



This month marks an historic moment for child care in British Columbia. The B.C. Government has announced more than 50 Universal Child Care Prototype Sites that will test the funding and operational models for moving British Columbia towards a universal child care system.

Through the Province's Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (ELCC) with the Government of Canada, the Province is investing \$60 million to convert around 2,500 licensed child care spaces – with a priority on infant and toddler spaces – into low-cost spaces at existing child care facilities across B.C. These sites reflect the diversity of B.C.'s geography, population, program types and operational models.

From November 1, 2018 to March 31, 2020, these sites are offering a number of key benefits to both parents and child care providers. Parent fees have dramatically decreased with families paying \$200 a month – or less – per child for full-time enrolment during regular business hours, regardless of the care type. Funding for sites is based on a facility's reported revenues with the exception of the maximum parent fee amount, fund-raising, in-kind supports, and other non-provincial operational funding. The base amount will be supplemented with an administrative top up of 5% in recognition of additional administrative requirements. In addition, prototype sites will also be eligible to receive one-time funding to enable them to further enhance the quality of their child care programs.

As a component of the prototype sites, the Ministry is launching an Inclusion Pilot Project to explore new approaches to including children with extra support needs in child care programs. This is particularly important when we consider the growing demand for services, and the pressures on existing Supported Child Development (SCD)/Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD) programs. Evaluation of the impacts of each model is an important element of the Inclusion Pilot Project. These learnings will directly inform planning as the Province moves towards more inclusive child care.

To support employee recruitment and retention, Early Childhood Educators working in prototype sites will receive the B.C. Government's \$1-per-hour wage enhancement retroactive to September 2018, as will other ECEs working at licensed facilities that have been approved for the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative. There will be a further \$1-per-hour lift in April 2020. The wage increases are part of the Government's [Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy](#).

This announcement is a significant milestone in our journey towards implementation of universal childcare in British Columbia. Our success in this endeavour depends upon ongoing collaboration with sector stakeholders like yourself. Thank you for the work you do to support child care and families throughout the province, and for helping to raise awareness about the many initiatives underway as part of Childcare BC.

Read the [news release](#) about today's announcement.

Regards,

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