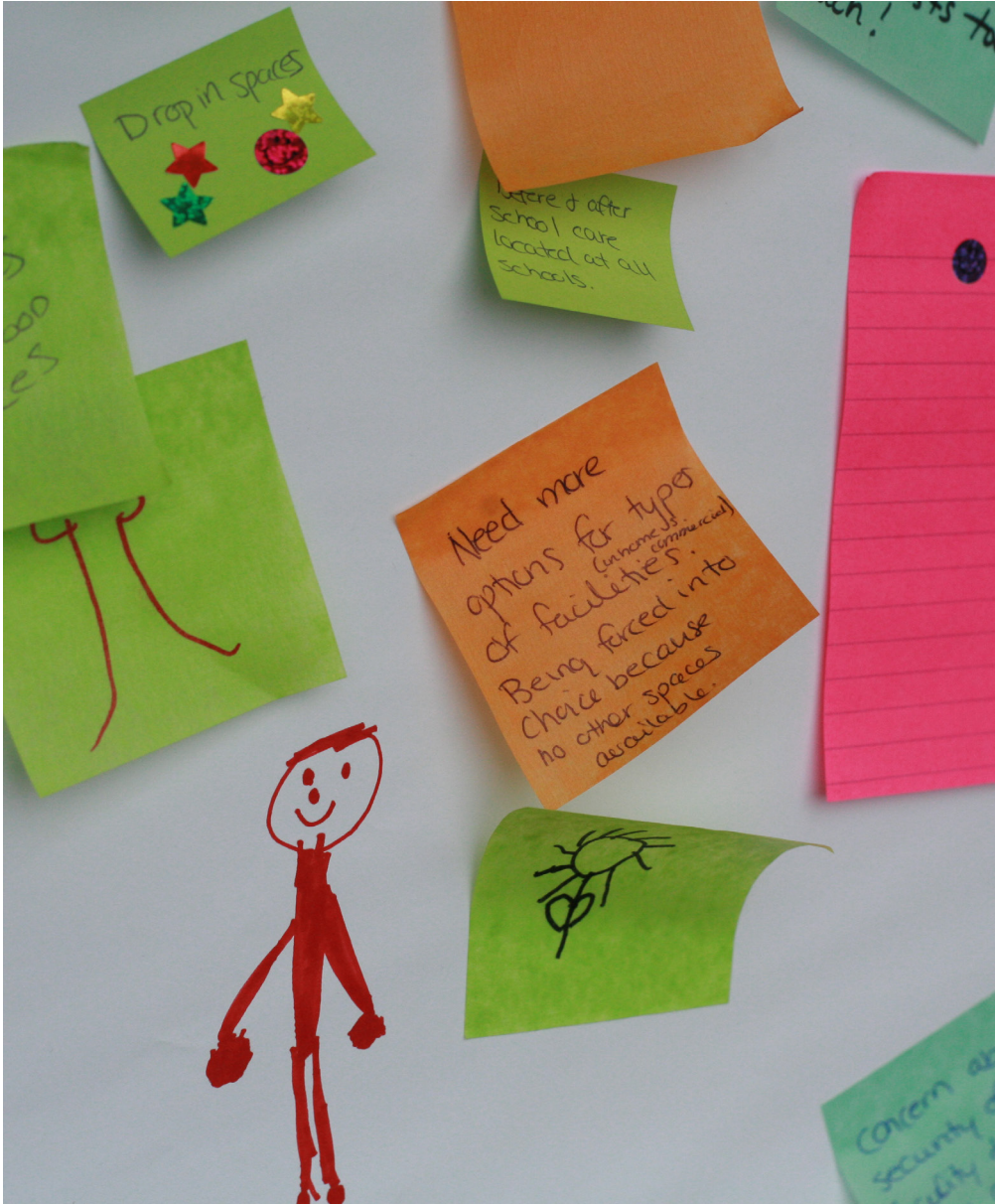
Engagement with children took place at community events and was also facilitated with the help of local child care providers. At community events, children were invited to contribute comments and drawings on post-its notes to a large interactive board and a drawing activity was also used to capture what children valued about their child care experience.

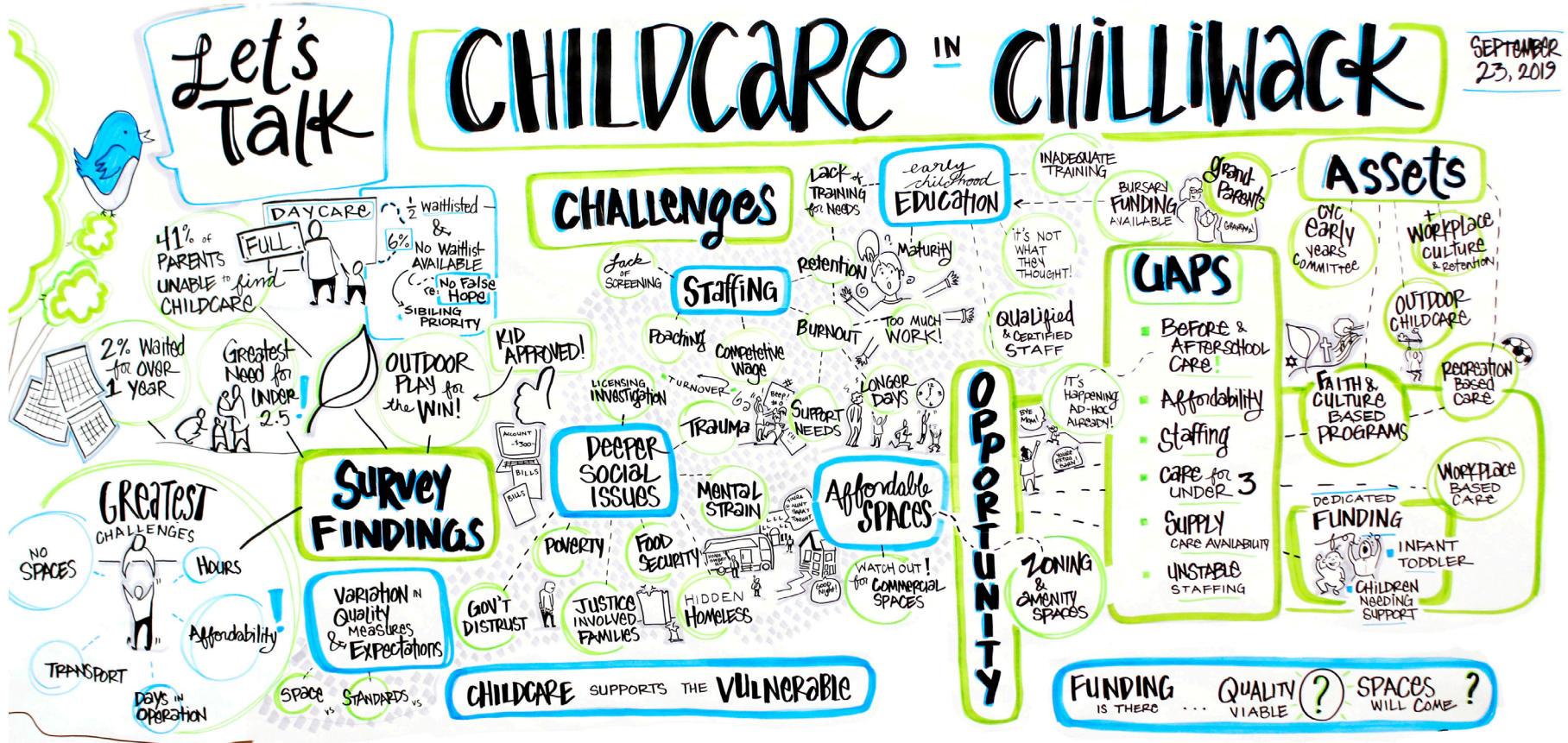
The outcomes of both activities largely resulted in themes related to play, including access to outdoor spaces. Play is essential to the development of a child’s social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. There is a growing concern about the lack of play in children’s lives today, along with the same concern for future generations due to the lack of space and time for self-directed play in childhood¹⁵.

Play is needed for optimal development, but it is also a child’s right. Children’s right to play, participate in recreation, and engage in cultural activities is recognized in Article 31 of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is imperative that importance of play and a child’s right to play are considered when making decisions regarding the development of additional child care spaces and when making planning decisions that impact the larger community. The emphasis on play provides information useful to location and physical environment of child care facilities.

15. “Right to Play: A Fundamental Necessity for Healthy Development! Fact Sheet 8.” Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children and the International Play Association - Canada (IPA-C), December 2019.

Public Consultation: Stó:lō Children's Festival





Advisory Group Visioning Session, September 23, 2019

melissa.kendzierski@gmail.com

3.4 What Community Partners & Stakeholders Had to Say

Input provided by the project’s steering committee and interviews with key-informants in the community reflected the issues identified by the various stakeholder engagement activities and provided the necessary context and resources required to develop recommendations for this report.

Engagement with partners and other stakeholders echoed the issues and challenges shared by parents, child care providers, ECE professionals and, while also highlighting the complexity of the issues and the inability to solve the problem simply by increasing the number of spaces. Key-informants expressed concerns about low enrollment in basic and advanced ECE training programs, noting an overall decrease in interest for the profession thought to be caused by low wages.

As for the talented and passionate ECE professionals who leave the field early in their careers; it is believed that the poor compensation for work that is not valued makes the physical and mental demands of the job, often difficult to justify.

On September 23, 2019 a graphic artist attended the Chilliwack Child Care Needs Assessment steering committee meeting at the City of Chilliwack. This meeting involved the presentation of engagement findings, which provided a basis for discussion and engagement with the stakeholders and community partners on the committee. The preceding figure summarizes and reinforces needs and opportunities pertaining to child care within Chilliwack.

3.5 Summary

A review of the current child care supply and observations shared by parents, child care operators and stakeholders highlight the following challenges:

- Long waitlists for all categories of child care, especially 0-36-month care;
- Lack of flexibility and limited hours especially if reliance on transit systems to access care;
- Need for greater family support due to deeper and systemic issues facing families;
- Staffing shortages, further exacerbated by few qualified graduates entering the profession;
- Operating costs for child care centres require further subsidy in order to meet all regulations;
- Child care is not available for all children, especially children with special needs:
- Limited opportunities for before and after school care which meets needs of families;
- Lack of suitable spaces or locations for child care;
- Child care deserts, limited access to child care in certain areas of the city; and
- In isolated instances concerns as to quality to care.

Limited access to quality and affordable child care severely impacts the healthy development of children, family incomes, gender wage parity and community economic development.

Part 4: Future Needs & Opportunities

In this section the future needs and projections related to child care in Chilliwack are presented, followed by a discussion of potential opportunities for addressing gaps between the needs of family and existing supply of child care programs.

**Greatest Child Care
Need:**

Infant Toddler Care

**Before & After
School Care**

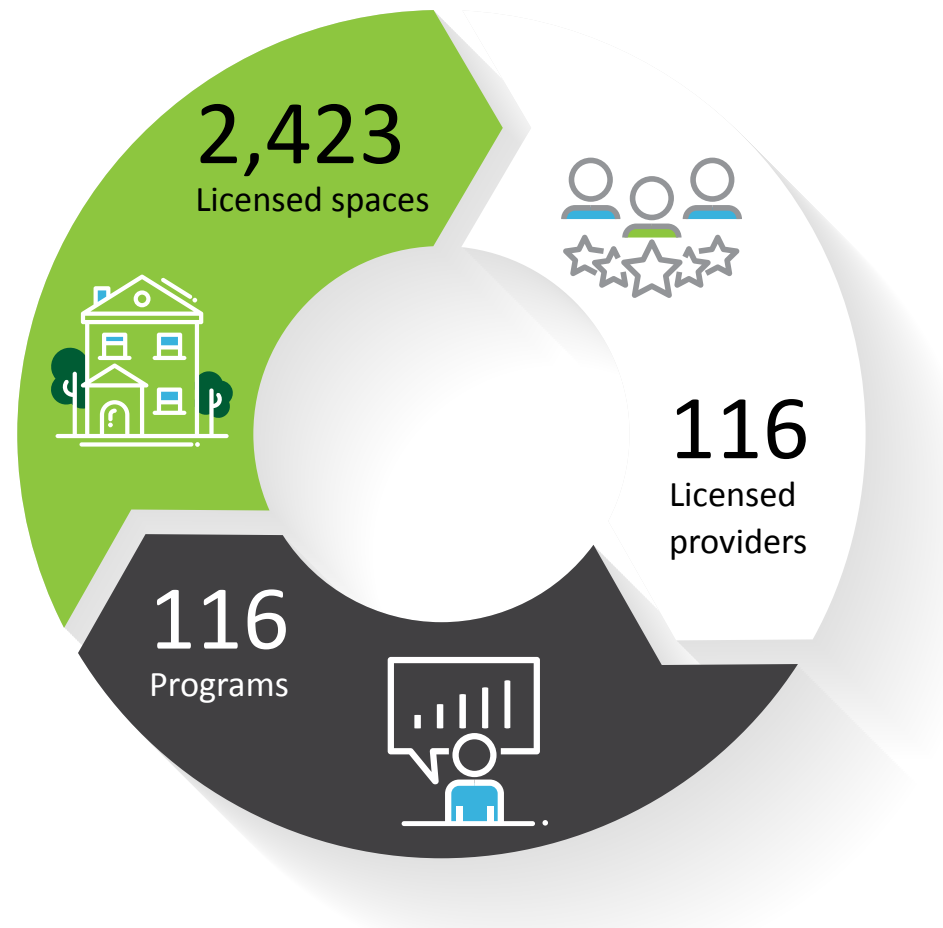
The Impact to Families

- Women are not returning to work due to cost and difficulty accessing child care
- Families are forced to make considerable compromises (quality, convenience and safety)
- Current Child Care situations are not necessarily what is best for children or parents

Child Care Inventory Highlights

20 Non-profit Child Care providers

- 1 Universal Child Care Prototype Site
- 3 First Nations Child Care Centers
- No publicly owned Child Care facilities
- No Young Parent Program



Plus 14 registered license-not-required Child Care operators with 28 spaces not including in analysis

4.1 Projected Child Care Needs

Chilliwack's projected child care needs uses the evaluation of the current child care inventory and population data in combination with projections in population growth to make an assessment of changes to the various child care access rates, which helps to determine future need, and inform space creation targets.

Need Based on Projected Population Changes

Chilliwack has a population of 91,797, with a five-year growth rate of 7.5% (2018 statistic). This is a greater growth rate than neighbouring communities. With continued steady growth, the city's projected population is expected to surpass 100,000 by 2021 . While child care programs have increased over the last five years the access rate for children within the region has not kept pace with population growth, hence the strain on the current child care system and the entire community's interest in finding ways to support an increased supply of available child care.

Growth estimates contained in Chilliwack's Official Community Plan and within School District 33 enrollment projections indicate a moderate growth in the population of children 1-12 years of age. Given that the capacity of the schools and child care facilities are currently surpassed, the pressures for new spaces are extreme in the short term and more moderate over the long term, provided that current demand can be addressed within the next 3-5 years. Table 7 illustrates the various scenarios of projected population growth for each age group served by the various licensed child care programs in B.C.



Table 7: Chilliwack Population Projections for Children 0-12 Years, 2021-2029

Year	Total Population	0 to 2 years	3 to 5 years	6 to 12 years	0 to 12 years	Number of Households
2016	83,788	2,950	3,135	7,790	13,875	32,440
2021	101,000	3,393	3,695	9,072	16,160	40,400
2025	108,000	3,628	3,976	9,576	17,280	43,200
2029	110,000	3,696	4,048	9,856	17,600	44,000

2019 Child Care Access Rates¹⁸

Chilliwack	Metro Vancouver	B.C.	Quebec	Canada
17.8%	18.5%	18.6%	55.1%	27.2%

Additional Child Care Space Targets

As of 2019, Chilliwack’s child care access rate was fewer than 18 spaces per 100 children ages 0 to 12 years. This is slightly less than the access rates of Metro Vancouver and the province of B.C. reported in the 2019 Survey of Licensed Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver. While, access rates have moderately increased over the last 3 years, to date Chilliwack has not achieved a moderate access rate of 20% for all children under the age of twelve.

18. 2019 Survey of Licensed Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver

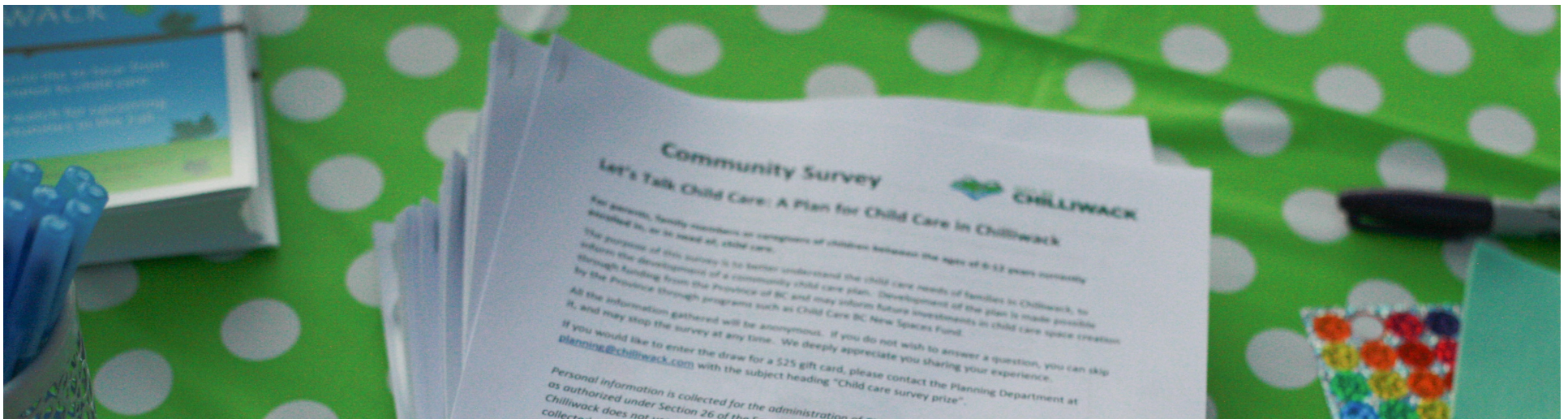
In Table 8, additional child care space targets are determined using a moderately higher child care access rate of 25% and the considerably higher access rate of 50%, which will be compared to a baseline rate for 20%, only slightly higher than the existing access rate. A 50% child care access rate reflects the provincial mandate for universal child care programming, current child care wait lists, and the fact that forty percent of parents surveyed said they currently could not access child care, which is much lower in Chilliwack than BC rate for children under 6 years of age.

It should be noted, that calculations of future demand do not take into consideration the fact that due to operating challenges noted by many child care operators and school capacity rates, several existing facilities could become forced to close in the very near future, which only increases the strain on an already stretched system. Furthermore, School District 33 is not able to consider expansion of child care programming even with current funding opportunities due to their current spacing challenges

If the current inventory remains stable, in 2020 Chilliwack will need an additional:

- 1627 child care spaces (0-12 years) to meet a 20% or provincial average access rate;
- 2427 (0-12 years) child care spaces to meet the moderate growth of 25% access rate;
- And almost 7000 additional spaces if the goal is a 50 % or 50 spaces per 100 children ages 0-12 years

The gap between current supply and potential demand is alarming as these numbers do not consider the loss of current inventory or anticipated increases to parent demand if spaces become more affordable and accessible. Currently, the province of Quebec has 55 spaces per 100 children¹⁹, due to the implementation of universal child care.



19. Ibid.

Table 8: Additional Child Care Space Targets for 2029

Age Range	2029 Projected Population	Current # of Spaces* (2020)	Total # of Spaces Needed for 20%-50% Access Rate	Additional Spaces Needed to Meet 20%-50% Access Rate	Total # of Spaces Needed for 25% Access Rate	Additional Spaces Needed to Meet 25% Access Rate
Under 36 months	3,696	421	739-1,848 Total Spaces	318-1,427 Additional Spaces	924 Total Spaces	503 Additional Spaces
3 to 5 years (excluding preschool)	4,048	780	810-2,024 Total Spaces	30-1,244 Additional Spaces	1,012 Total Spaces	232 Additional Spaces
3 to 5 years (only preschool)	4,048	580	810-2,024 Total Spaces	230-1,444 Additional Spaces	1,012 Total Spaces	432 Additional Spaces
School age - 12 years	9,756	692	1,951-4,878 Total Spaces	1,259-4,186 Additional Spaces	2,439 Total Spaces	1,747 Additional Spaces
All Children 0 to 5 years (excluding preschool)	7,744	1,201	1,548-3,872 Total Spaces	348-2,671 Additional Spaces	1,936 Total Spaces	735 Additional Spaces
All Children 0 to 12 years (excluding preschool)	17,600	1,893	3,520-8,800 Total Spaces	1,627-6,907 Additional Spaces	4,400 Total Spaces	2,507 Additional Spaces

*Current spaces for under 36 months spaces includes 45% of all multi-age (group and in-home) and family child care (223 spaces).
 Current spaces for 3 to years (excluding preschool) includes 45% of all multi-age (group and in-home) and family child care spaces (223 spaces).
 Current spaces for school age -12 years includes 10% of all multi-age (group and in-home) and family child care spaces (50 spaces).

Physical Space & Staffing Required to Meet Targets

Table 9 expands on the targets provided in the previous table and estimates the physical space and staffing required to create the additional child care spaces associated with the previously discussed targets. Estimates were created based on current requirements in Fraser Health Authority Child Care Licensing Regulation and Community Care Licensing Program.

Table 9: Requirements of Child Care Space Targets*										
Age Range	20% Access Rate for 2029 Projected Population					50% Access Rate for 2029 Projected Population				
	Additional spaces Needed	Additional Programs Needed	Estimate of Indoor Space Required	Estimate of Outdoor Space Required	Estimate of New Staff Required	Additional spaces Needed	Additional Programs Needed	Estimate of Indoor Space Required	Estimate of Outdoor Space Required	Estimate of New Staff Required
Under 36 months	318	27	1177 m ²	1908 m ²	81	1427	119	5,280m ²	8,562m ²	357
3 to 5 years	30	3	111 m ²	180 m ²	9	1244	104	4,603m ²	7,464m ²	312
School Age – 12 years	1,259	42	4,658m ²	7,554m ²	84	4186	140	15,488m ²	25,116m ²	280
All Children 0 to 5 years	348	30	1,288m²	2,088m²	90	2671	223	9,883m²	16,026m²	669
All Children 0 to 12 years	1627	72	6,020m²	9,762m²	174	6907	363	25,556m²	41,442m²	949

* Staff and Floor Area requirements are based on Fraser Health licensing minimum standards, not actual numbers.

Estimates exclude preschool spaces, as they are not typically used for the purpose of allowing parents to work or attend school.

Program and staffing figures were calculated based on maximum number of children allowed per program type and associated staffing ratios.

The number of additional programs needed is based on calculations that have been rounded up to the next whole number, as programs do not operate over their approved capacity.

4.2 Need for Qualified Early Childhood Workforce

Additional Qualified Early Childhood Workforce is a critical consideration in addressing child care gap within the City of Chilliwack. –Stakeholders are encouraged to review, access and advocate for further tools related to provincial retention and recruitment strategy for early childhood educators²⁰. The Province of BC has a range of funding related to operating child care centres, including wage subsidy. Consideration of advocating for support of further child care hub programming so that large number of family and community members providing non-licensed child care can also access support. Research verifies that additional spaces are not viable unless qualified staffing challenges are addressed. A recent article in the Hope Standard²¹ highlights concerns over provincial program due to challenge of finding qualified staff that are willing to work at the current wage rates.

“It’s always been a struggle to find quality ECEs, but right now, it’s the most challenging I’ve ever seen.” said Jenn Carman-Kask, a manager at Chilliwack’s Sto:lo Early Education Centre. “Most of the applications I get are under-qualified.”

"Carman-Kask says “that her facility has a critical shortage of staff, not space. She said Sto:lo Early Education has a licence to have 80 children use her facility, but is currently running at half capacity because of a lack of qualified educators. Provincial childcare regulations permit an 8-to-1 student-teacher ratio.”



Álmelháwtkw Early Education Centre supervisor Jenn Carman (left) speaks with Minister of State for Child Care, Katrina Chen on June 29, 2018 during Chen's visit to Chilliwack. Paul Henderson / The Progress.



“There is a crisis in daycare in Chilliwack. What crisis? When you find a spot in a licensed child care centre your child is being cared for by qualified staff, right? Wrong.”

4.3 City of Chilliwack Policy Review

A review of population trends, research shared by child care operators and parents, and an assessment of best practices in other communities in British Columbia suggests that the strongest emerging opportunities for the creation of child care spaces can be summarized as follows:

Additional Child Care Programs and Spaces-Encouragement and support of stakeholders including municipalities to collaborate and apply for UBCM²³ and Province of BC ChildCare New Spaces Fund programs²⁴ to build new child care spaces, focusing on critical need areas such as infant and toddler care, before and after school programs that reflect special needs, cultural and language requirements of families. At the time of writing this report only one additional centre is scheduled to open this year within the City of Chilliwack.

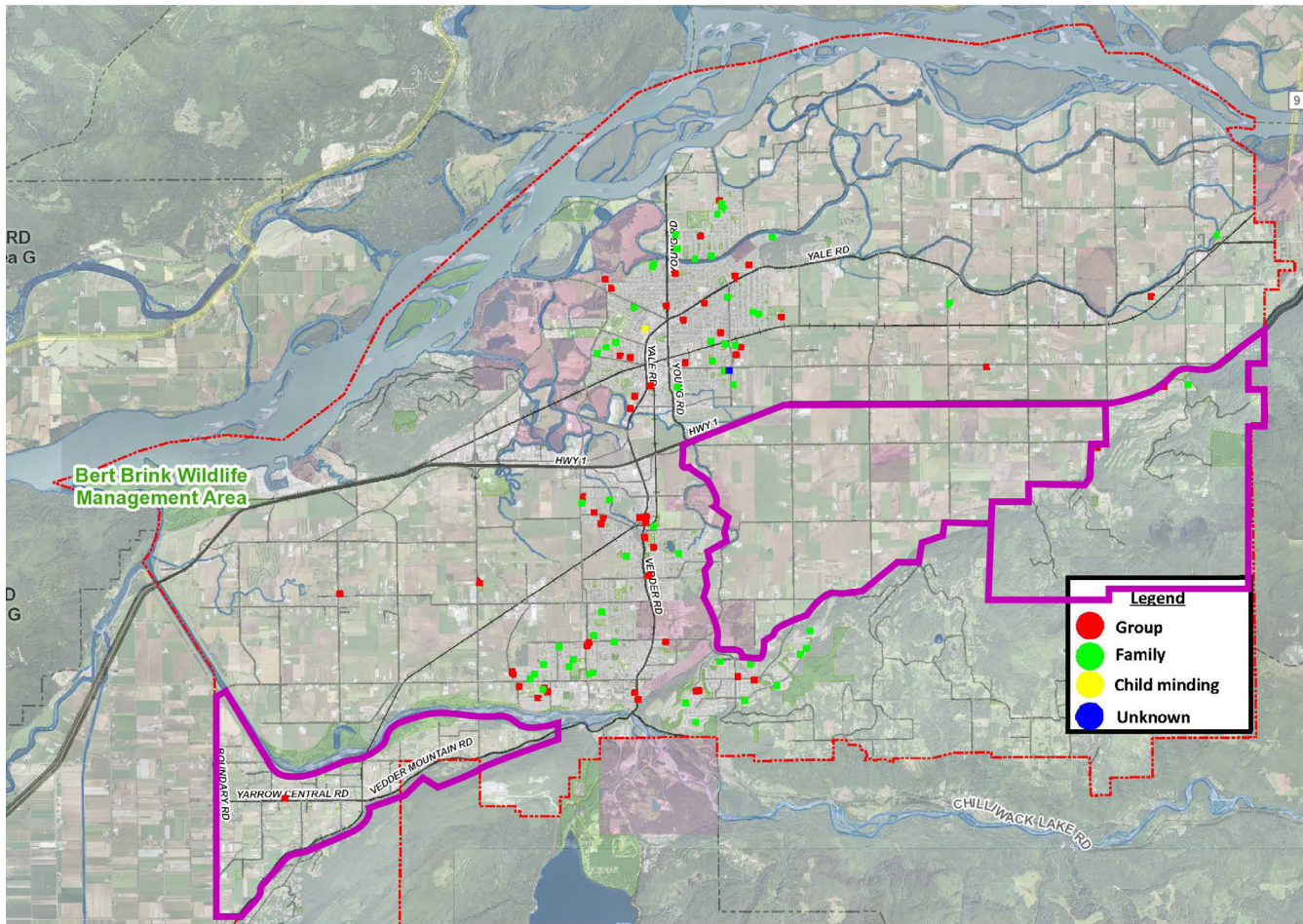
Additional Locations for Child Care Programs-Review and audit current zoning and development regulations related to location and incentives for child care spaces including in potentially government buildings, park settings, private sector businesses, BC Housing or private multi-housing buildings²⁵. A review of Metro Vancouver Plans and Policies (Table 10) highlights the number of communities that have more formally integrated child care into city policies and plans. Burnaby and Vancouver have Child Care facility used agreements with local school board. Appendix E documents the current zoning related to child care within Chilliwack and other cities within British Columbia.

Table 10: Strategies, Plans, Bylaw and Policy Review

Strategy/Plan/Policy	Municipalities within Metro Vancouver	
	No.	%
Child Care Strategy or Policy	7 of 17	41%
Child Care in Official Community Policy	11 of 16	69%
Child Care addressed in Social Plan	7 of 10	70%
Child Care defined as Community	9 of 16	56%

Source: A Municipal Survey of Child Care Spaces & Policies in Metro Vancouver, 2015

Figure 5: Map of Child Care Facility by Type of Child Care



The preceding map shows the location by types of child care within Chilliwack. As noted by parents and as evident in the map there is a need for infant/toddler care in most areas of the city and a desire for more child care centres in communities such as Yarrow, Chilliwack Mountain and Rosedale. Chilliwack Mountain and Eastern Hillside neighbourhoods are seeing development of townhouses (Chilliwack Mountain) and new single family homes (Eastern Hillside) which will lead to an increase in the numbers of families in these areas. Based on the current distribution of child care in the City, these areas are significantly underserved. This issue is particularly acute in neighbourhoods that do not have any commercial zoning in place to accommodate larger commercial scale child care facilities. Any proposed provider in these emerging areas would have to submit a rezoning application to permit a commercial child care facility, a deterrent from pursuing child care inclusion in these areas.

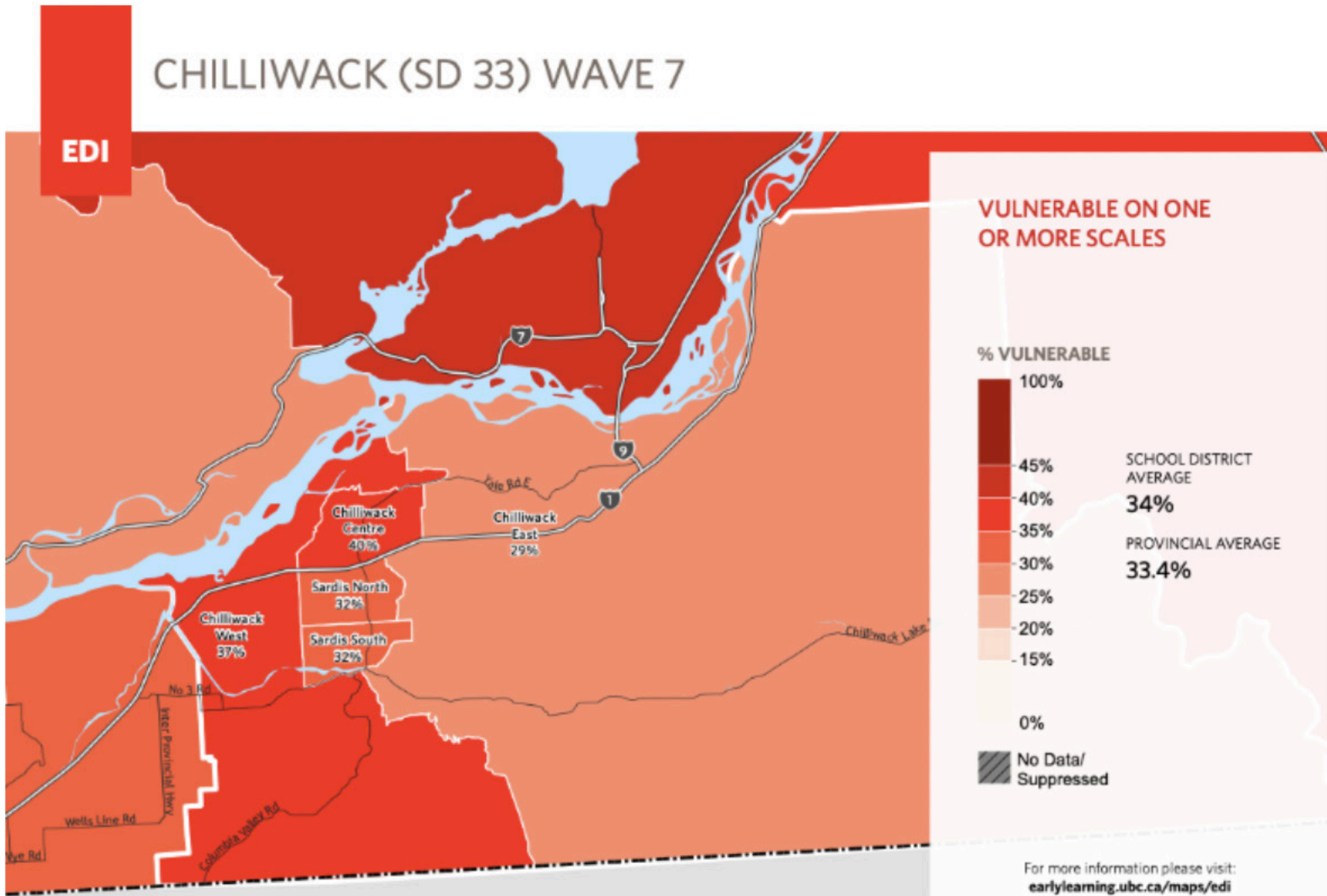
The need for a more equitable distribution of child care spaces throughout the city was highlighted throughout the research with documentation on importance of child care hubs in parts of the city where children are identified as being more vulnerable as well in areas of the city are under-served as highlighted in the parent survey and summarized in Tables 6 and Table 11.

Selected areas within the city can be described as child care deserts as it relates to child care accessibility and with the timing and extent of the transit systems this leaves many parents with very restricted options. The need for child care closer to home combined with limited spacing available presents a challenge in addressing the requests for child care closer to where children live. It is interesting to note that almost 50% of parents surveyed were interested in more outdoor programming. Child cares may be best located adjacent, or in close proximity to permanent structures in park and recreational areas. The EDI (2019) map highlights areas in Chilliwack where children are considered most vulnerable according to the Early Development Index. It is important to note that a preliminary review of the EDI score for Chilliwack indicates that the areas growing most rapidly and with less family supports are also the areas where there is greater child vulnerability, and in some cases an increase in vulnerability.

Table 11: Area of Chilliwack Parent References as Needing Additional Child Care Spaces

Area of Chilliwack	Total References	Infant/Toddler	Ages 3-5	Preschool	Before/After School
North Side	54	11	8	0	14
South Side	121	49	20	1	32
No reference Neighbourhood	13	5			8
Total	188	65	28	1	54

Figure 6: Map Demonstrating Chilliwack's Vulnerability Compared to Neighbouring Communities



4.4 Summary

The purpose of this section was to highlight projected needs for child care spaces over the next 10 years. Given the pent-up demand reflected in the parent survey, child care provider waitlists and below average access rates in Chilliwack, population growth including proposed new development is of critical concern. The need for 1627 -7000 additional child care spaces to meet a 20% -50 % access rate is alarming as access to quality and affordable child care is an important pillar in the economic growth of the region as it affects employee recruitment and retention as well as the overall economic well-being of families²⁶. The potential range of responses to child care are highlighted in the following infographic adapted from Childcare BC provincial information and illustrates the importance of involving a range of actors.²⁷



1. Assign a single staff member to help all child care providers navigate municipal requirements



2. Ensure bylaws reflect up-to-date legislation



3. Review land use bylaws to ensure they support new child care spaces



4. Review municipal fees charged to child care providers who are developing or expanding their facilities



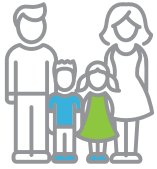
5. Consider supporting non-profit child care facilities through in-kind contributions



6. Work with your regional health authority to establish document protocols and other ways of streamlining the process for child care providers

26. 2019 Survey of Licensed Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver.

27. Adapted from ChildCare BC and UBCM. Please find additional information at this site Retrieved: February 5, 2020 https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/child_care/running-a-daycare-or-preschool/ubcm-news-spaces-infographic.pdf



7. Spread the word—tell councillors and staff about why child care is important to your community



8. Encourage municipal staff to streamline processes for child care providers



9. Assemble a cross-sectoral child care planning team



10. Draft a child care plan



11. Offer your employees child care



12. Work with your school district



13. Include a focus on the early years and/or child cares in your Official Community Plan

Source: Adapted from Early Years BC,

Part 5: Chilliwack Child Care Space Creation Vision

The quality of early childhood affects the quality of the future population and the prosperity of the society in which these children are raised²⁸. – Dr. Faser Mustard

The strategic directions and recommended actions in this section build on the preceding analysis of child care gaps and needs in Chilliwack and reflect current provincial and federal commitments to provide more affordable and quality child care spaces. The proposed actions focus primarily on the steps the city can take working with key community stakeholders and draw on the insights and actions that are currently implemented by municipalities in British Columbia.

5.1 Strategic Directions

Each strategic direction includes a brief description followed by a list of potential actions, general timeline and suggested implementing partners. Central to each recommendation is an understanding of an inventory of opportunities available to influence the growth and development of child care spaces through legislative tools, funding and collaboration of stakeholders. It is recommended that the **City of Chilliwack affirms that child care is an essential community-based service and critical to economic growth, social wellbeing and a sustainable community.**

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.

5.1 Proposed Child Care Action Plan, 2019-2029

This action plan builds on the understanding that many of the recommended actions are beyond the scope of the City's mandate and require efforts of higher levels of government and varied stakeholders. The Government of British Columbia Provincial Office for the Early Years developed a list of possible community actions²⁹ ranging from advocacy, to creating a child care plan, to reviewing zoning, to providing space and direct role in child care provision. Therefore, all proposed actions in this plan align with not only with the current provincial context, but also city resources, anticipated growth and the 2040 Official Community Plan vision for the City of Chilliwack to be a *healthy, engaged, sustainable community*³⁰ with an emphasis on healthy communities and social wellbeing.



29. See Section 2 of this report for the complete list.

30. City of Chilliwack (2015) Official Community Plan 2040, Chilliwack, BC, p. 21.

City of Chilliwack Child Care Action Plan: 2019-2029

4 Strategic Directions

Strategic Direction 1: Identify Opportunities for Advocacy, Partnerships and Collaboration Related to City Child Care System

City staff supports and provides resources to community partners in developing additional child care spaces in the community.

Actions	Time Frame Short 1-3 Years Medium 3-5 Years Long 5-10 Years	Proposed or Suggested Lead, Partners and Stakeholders to Explore Implementation of Proposed Action
1. Designate a City staff member as a point person related to enquires and applications related to increased child care spaces across all age groups, most notably for infant/toddlers, flexible program schedules and child care located in “hubs5”. This includes supporting applications to Childcare BC New Spaces Fund.	Existing	City
2. Develop a child care action plan implementation team or advisor group that collaborates with key players in the region to address concerns such as teenage parents. This newly formed Child Care Stakeholder Advisory Group (CCSAG) would play a catalytic role in implementing proposed City of Chilliwack Child Care Space Creation Vision.	Short	Early Years Committee (EYC-CYC) is to take the lead or take on this role working with all stakeholders including 'Youth Matters", CRR,
3. Investigate the possibility of opening Child Care Prototype ⁶ site in lower income areas in the City of Chilliwack.	Short	YMCA, Stakeholders, MCFD, University of the Fraser Valley. CCSAG

<p>4. Work in partnership with local organizations to promote access to child care resources and information, advocate to higher levels of government, and encourage continued dialogue between child care providers and the City to ensure local child care needs stay at the forefront of community growth conversation.</p>	<p>Short</p>	<p>City, MCFD, Health Authority, CCSAG</p>
<p>5. Work in close partnership with the School District, large employers and CCRR on leading the discussion on child care needs quality of care and school readiness for all children. Include current child care providers in these conversations.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>EYC-CYC, School District, CCRR, Large Employers, Chamber</p>
<p>6. Advocate for further integrating child care centres into virtual 'Child-Hubs' that include broader family support.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>EYC-CYC, MCFD, CCRR</p>
<p>7. Encourage child care providers and local service organizations to advocate that the Provincial government continues to raise ECE wages, increases training opportunities and continues to move towards a universal child care system.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>CCSAG, City, MCFD</p>
<p>8. Explore with key partners opportunities to raise the profile of early childhood as a career.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>UFV, CCSAG</p>

Strategic Direction 2: Support the Creation of Additional Child Care Spaces

This direction is in line with the Provincial mandate for child care funding and child care spaces and highlights the importance of facilitating access to child care that meets the needs of caregivers.

Actions	Time Frame	Key Partners
1. Ensure inclusion of policies in the Official Community Plan and other city documents that support the need for new child care spaces as part of future land use decisions related to community growth, multi-family housing development, child health and economic development.	Ongoing/ short	City/Private Sector
2. Discuss with BC Housing the potential to further incorporate childcare space in new housing projects.	In-process/ Ongoing	City, BC Housing, Housing Providers
3. Explore the potential for the provision of child care space in new developments. .	Medium	City/Private Sector
4. Explore the opportunity for further provision of child care space within public facilities, including educational and government facilities.	Medium/Long	Multi-levels of government and public stakeholders, UFV, School District, City, Varied Stakeholders and Partners
5. Prepare information for non-profit organizations such as faith groups that could consider adding child care spaces. This information would be provided by the City and document the benefits to the organization and community, clarify licensing requirements and include tips to avoid potential conflict situations. 6. Prepare information from the City to developers to identify facility needs, provincial funding options and other opportunities.	Medium to Long term	City working with multi stakeholders

Strategic Directions 3 : Improve Access for all Families to Child-Centric Child Care Throughout the City

This direction integrates research and community findings related to the importance of community-based care that includes access to nature, outdoor spaces, and community public places that are child-friendly.

Actions	Time Frame	Key Partners
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore criteria for allowing larger child care centres in residential neighbourhoods and consider development of a zone to support this as a potential permitted use in selected residential, commercial and institutional zones. This amendment acknowledges that licensed child care facilities must adhere to provincial and other licensing and permitting requirements (e.g. building code).³¹ 2. Support the creation of new child care spaces in the community by establishing land use regulations that enable the development of child care spaces in residential, commercial and institutional zones. This action is aimed at removing any future regulatory barriers and shifting existing non-conforming child care programs into zoning compliance. 	<p>In-process Short-Long Term</p>	<p>City</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Review and where applicable amend the City of Chilliwack’s zoning to remove any potential barriers to child care spaces that meet the range of family and child needs for care. Embed child care and child friendly planning in all community planning activities. 	<p>Short</p>	<p>City, Stakeholders and Partners</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Encourage new child care facilities to be located close to child and family-related uses, such as schools, multi-family residential housing and recreation programming. 	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>City</p>

31. Section 2.01 of the City of Chilliwack Zoning Bylaw defines a child care facility as over 8 children in care; Section 6.03 (1) refers to child care as an accessory home occupation for no more than 8. Case by case consideration of exemptions is current practice.

Strategic Direction 4: Establish a Child Care Monitoring, Reporting and Information Framework

This direction mirrors the accountability framework with a focus on social wellbeing central to the City of Chilliwack Official Community Plan.

Actions	Time Frame	Key Partners
<p>1. Monitor space creation progress by tracking the number of licensed child care programs & spaces (Health Authority), child care access rate (% of spaces per population 0-12 years) and City of Chilliwack child care utilization rate to inform space creation.</p>	Medium / Long	CCSAG, City, Health Authority,
<p>2. Explore opportunities to streamline community resources and information to ensure that child care resources are easy to find and up to date for parents and for individuals looking to relocate to Chilliwack. Co-developed this web content with local partners, which may include links to child care benefits, local resources and BC Child Care Map³².</p>	Short	CCRR, Info Chilliwack, City, MCFD, Health Authority
<p>3. Develop centralized resources for to-be and current child care providers to reduce barriers to starting or expanding child care facilities. This includes making local child care data contained in this report publicly available, creating a how-to guide and designating staff contact to navigate the city requirements, including government licensing and funding processes.</p> <p>4. Review Chilliwack's child care space needs and update child care targets using census 2021 child population information.</p> <p>5. Hosting (by the City), possibly in conjunction with Fraser Health Community Care Facilities Licensing, a child care information session for those interested in operating a family daycare or in-home multi-age care operation.</p>	Short	City, Health Authority

32. Important current resource for families <http://infochilliwack.com/#/search>

In summary, this Child Care Action Plan is aimed at helping partners and stakeholders to advocate for and address child care needs of the City of Chilliwack’s residents, strengthen programs for training and education of early childhood employees and encourage the development of more child-centric spaces. An important first step is to form the proposed Child Care Stakeholder Advisory Group (CCSAG) as a catalyst for implementation of strategic directions. The issues facing the child care system are complex and the response requires varied levels of government as well as private and non-profit sector, this action plan is directed at the role of the City and community stakeholders to work collaboratively to enhance social wellbeing of residents and the community.

“The best way to make children good is to make them happy.”
— *Oscar Wilde*

“Early child development is a cornerstone of human development and should be central to how we judge the successfulness of societies.”
— *The World Health Organization*

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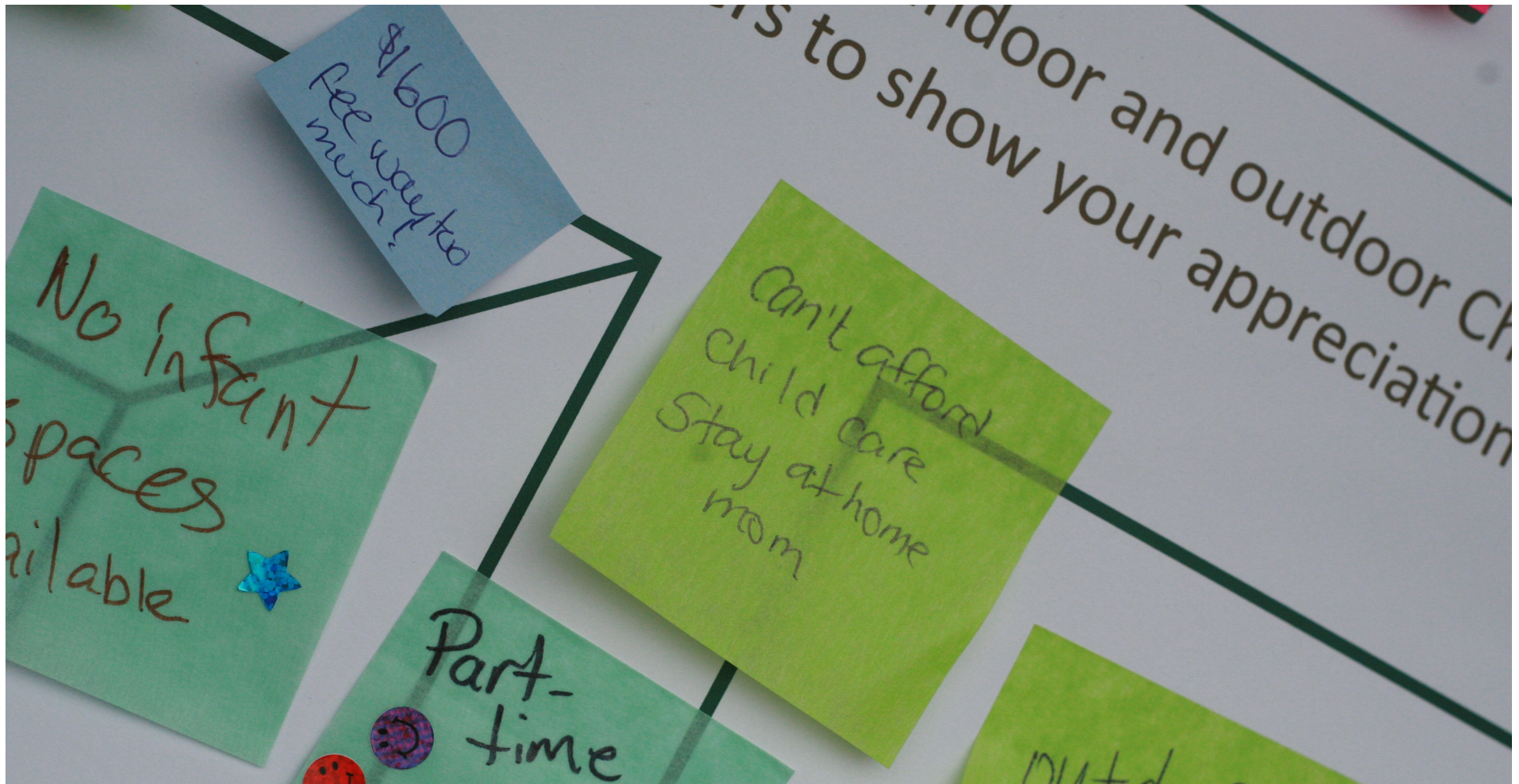
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Appendices



Appendix A: Summary of Parent Survey Results

An online survey for parents and caregivers of children aged 0-12 was used to engage both working and non-working parents. The survey asked parents to reflect on their past, present, and anticipated child care needs and share their thoughts on the quality, availability, and affordability of child care in their community. The online survey was promoted on social media, email, in community newsletters, and at community events. The survey received 343 responses from parents and caregivers during the 12-week period of July 7, 2019 - October 1, 2019.

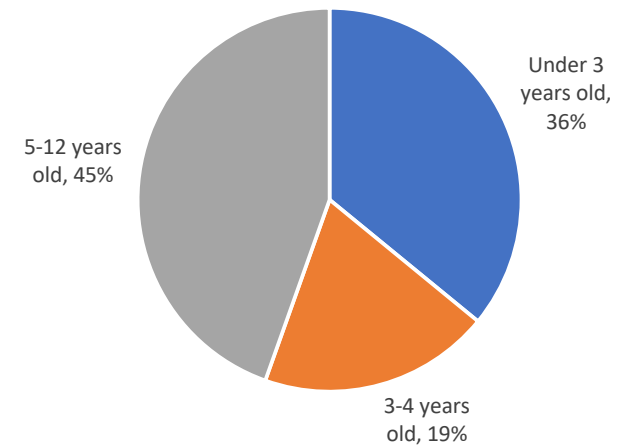
Parents & Families Represented in Survey Data

- Parent respondents had an average of 1.7 children
- Most parent respondents were currently accessing child care for at least one child

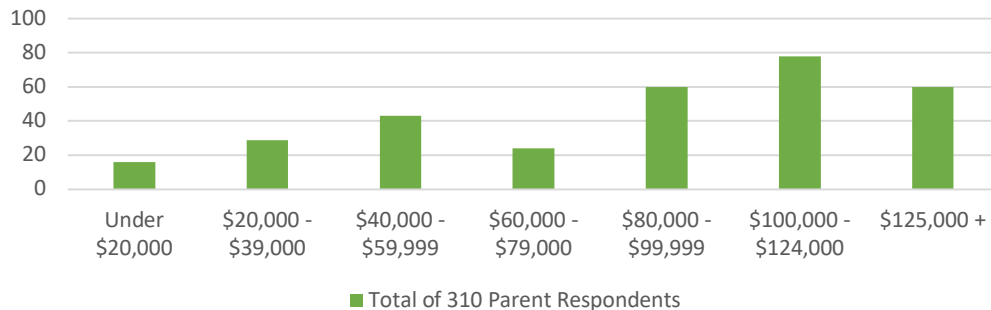
Ages of children represented:

- 208 children under 3 years old (36% of all children represented)
- 113 children 3-4 years old (20% of all children represented)
- 258 children 5-12 years old (44% of all children represented)

Children's Ages Represented in Parent Survey



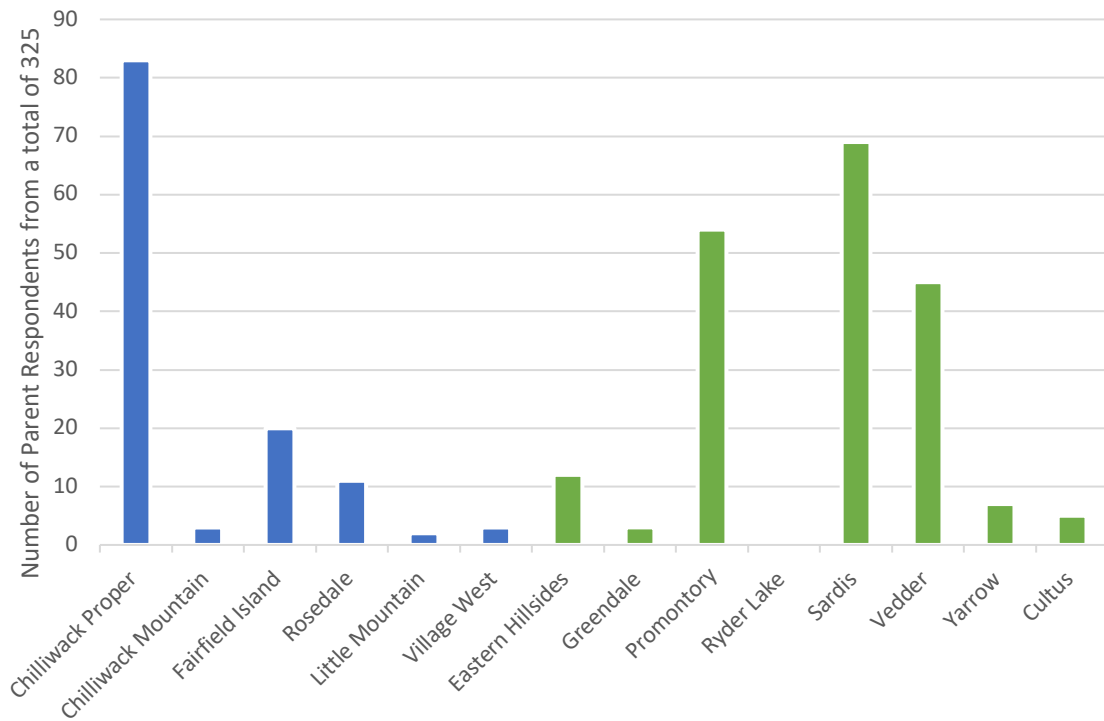
Income Reported by Parent Respondents



Income reported by parent respondents:

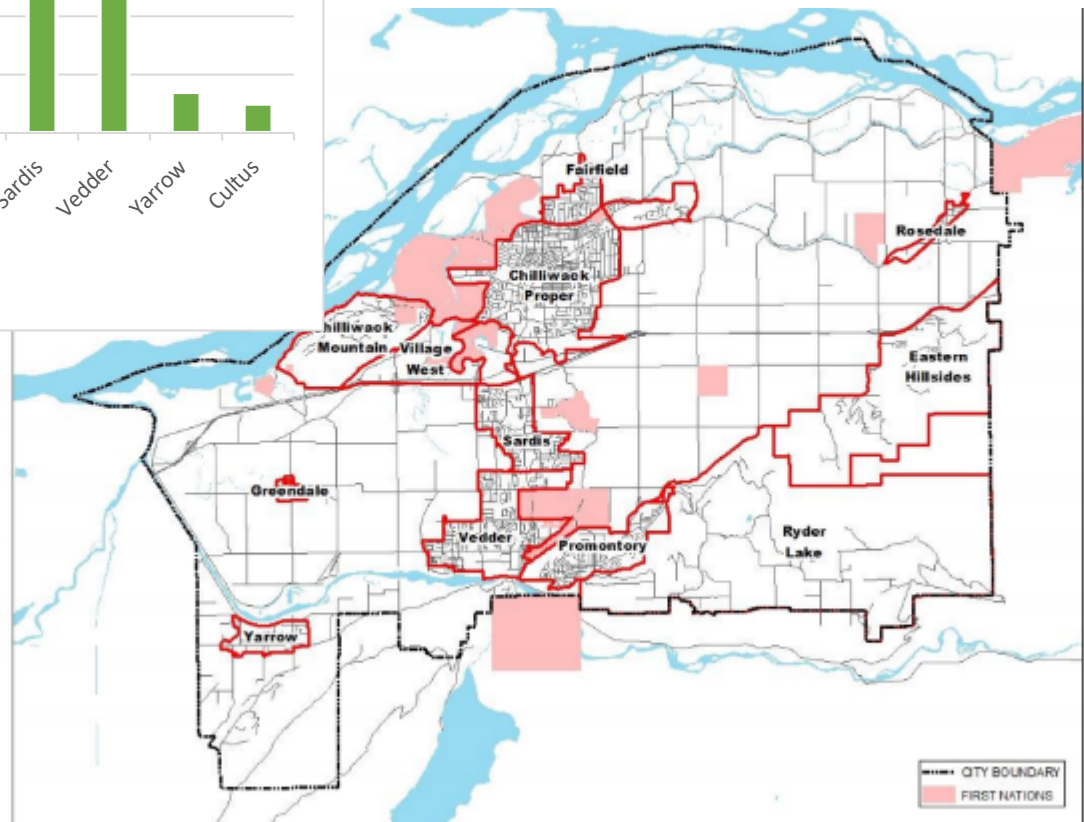
- 45% had a combined income of over 100,000
- 55% had a combined income under 100,000

Neighbourhoods Represented by Parent Respondents



38% { • North Side

62% { • South Side



Parent Survey: Assessment of Child Care Needs

Access to Child Care

- Of parents who required child care, 54% of parents were able to access appropriate child care, and 46% were not.
- 89 parents reported having at least one child currently on a waitlist for child care
- 91% of parents reported experiencing at least one barrier to securing child care
- Of parents who had child(ren) on waitlists for child care;
 - o 38% were waitlisted for Group Infant/Toddler care
 - o 17% were waitlisted for Group 3-5 care
 - o 12% were waitlisted for In-home or multi-age child care
 - o 23% were waitlisted for before and/or after school care
 - o 8% were waitlisted for preschool
- 69% of parents said there was simply not enough child care spaces available (61%), or no formal child care within their community (8%)
- Of parents with children currently accessing child care,
 - o 52% were able to find child care in less than 6 months;
 - o 27% found child care in 6 months – 1 year;
 - o and for 21% of parents it took more than 1 year to find child care.

Affordability

- 61% of parents reported the unaffordable fees as barrier to securing child care
- Of parents accessing child care, 37% were currently or had previously utilized the Affordable Child Care Benefit
- Average month cost of child care reported by parent respondents of;
 - o Children under 3 years, was \$704
 - o Children 3-4 years old, was \$656
 - o Children 5-12 years old, was \$424

Monthly Cost of Child Care Reported by Parent Respondents

Under 3 years old		3-4 years old		6-12 years old	
Average	\$704	Average	\$656	Average	\$392
Median	\$700	Median	\$720	Median	\$400
Mode	\$650	Mode	\$800	Mode	\$400
Highest	\$1,400	Highest	\$1200	Highest	\$60
Lowest	\$200	Lowest	\$125	Lowest	\$1140

Data regarding fees likely includes subsidized fees, as well unregulated child care.

Data reported for 5-year old children was removed as it could not be determined if reported fees were for full day child care or partial days child care (before and after school care).

Hours & Location

- 23% of parents required child care before 7am, 8% required child care after 6 pm, 12% required child care that was suitable to a rotating schedule or shift work, and 7% required child care on weekends.
- 36% of parents described transportation issues;
 - o either to/from full time child care (18%) or
 - o to/from school and a before/after-school program (18%).
- 44% of parents experienced barriers associated with the days (12%), times (21%), and frequency (11%) in which they required child care, compared to what is available.

Quality % Supports

- 11% of parents reported difficulties finding adequate child care for their child who required additional supports.

Appendix B: A Summary of Public Engagement – Post-It Note Activity

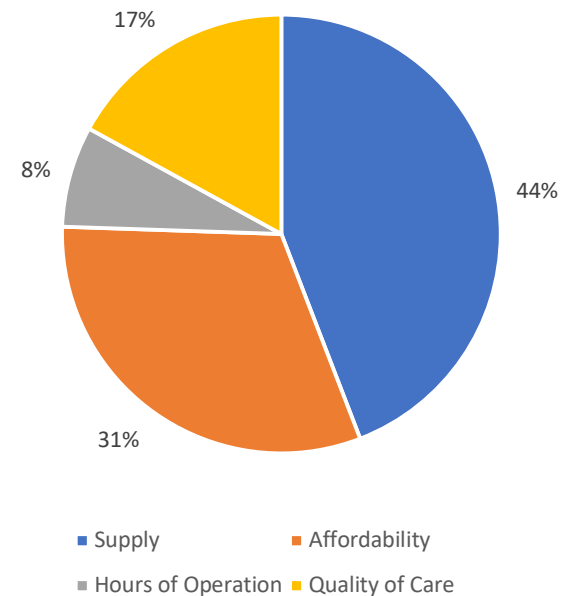
The City engaged with parents, caregivers, and children at three community events over the summer, the Stó:lō Children’s Festival on July 9, 2019, Party in the Park on July 19, 2019, and Party in the Park on July 26, 2019.

The public was invited to use Post-It Notes to provide a response to the question, “What would like to tell us about Child Care in Chilliwack?” Comments were placed on a board for others to see, and/or they could like comments already on the board, by placing a sticker on the post-it notes(s) which accurately reflected their thoughts, feelings or experiences. There were a total of 204 comments and comment likes, which were later categorized by topic or key issue. Children also provided 25 comments on Post-it Notes. Instead of focusing on issues and challenges, children were asked to share what they liked about child care.

Post-It Note Activity: Assessment of Parent Needs

- Of the 204 comments, most of which could be grouped into the following categories;
 - o Supply, with 83 comments
 - o Affordability, with 59 comments
 - o Hours of Operation, with 14 comments
 - o Quality of Care, with 32 comments
- Parents were most likely to comment on the shortage of infant/toddler spaces, followed by before and after school spaces.
- Parents who did not report experiencing child care difficulties, often received child care provided by a member of their extended family, often a grandmother.
- Stay-at-home parents were least likely to report experiencing challenges related to child care, however many also revealed the main reason for being the primary caregiver was the inability to afford the cost of child care, particularly if there were two or more children who required care.
- Some parents expressed challenges specifically related to their child’s additional needs, and increased difficulties of finding suitable child care

Post-It Note Comment Themes



Post-It Note Activity: Assessment of Children's Needs

There were a total of 25 drawings and comments on Post-it Notes produced by children, depicting the experiences they valued the most, most of which related to aspects of play. 60% all of children's comments & drawings were about play & nature, with 93% of those comments & drawings specifically related to outside play.



Appendix B: Summary of Child Care Provider Survey Results

An online survey was used to obtain information from local child care providers and child care operators related to Chilliwack's unmet child care needs, helping to identify the underlying issues and potential opportunities to improve the conditions required to grow the number of child care spaces needed. Survey questions were designed to identify key challenges, potential limitations, and opportunities from the perspective of the child care provider and operator. There was a total of 60 respondents to the Child Care Provider survey during the 4-week period of October 6, 2019 to October 31, 2019.

Child Care Operators and Providers Represented in The Survey Data

- 60% of respondents identified as owners or managers a child care facility or program, and 40% identified as employees - most of which reported having full time employment
- 30% of respondents had worked in the field for less than 5 years, 16% between 5-10 years, and over 55% had worked in child care for over 10 years.
- 66% of respondents worked at facilities that had been in operation for more than 5 years, 17% had been in operation for 1-5 years, and 13% had been in operation less than a year
- Respondents represented operators and providers across all program types, program sizes, and age groups of children
- 90% of facilities were operating in their original location

Provider Survey: Assessment of Child Care Needs & Other Insights

Child Care Availability & Waitlists

- 65% of respondents said their facility utilized a waitlist system for child care and 80% those reporting a waitlist consisting of 1-12 children/families
- Responses to the question, "what would be required to create additional child care spaces for your program at its current location?" were either related to increased staffing (48%) or increased space (52%)

Workforce & Staffing Issues

- Employment satisfaction/retention 57% of survey respondents anticipated they would remain in the field for the remainder of their working career, 14% were certain they would not remain in the field, and almost 30% were uncertain

- Needs or challenges specifically related to staffing, included;
 - o Limited supply of qualified child care applicants for full-time (48%), part-time (53%) and casual positions (53%),
 - o Limited supply of applicants qualified to work with children who require additional supports (45%)
 - *Note: includes responses from operators of home-based child care operations, which may not require additional staff, thus the staffing needs are assumed to be underrepresented in the data*
 - o A desire for better wages and benefits.
 - Unsatisfactory wages lead to difficulties with employee retention
 - Difficulty offering attractive employee wages and/or benefits while maintaining affordable child care fees (60%)
 - Employees leave to pursue work outside of the child care field (33%) or employees leave for better compensation within the field (33%)
 - o Burn out due to long hours, stresses of the job, and a lack of respect/appreciation for profession
 - o staffing shortages increase burnout, stress on employees

Challenges of Location and Physical Space

- Needs or challenges specifically related to location and suitability of space, include
 - o A desire for more nearby child-friendly spaces (22%), as well as improved indoor (16%) and outdoor play spaces onsite (22%)
 - o Perception of child care's current location and nearby child-friendly spaces or amenities as unsafe (22%)
 - o 16% of respondents indicated a need for improvements to their facility to accommodate children, parents or staff requiring accessibility considerations (ramps, handrails, wider doorways)
 - o 65% of respondents did not anticipate their program would need to relocate in the near future, 20% were unsure about the need to re-locate and 17% anticipated they would be required to relocate in the next 2 years.
 - o 19% of respondents reported difficulties due to the ease of pick/drop-off and parking availability

Appendix C: Summary of Informal Interviews with Child Care Providers

8 informal phone interviews were conducted with child care providers and ECE professionals during the month of November. The City of Chilliwack informed child care providers of the opportunity to participate in informal interviews by mail and on the City's website. Engagement of this nature provided the opportunity for the interviewer to ask follow-up questions, which resulted in a deeper understanding of complex issues, and provided supplemental information to themes already both surveys and steering committee meetings.

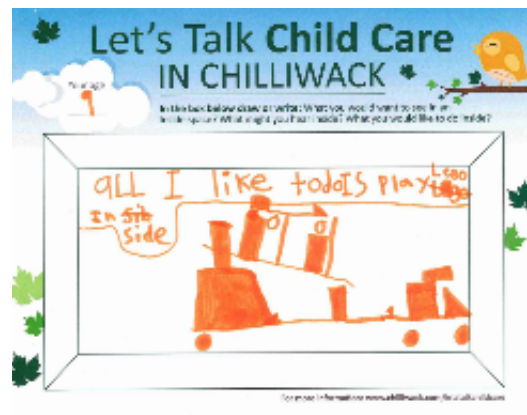
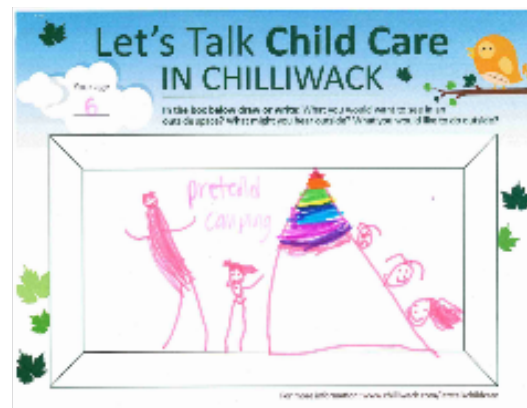
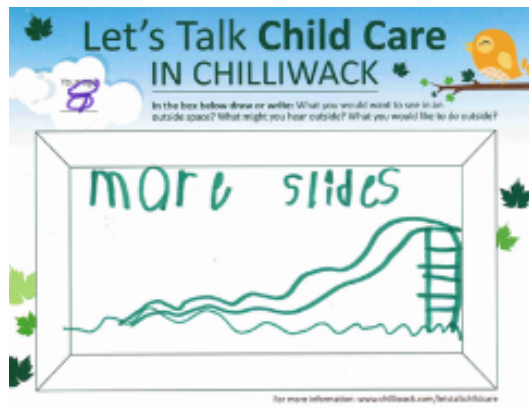
The challenges identified by child care providers through the informal interview process were primarily related to staffing, followed by issues related to physical space and location.

- A serious shortage of qualified staff and the difficulties in attracting and retaining employees in the field was clearly identified as the main hurdle to the provision of local child care. This issue is clearly recognized across the province, the country, and the globe.
- The main cause of staffing difficulties appears to be due to poor compensation and poor job satisfaction due to a general lack of value and respect for the ECE profession, despite the physical and mental demands of the work, and recognized importance or early childhood experiences.
- Presumably, these factors also discouraged those who may have otherwise been interested in the field from considering child care as a profession.
- Concerns about the impact to quality of child care was expressed in relation to the practice of hiring minimally or untrained staff
- Issues related to location or physical space was due to the difficulty of finding and securing an affordable location, suitable for the provision of child care.
- In respect to the challenges of increasing the number of spaces within an existing facility, the number one issue was the lack of staff to run additional programming, followed by the difficulties of increasing physical space due to cost, or restrictions due to child care licencing or City bylaws.

Appendix D: Summary of Children's Drawing Activity

Community engagement included the voluntary participation of children with permission from their parents or guardian, in the hopes of getting a better understanding of what children value and prefer in reference to their experiences of the child care environment. The child consultation drawing activity was designed with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in mind and aims to reflective best planning practices as they relate to the involvement of children in matters related to local government. Consultation with children, through their participation in this activity, was carried out with the help from local child care providers.

Thirty-two drawing activity worksheets were completed by child participants, ranging in approximately three to nine years old. Most pages had a child's drawing in pen, crayon or marker paired with an adult's written description of what the image was demonstrating. The children's drawing activity illustrated a high value for play, an appreciation for various types of play, and the desire for specific opportunities for play. Most drawings referenced physical play, as well as play that took place outside.



♥ LOVE ♥

Prof
Outside

Let's Talk Child Care
IN CHILLIWACK

Your age
7

In the box below draw or write: What you would want to see in an outside space? What might you hear outside? What you would like to do outside?



Biger play grants

For more information: www.chilliwack.com/letstalkchildcare

I like Haging UP side down



Lego
Art and

Appendix E: Child Care in BC

The Critical Role That Child Care Plays

The benefits of quality child care are significant, long-lasting, and shared by all.

In Early Childhood Development

The benefits of quality child care programming is documented extensively in research across the globe. Quality child care and early learning opportunities help to support a child's physical, intellectual, emotional and social development. Early experiences have a profound affect on the brain development of infants and young children. Quality child care is a known contributor to healthy child development and increased academic success, especially for those most vulnerable.

For Children and Their Families

Child care supports families in many ways, largely enabling parents to work or pursue education outside the home. Having access to child care allows parents, particularly women, to remain in the workforce after having children, to gain full-time employment, and allows for more meaningful employment opportunities. Women who are employed have more financial independence and their families are less likely to experience poverty.

Within Communities and Municipalities

The availability of quality child care is crucial to regional economic development. An investment in today's child care systems, has a positive impact to local economies in the short term and long term. Working parents make significant contributions to existing economies and investments in early childhood have positive impact on future economies. Quality child care and early childhood education improves both the human capital of the future workforce, as well as social inclusion, both of which result in greater well-being, lower rates of crime and other social problems and better economic performance when more children are able to reach their full potential.³³

A lack of appropriate, accessible, and affordable child care have negative impacts on employee recruitment, attendance, and retention which can have a negative impact on productivity and the wellbeing of families. Access to quality child care benefits businesses by reducing absenteeism and stress among its employees who have young children.³⁴

33. 2019 Survey of Licensed Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver Aug 2019
34. Solving BC's Affordability Crisis in Child Care Financing the \$10 a Day Plan Igluka Ivanova July 2015.pdf

The Child Care System

In Canada, child care falls under the jurisdiction of all three levels of government.

Federal

Canada does not have a national early childhood education and care program, and is one of the few industrialized countries in the world without a coherent and effective early childhood education and child care system. Families with young children receive support through cash transfers from the Federal government through the Canada Child Tax Benefit and the Universal Child Care Benefit.

Provincial

The provincial government is responsible for providing the operating funds, child care subsidies and capital funding to support child care. The Province is responsible for the licensing and regulation of child care facilities through the Health Authorities, and provides guidance to municipalities and child care providers. Provincially, there are four ministries that play a role in the provision or regulation of child care services.

1. Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD)
2. Ministry of Education (MOE)
3. Ministry of Health (MOH)
4. Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills & Training (MAE)

Municipal

While City's do not have a legislative role in child care, local governments have regulatory powers that can affect the provision of local child care services. Local governments regulate land use planning, business licensing and provide growth management, all of which have impact on the local supply of child care. Land use regulation can impact the location and size of new child care facilities, as well as other aspects of operations which are not regulated by the Province, through health and safety regulations or building code requirements.

In recent years, an increased number of municipalities in B.C. and across the country have taken more of an interest in community child care issues, such as stand-alone child care strategy strategies (such as this one), as well as including child care objections and policies within Official Community Plans, and Social Plans. Some municipalities have identified child care as a “community amenity” within policy documents, encouraging the provision of child care facilities through the development approvals process. Some municipalities offer financial and other types of resources to facilitate child care, most commonly is the provision of space to child care providers, through a nominal rate agreement, reduced lease rates, or space at market lease rate within city-owned buildings. Some local governments offer grants for child care providers for either operating costs and/or for capital projects. Some local governments offer property tax exemptions for child care facilities.^{35 36}

35. “Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada 2016.” Child Care Canada.19
36. 2019 Survey of Licensed Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver

Table: Types of Child Care in BC

There are four types of child care recognized in British Columbia. Licensed, Registered Licence-Not-Required, Licence-Not-Required, and In-Child’s-Own Home Care. As per funding requirements, the completed inventory of child care spaces and methods of measuring child care supply is only based on licensed child care spaces. Child care that is outside of these four types of care is considered illegal.

Child Care Type	Regulatory Requirements
Licensed	Monitored and regularly inspected by regional health authorities because they must meet specific requirements for health and safety, staffing qualifications, record keeping, space and equipment, child-to-staff ratios, and programming.
Registered Licence-Not-Required	Child care providers are unlicensed but have registered with a Child Care Resource and Referral Centre. To become a registered licence-not-required provider, operators must have completed a criminal records check, character references, a home safety assessment, first aid training, and child care training. Licence-not-required child care providers are allowed to care for up to two children (or a sibling group) who are not related to them.
Licence-Not- Required Child Care	Unlicensed child care providers are allowed to care for up to two children (or a sibling group) who are not related to them. They may be operating illegally if they have more children in their care than is allowed. There is no monitoring or inspection and no health or safety standards.
In-Child’s-Own Home Care	This type of unlicensed care is when parents arrange for child care of their own child within their own home – like a nanny, family member, or a child-minder. There are no legal requirements for monitoring this type of care.

Source: 2019 Survey of Licensed Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver

Table: Types of Licensed Child Care in BC*

Child Care Licence Type	Age of Children	Max Number of Children	Minimum Staff to Child Ratios & Staff Qualifications			Setting
Group - Under 3 years old	0-36 months	12	1 to 4 children	1 staff	1 Infant Toddler Educator	community-based facility or centre
			5 to 8 children:	2 staff	1 Infant Toddler Educator & 1 Early Childhood Educator	
			9 to 12 children:	3 staff	1 Early Childhood Educator, 1 Early Childhood Educator & 1 Early Childhood Educator Assistant	
Group – 2.5 to school age	30 months – school age	25	1 to 8 children	1 staff	1 Early Childhood Educator	community-based facility or centre
			9 to 16 children	2 staff	1 Early Childhood Educator & 1 Early Childhood Educator Assistant	
			17 to 25 children	3 staff	1 Early Childhood Educator & 2 Early Childhood Educator Assistants	
Group – school age (before & after school care)	School age (Kindergarten and up)	24-30 (depending on age)	1 to 12 children (K-gr. 1) or 1 to 15 children (gr. 2 and older)	1 staff	1 Responsible Adult	community-based facility or centre
			13 to 24 children (K-gr. 1) or 16 to 30 children (gr. 2 and older)	2 staff	2 Responsible Adults	
Multi-Age	0-12 years old	8 children	0-8 children	1 staff	1 Early Childhood Educator	community-based facility or centre
In-home Multi-age	0-12 years old	8 children	0-8 children	1 staff	1 Early Childhood Educator (who is also the licensee)	In the child care provider's own home

Family Child Care	0-12 years old	7 children	0-7 children	1 staff	1 responsible adult (who is also the licensee)	In the child care provider's own home
Preschool	2.5 years – school age	20 children	1-10 children	1 staff	1 Early Childhood Educator	community-based facility or centre
			11 to 20 children	2 Staff	1 Early Childhood Educator & 1 Early Childhood Educator Assistant	
*Excluding child minding Source: www2.gov.bc.ca , Understand the Different Types of Child Care in B.C. - Province of British Columbia						

Table: Staff Qualifications, Certification & Training in B.C.

Certification	Requirements	Certification Period
Early Childhood Educator (ECE)	Complete a basic ECE training program from an approved institution. 500 hours of unpaid work experience under the supervision of a Canadian-certified ECE	5 years
Early Childhood Educator (1 year)	Complete a basic ECE training program from an approved institution. Permits holder to work as ECE without 500 hours of unpaid work experience (Applicant must submit explanation describing circumstances that prevented acquisition of 500 hours of work experience.)	1 year
Infant and Toddler Educator (ITE) Special Needs Educator (SNE)	Complete basic ECE requirements and a post-basic ECE training program in one of the specialties.	5 years
Early Childhood Educator Assistant (ECEA)	Permits holder to work with young children in an early childhood setting under the supervision of a qualified ECE Complete an ECE course in child guidance, child health, safety and nutrition, or childhood development within the previous 5 years.	5 years
Responsible Adult	In accordance with the Child Care Licensing Regulation (section 29), a Responsible Adult must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be at least 19 years of age • Be able to provide care and mature guidance to children • Have relevant work experience • Have completed a 20-hour course relevant to early childhood development 	Indefinite

Appendix F: Zoning Policy Review

The city of Chilliwack’s planning and bylaw provisions in accordance with child care zoning in multiple cities across the lower mainland demonstrates less specific regulations, instead choosing to create broad categories which are approved for child care facilities. Chilliwack’s official community plan vision includes the goal of managing future population growth “responsibly”, utilizing zoning bylaws to allow for the necessary levels of child care will be important for this goal as well as goal 5: to “build healthy attractive communities”. Chilliwack allows for two different categories of childcare: 8 children or less in Accessory home occupation or commercial facilities with no maximum number of children but must meet Fraser health regulations. Most of the cities looked at have a similar two categories with the exception of New Westminster which uses three – Residential 8 or fewer children, attached residential 7 or fewer children, and commercial. Chilliwack also does not have specific parking bylaws for child care facilities in contrast to the other cities.

Chilliwack is on par with Abbotsford in concern with commercial districts zoned to allow for child care when compared to the other cities, this includes the lack of zoning for light industrial areas to include child care as New Westminster does. Most of the cities, including Chilliwack, classify residential child care facilities as accessory home occupations and home based businesses dependent of meeting certain guidelines. This allows for residential childcare facilities to exist in most residentially zoned districts.

Richmond demonstrates the most liberal zoning allowances in regard to child care of the specified cities. The city of Richmond is the only city to not require a business license for residential child care facilities and allow child care centres in all mixed use or residential districts.

City & Zoning Definitions	Zones that permit childcare	Associated regulations	Parking loading regulations
Chilliwack “Child care facility”	“General Commercial” or “Public and Private Assembly” Residential - Single family home (Accessory Home Occupation)	AHO – Maximum 8 children (possible for more with special hearing) Commercial providers – any number of children, may need renovation to meet Fraser health guidelines	Must follow regular zoning for individual zones

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Abbotsford "Child Care Centre" Accessory home occupation level 2 and 3	Cornerstore policy: Urban 3 - infill and Urban 4 – detached land use Secondary and regional Commercial land (C1 and C2)	Must be a minimum of 400m from the nearest Neighbourhood Centre • Must be a minimum of 400m from other Corner Store uses • Must be on a corner when located on a Local road, as shown on Map 4 • Limited to 400m ² total commercial floor area (200m ² when on a Local road only)	Must meet bylaws 150.12 and 150.25
Richmond "Child care" or "child care program"	"All residential – Home business" All mixed use zones. Local Commercial (CL), Community commercial (CC), Entertainment & athletics (CEA), Auto-oriented commercial (CA).	Home business child care doesn't require a business license Must have outdoor space	Must provide on-site parking 0.75 spaces per employee; plus 1 space for each 10 children in care All child care programs that are home businesses that provide additional parking to the on street parking, must park in a permitted driveway not in any required yard
Surrey "Child care centre"	Any Residential zone – accessory use (8 or less children) Child care zone – max 25 children (CCR) Assembly hall zones, Special care housing zones, Institutional zones, Neighborhood commercial (C-5), Community commercial zone (C-8; C-8B), town centre commercial zone (C-15), downtown commercial zone (C-35), Commercial recreation zone (CPR), Business park zone (IB; IB-1 ; IB-2, IB-3 ;)	Child care centres shall be located on the lot such that these centres have direct access to an open space and play area within the lot. All designated outdoor play areas for the child care centre shall be fenced to a height of 1.8 metres [6 ft.] and should be non-climbable and strong. If the fence is not solid, the spacings should not allow a child's head through	0.70 parking spaces per employee; plus 0.15 parking spaces per licensed child for drop off, or 2 parking spaces, whichever is greater
New West "Child care"	8 or fewer children – allowed in residential single family dwellings. Child care facilities are permitted in most commercial zones, not including (C-1A; CS-1; CS-2; CP-1; CP-2; CW-1; CW-2; CW-3) In some industrial zones: M-1; M-2; limited location M-5 All institutional districts except (P-4; P-5; P-7; P-8; P-9)	For attached housing (ie. Townhouses or rowhouses) max 7 children Child care facilities more than 8 children: classified as assembly use Residential child care use is not classified as a home based business.	For any child care facility in a non-residential building or a portion of a non-residential building one space shall be provided for each 50 square metres (538.21 sq. feet) of floor area. For any group child care facility in a residential building or portion thereof two parking spaces shall be provided for staff.