

# Child Care and the Environment

Intersections and Opportunities in BC



COALITION OF  
**child care  
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OF BC



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## CHILD CARE AND THE ENVIRONMENT: Intersections and Opportunities in BC

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# Child Care and the Environment: Intersections and Opportunities in BC

**BRITISH COLUMBIA IS AT A MOMENT** of intense disruption and change, from the pandemic to the climate emergency, to the affordability and opioid crises. To respond to this moment and “build a strong, sustainable economy that works for everyone” — as BC’s Ministerial mandate letters all direct — government must seek out intersections between seemingly disparate issues, and act in ways that simultaneously advance multiple goals.

In that spirit, this policy note sets out to specifically examine five intersections between the issues of child care, the environment, and climate change:

1. Protecting children’s environmental health;
2. Improving buildings;
3. Reducing transportation emissions;
4. Powering the clean economy; and
5. Helping all families engage.

Within these intersections, we present 10 key recommendations to the BC government to strengthen the Childcare BC plan, CleanBC Roadmap to 2030, and related provincial plans and regulations. The recommendations align with and supplement the community Roadmap to \$10aDay Child Care in BC.<sup>1</sup>

Our aim is to hasten BC’s transition to both universal child care and a clean economy in ways that improve the health and well-being of children, families, educators, and communities.



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**This policy note should be considered through lenses** of overall equity, Indigenous rights and jurisdiction, environmental justice, and the role of the educator. We acknowledge the work of many individuals, groups, and organizations who are currently leading the way on these issues and providing a foundation for the analysis and recommendations in this policy note.



**EQUITY:** The pursuit of equity requires us to identify and overcome intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures. The expansion of high quality, inclusive \$10aDay child care itself is equity-enhancing as it removes barriers to education, employment, and income for parents – particularly mothers – and supports early childhood educators in becoming valued, fairly-compensated professionals. It also enhances children’s health, well-being, and outcomes through their whole life course<sup>2</sup> and mitigates a range of household stresses that makes it harder for families and children to thrive.<sup>3</sup>



**INDIGENOUS RIGHTS AND JURISDICTION:** We must acknowledge and honour Indigenous rights and jurisdiction, identify and overcome barriers created by colonial systems and structures, and align our practices accordingly. We support the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework and acknowledge that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities have and may evolve their governance structures and child care services in directions other than those outlined in this policy note, creating models to learn from and strive for. We commit to listen, learn, and act in our ongoing work to decolonize our own practices and perspectives.



**ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE:** Some recommendations in this policy note deal with minimizing environmental burdens or maximizing environmental benefits in child care contexts. The lens of environmental justice calls on us to ensure an equitable distribution of these benefits and burdens across BC’s diverse populations and communities.



**ROLE OF THE EDUCATOR:** While this policy note focuses on the role of the provincial government, we must also acknowledge the key role of early childhood educators in co-creating more livable, just, and sustainable worlds alongside children, families, and communities, as advanced through educators’ own pedagogical and ethical commitments.<sup>4</sup>



# Recommendations at a Glance

## PROTECTING CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

1. Ensure BC's current project to create new provincial Child Care Facility Design Standards incorporates all of the applicable aspects of environmental health discussed in this policy note.
2. Create complementary provincial Operating Guidelines for Environmental Health in Child Care Settings, and provide additional funding and expert resources and personnel to support child care programs in following these new guidelines.
3. Conduct expert and stakeholder consultations to identify potential updates to BC's Child Care Licensing Regulation and/or Building Code that translate key design and operating standards and guidelines into updated requirements to increase consistency across municipalities.

## IMPROVING BUILDINGS

4. Create a child care capital plan that includes funds for Indigenous-led program facilities and ensures new and expanded public and publicly-funded non-profit child care centres are built or retrofitted to new zero-carbon, climate resiliency, and environmental health standards. This should include an immediate requirement that no new, publicly-funded centres use natural gas.
5. Leverage private capital by requiring or incentivizing — as appropriate — all privately-owned child care facilities (centres and licensed family homes) to utilize the forthcoming PACE financing tool to undertake zero-carbon, climate resilience, and environmental health upgrades.

## REDUCING TRANSPORTATION EMISSIONS

6. Cluster the creation of new child care programs on or near school grounds or near other community, workplace, and clean transportation corridors and nodes.

7. Expand and solidify BC's current "Active and Safe Routes to School" initiatives by (a) increasing program funding to cover more schools, (b) including participation by adults and children traveling to and from onsite or nearby child care programs, (c) providing new funding for dedicated "Active and Safe Routes to Child Care" travel planning initiatives to support child care programs not incorporated into school-based projects, and (d) working with municipalities to adequately fund the necessary supporting infrastructure.

## POWERING THE CLEAN ECONOMY

8. In government strategies, position the Childcare BC Plan as explicitly anchoring components of the CleanBC Plan/Roadmap to 2030 and forthcoming CleanBC Jobs Readiness Plan. Use language acknowledging that:
  - a. An equitable transition to a clean economy is not possible without child care infrastructure and early childhood educator professionals; and
  - b. For families, "Helping people get the skills they need" often begins by providing access to child care.
9. In BC's forthcoming system for tracking the creation of "clean jobs," classify early childhood educator positions as a subtype of "clean jobs." In BC's economic planning, highlight the role of child care, early childhood educator professionals, and the broader care sector in driving lower-emissions growth.

## HELPING ALL FAMILIES ENGAGE

10. Fully implement the community Roadmap to \$10aDay Child Care in BC, which prioritizes expansion in public and non-profit models of care, and upholds Indigenous rights and jurisdiction over systems of care that are determined by Indigenous leadership.

# 1. Protecting Children's Environmental Health

**PART OF CARING FOR OUR CHILDREN** is ensuring they can play, learn, and grow in healthy social and physical environments. In child care settings, a healthy physical environment includes decreasing exposure to toxic chemicals, air, water, and noise pollution, and increasing exposure to natural light and nature.

As BC builds out a system of universal child care, there is an opportunity to ensure that child care centres are built and programs are operated in ways that advance environmental health for children and staff.<sup>5</sup>

## Background

Young children are at higher risk for health impacts from chemical exposures, radiation, pollution, and other environmental stressors.<sup>6</sup> In child care and other settings where children are present, major concerns include:

- Poor outdoor air quality (e.g., vehicle pollution, wildfires, woodsmoke, fumes, and dust from nearby construction);
- Chemical exposures in outdoor areas (e.g., pesticides, lead-contaminated soil, treated wood);
- Radiation (e.g., ultraviolet, radon gas);
- Poor indoor air quality (e.g., toxic chemicals in dust including during and after renovations, fragrances, mould/mildew, off gassing of volatile organic compounds, and lack of adequate ventilation or filtration of incoming air);
- Cleaning materials (e.g., bleach and other harsh chemicals, antibacterial soaps);
- Toys and activity materials (e.g., toys or costume jewelry that contain lead, sleep mats and other items made with PVC/vinyl, art and craft materials in powder or spray form or that contain solvents);
- Kitchen and food preparation (e.g., lead in drinking water, mercury contamination in fish, BPA-lined food cans, PFCs, heated plastic);
- Excessive noise (both indoor and outdoor due to site location, placement of mechanical equipment, and lack of acoustical treatments); and
- Extreme heat.

Despite the availability of high-quality third party resources,<sup>7</sup> these concerns are not yet explicitly addressed in BC's current Child Care Licensing Regulation<sup>8</sup> and are not detailed in current, prominent BC child care design guidelines.<sup>9</sup>

On the flip side, children’s environmental health can be supported by *increasing* exposure to positive environmental factors<sup>10</sup> like natural light, fresh air, and nature/natural elements,<sup>11</sup> including frequent opportunities for outdoor play and learning.<sup>12</sup> Current standards and guidelines specify a minimum amount of outdoor space per child,<sup>13</sup> minimum levels of outdoor active play,<sup>14</sup> a minimum amount of natural light,<sup>15</sup> and encourage spaces to be built to create as natural an environment as possible (with living elements).<sup>16</sup> However, comprehensive province-wide guidance on increasing these and other positive aspects of environmental health are not yet fully developed.<sup>17</sup>

## Recommendations

- Ensure BC’s current project to create new provincial Child Care Facility Design Standards<sup>8</sup> incorporates all of the applicable aspects of environmental health discussed in this policy note.<sup>19</sup>
- Create complementary provincial Operating Guidelines for Environmental Health in Child Care Settings, and provide additional funding and expert resources and personnel to support child care programs in following these new guidelines.
- Conduct expert and stakeholder consultations to identify potential updates to BC’s Child Care Licensing Regulation and/or Building Code that translate key design and operating standards and guidelines into updated requirements to increase consistency across municipalities.<sup>20</sup>





## 2. Improving Buildings

**THE BUILD OUT OF UNIVERSAL CHILD CARE** in BC will require the construction of many new buildings and the expansion of existing buildings to accommodate new spaces.

As BC builds out a network of new and expanded child care centres, there is an opportunity to ensure that retrofitted and new buildings are zero-carbon, healthy, and pandemic and climate resilient.

### Background

BC's new CleanBC Roadmap to 2030<sup>21</sup> sets a target to reduce emissions from buildings and communities by 50 per cent by 2030, including by requiring all new buildings constructed after 2030 to be zero-carbon.

In advance of 2030, a range of programs and incentives will be used to build momentum toward these targets and standards through retrofits and new construction. For example, on top of current incentives and supports,<sup>22</sup> the CleanBC Roadmap commits government to (a) require all new public sector buildings to adhere to performance standards by 2023 and be zero-carbon by 2027, (b) implement a comprehensive strategy to transform existing public sector buildings to a low carbon and resiliency<sup>23</sup> standard by 2024, and (c) to immediately begin prioritizing capital projects that produce zero or low-carbon.<sup>24</sup>

There is an opportunity to ensure that all children and staff — whether in public, non-profit, or private facilities — are in healthy and safe environments, and that the child care sector is at the vanguard of BC's necessary transition to zero-carbon and climate resilient buildings.

**As BC builds out a network of new and expanded child care centres, there is an opportunity to ensure that retrofitted and new buildings are zero-carbon, healthy, and pandemic and climate resilient.**

### Recommendations

- Create a child care capital plan that includes funds for Indigenous-led program facilities and ensures new and expanded public and publicly-funded non-profit child care centres<sup>25</sup> are built or retrofitted to new zero-carbon, climate resiliency, and environmental health standards.<sup>26</sup> This should include an immediate requirement that no new, publicly-funded centres use natural gas.<sup>27</sup>
- Leverage private capital by requiring or incentivizing — as appropriate — all privately-owned child care facilities (centres and licensed family homes) to utilize the forthcoming PACE financing tool<sup>28</sup> to undertake zero-carbon, climate resilience, and environmental health upgrades.<sup>29</sup>

# 3. Reducing Transportation Emissions

**AS FAMILIES GAIN ACCESS TO CHILD CARE** for the first time, they will be adding new trips to their daily transportation schedule.<sup>30</sup> Other families—seeking child care options closer to home, school or work—will switch up their daily trip planning to match.

As BC builds out a network of new and expanded child care centres, there is an opportunity to lower emissions and advance public health by reducing the number and length of family and educator vehicle trips, and by making it safe and easy to walk or wheel to child care.

## Background

Clustering new child care programs on school grounds<sup>31</sup> or near other community,<sup>32</sup> workplace, and clean transportation nodes<sup>33</sup> can reduce greenhouse gas and other harmful emissions<sup>34</sup> by reducing families' daily reliance on vehicle transportation.<sup>35</sup>

Adults and children can also be supported to safely walk or wheel to child care through “Active and Safe Routes to School” programs,<sup>36</sup> and by building the necessary transportation infrastructure.<sup>37</sup> As suggested by the name, Safe Routes to School programs largely focus on school-age children and their parents. However, recognizing the benefits of early intervention<sup>38</sup>—and that parents with preschool-age children are among those least likely to engage in recommended levels of physical activity<sup>39</sup>—some jurisdictions have begun testing the inclusion of child care programs into these travel planning initiatives.<sup>40</sup> BC has an opportunity to follow suit.



## Recommendations

- Cluster the creation of new child care programs on or near school grounds, or near other community, workplace and clean transportation corridors and nodes.
- Expand and solidify BC’s current “Active and Safe Routes to School” initiatives<sup>41</sup> by (a) increasing program funding to cover more schools,<sup>42</sup> (b) including participation by adults and children traveling to and from onsite or nearby child care programs, (c) providing new funding for dedicated “Active and Safe Routes to Child Care” travel planning initiatives to support child care programs not incorporated into school-based projects, and (d) working with municipalities to adequately fund the necessary supporting infrastructure.

## 4. Powering the Clean Economy

**MEETING BC's CLIMATE GOALS** is going to require a massive mobilization of human capital, skills, and talent, new forms of economic growth and jobs that are less emissions-intensive, and strong support for households impacted by the economic transition.

Here, the opportunity is to prioritize the expansion of high quality, universal child care to (a) help catalyze an increase in BC's clean economy labour capacity (especially among women), (b) grow our economy while lowering its emissions-intensity, and (c) provide an essential buffer for families negatively impacted by job loss and other transition stressors.

### Background

One of the key goals of the CleanBC Plan is to “Expand training opportunities... to ensure we have the workforce needed in our low-carbon economy.” However, ensuring a workforce is not just about providing training, it's about removing barriers to training and education and ensuring British Columbians can access paid employment.

Among other things, this means building out infrastructure — including child care — that supports families seeking increased employment.<sup>43</sup> For example, parents surveyed in an evaluation of BC's universal child care prototype sites reported significant increases in their ability to focus on work or school, with 22 per cent reporting they had upgraded their training or credentials.<sup>44</sup> Overall, full implementation of the \$10aDay plan is estimated to significantly increase the number of women in BC's workforce,<sup>45</sup> and the participation of these women will be key to achieving gender equity in CleanBC initiatives.<sup>46</sup>

As we transition to a low-carbon economy, we also need to decouple growth from emissions. This means lowering the emissions-intensity of every sector and leaning on low-emissions sectors to drive a greater share of future growth. For example, European data estimate that compared to the construction industry (BC's second largest sector by share of GDP), the care sector is 30 per cent less emissions-intensive<sup>47</sup> with a 2 per cent GDP investment in care estimated to create double the number of jobs for women and almost as many for men than the same investment in construction.

BC's child care sector is estimated to boost GDP by \$1.63 per dollar of increased expenditure, compared with \$0.86 for the average industry and \$1.04 for other provincial spending.<sup>48</sup> In short, child care jobs are low-carbon jobs and child care investments are high-growth investments.

One of the primary concerns with transitioning to a clean economy is the impact on household affordability, both via lost employment and income and potential cost of living increases. Universal child care provides a buffer to both. It creates a new source of jobs (full implementation will add 28,600 new jobs in BC, including many for child care professionals),<sup>49</sup> and it lowers families' cost of

living (90 per cent of surveyed parents participating in \$10aDay prototype sites reported increased disposable income<sup>50</sup> and 98 per cent reported reduced financial stress<sup>51</sup>).

Overall, there is an opportunity to centre the intersection of care work and climate work in all government plans in order to maximize co-benefits and build public support for the rapid advancement of both.<sup>52</sup>

## Recommendations

- In government strategies, position the BC government’s Childcare BC Plan as explicitly anchoring components of the CleanBC Plan/Roadmap to 2030 and forthcoming CleanBC Jobs Readiness Plan. Use language acknowledging that:
  - » An equitable transition to a clean economy is not possible without child care infrastructure and early childhood educator professionals;<sup>53</sup> and
  - » For families, “Helping people get the skills they need”<sup>54</sup> often *begins* by providing access to child care.
- In BC’s forthcoming system for tracking the creation of “clean jobs,” classify early childhood educator positions as a subtype of “clean jobs.” In BC’s economic planning, highlight the role of child care, early childhood educator professionals, and the broader care sector in driving lower-emissions growth.



## 5. Helping All Families Engage

**TRANSITIONING TO A NET-ZERO**, ecologically restorative economy in the timeframe that scientists advise is necessary represents an “all hands on deck” challenge requiring participation at the household, community, workplace, and societal levels. But when families don’t have adequate child care there is often not enough time or bandwidth to participate in pro-environmental and pro-civic behaviours and actions, even when there is a desire to do so.

Here, the opportunity is to prioritize the expansion of high quality, universal child care to give more families the time and financial space required to engage in civic life and access public and non-profit child care models that are inherently more democratic.

### Background

There are many barriers to pro-civic and pro-environment behaviour on the part of families, ranging from psychological barriers,<sup>55</sup> to general civic engagement barriers,<sup>56</sup> to population-specific barriers.<sup>57</sup> For families with young children, a major barrier is simply having the required time and bandwidth. For example, in a survey of Oregon families 54 per cent reported “prioritizing work/family life” and 38 per cent “too busy/not enough time” as top barriers to civic engagement.<sup>58</sup>

Mechanistic changes can be made to empower families’ participation in specific engagement opportunities,<sup>59</sup> but programs like universal child care have the power to free up the required time and space more broadly. For example, in a survey of families participating in BC’s universal child care prototype sites, 98 per cent reported an improved quality of life, 96 per cent reported improved family well-being, and 93 per cent reported improved mental health.<sup>60</sup> Not all families will use increased bandwidth and time to increase their participation in pro-environment or civic behaviours,<sup>61</sup> but for many the availability of universal child care is a prerequisite.

The nature of child care programs themselves can also increase engagement. For example, BC’s recently-updated Early Learning Framework promotes programs that create opportunities for children to enrich and deepen their relationships with place, land, and community, which opens possibilities for engaging more deeply with issues of environmental responsibility and justice.<sup>62</sup>

The transition to more public and non-profit child care may also catalyze shifts in fundamental values embedded throughout the system: away from concepts of commodification and prescriptive formulas for quality, and toward concepts of democracy, community, and collective ownership — a shift that

**When families don’t have adequate child care there is often not enough time or bandwidth to participate in pro-environmental and pro-civic behaviours and actions, even when there is a desire to do so.**

can strengthen civic and environmental awareness and engagement of everyone involved (including parents, children, and educators).<sup>63</sup>

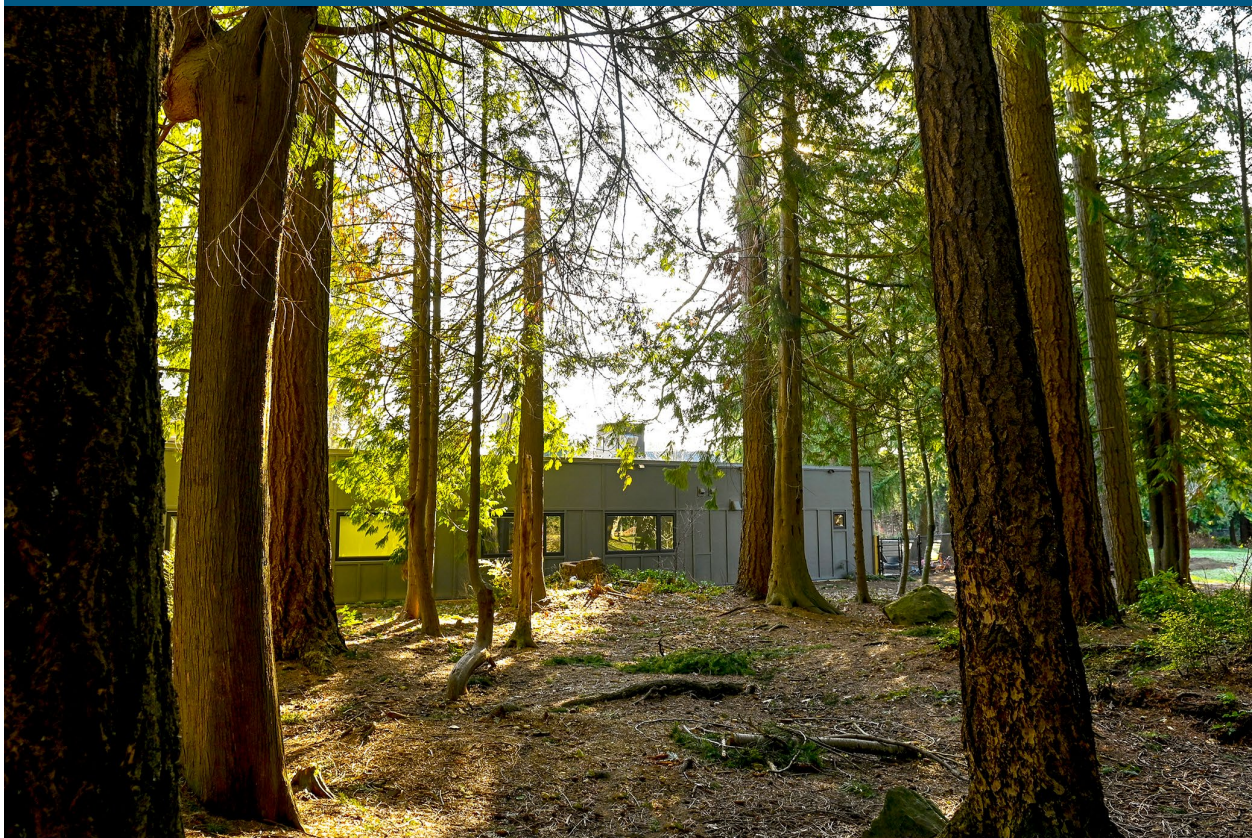
## Recommendations

- Fully implement the community Roadmap to \$10aDay Child Care in BC, which prioritizes expansion in public and non-profit models of care, and upholds Indigenous rights and jurisdiction over systems of care that are determined by Indigenous leadership.<sup>64</sup>

Additionally, implementing all of the other recommendations in this policy note will help create and strengthen a pro-climate/environment culture across BC's entire child care community.

## Conclusion

By acting on the 10 recommendations in this policy note, British Columbia can strengthen, hasten, and better integrate its Childcare BC and CleanBC plans and policies in ways that improve the health and well-being of children, families, educators, and communities, en route to both high quality, universal child care and a clean and sustainable economy for everyone.



# Notes

- 1 “2022 Roadmap for \$10aDay Child Care in BC,” (Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC and Early Childhood Educators of BC, 2022).
- 2 For example, see “Ready for Life: A Socio-Economic Analysis of Early Childhood Education and Care. Ottawa: The Conference Board of Canada” (Alexander, Craig, Beckman, Macdonald, Renner, and Stewart, 2017).
- 3 See “\$10aDay Child Care: Life-Changing Impacts for BC Families” (Coalition of Child Care Advocates of BC, 2021).
- 4 See “The Role of the Early Childhood Educator in British Columbia” (Early Childhood Educators of BC, 2021). ECEBC will be expanding on this work in future documents.
- 5 “Environmental health” is a broad term and can include any interaction between people and their environment that impacts health. In child care settings this could begin with basic considerations like the amount of indoor and outdoor space per child, number of toilets and washbasins per child, and ensuring play areas and equipment are properly constructed, well-maintained and free from hazards (e.g., all of the aforementioned are regulated in BC’s Child Care Licensing Regulation and BC Building code). From there, a wider array of design aspects might be considered including location, staff and family amenities, noise and light (e.g., as laid out in Vancouver Coastal Health’s “Design Resource for Child Care Facilities”).  
However, “environmental health” most commonly refers to **minimizing exposure to harmful substances and pollution and/or maximizing exposure to health-supportive environmental factors like natural light and nature**. In our review these kinds of considerations are not yet adequately addressed in most public child care resources and child care quality assessment frameworks such as AQI, ITERS, ECERs, and CLASS. We therefore prioritize this particular aspect of childrens’ environmental health in child care settings.
- 6 As summarized in “Advancing Environmental Health in Child Care Settings: A Checklist for Child Care Practitioners and Public Health Inspectors” (Canadian Partnership for Children’s Health & Environment, 2010), “...their greater vulnerability to harm stems from their smaller size, their differing patterns of eating and drinking, and their behaviour, as well as the fact that their organs and detoxification systems are still developing.”
- 7 *Ibid.*
- 8 Available at [bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332\\_2007](https://bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/332_2007).
- 9 These include the City of Vancouver’s “Child Care Design Guidelines” and accompanying “Childcare Technical Guidelines,” Vancouver Coastal Health’s “Design Resource for Child Care Facilities” and the province of BC’s “Director of Licensing Standards of Practice – Safe Play Space” documents, which are limited to general and rather vague guidelines to minimize exposure to harmful substances and pollution (with the exception of fairly-detailed noise [pollution] standards in Vancouver’s Childcare Technical Guidelines).
- 10 For example, as BC’s Early Learning Framework (p. 22) puts it: “The importance of the [...] environment – sometimes referred to as the “third teacher” – cannot be underestimated in shaping the experiences of children and adults [... who are] profoundly affected by their relationships with spaces and materials.”
- 11 For example, as discussed in “7Cs: an informational guide to young childrens’ outdoor play spaces” (Consortium for Health, Intervention, Learning and Development), produced after a five-year study of child care facilities in the City of Vancouver.
- 12 For example, in “Landscapes for play: Effects of an intervention to promote nature-based risky play in early childhood centres” (Brussoni et al., 2017), BC-based researchers found that increasing exposure to nature and opportunities for risky play was associated with a range of positive effects in children under care. Creating these opportunities also aligns with BC’s Early Learning Framework (p. 12), whose vision provides for children to “enrich and deepen their relationships with place, land, and community.”
- 13 BC’s Child Care Licensing Regulation sets outdoor space ratios (currently 6 m<sup>2</sup> per child, reduced from 7 m<sup>2</sup>, previously).
- 14 For example, BC’s “Director of Licensing Standard of Practice – Active Play” sets a minimum of 60 minutes of outdoor play per day except during poor weather, or where outdoor space is limited.
- 15 For example, Vancouver’s “Child Care Design Guidelines” and Vancouver Coastal Health’s “Design Resource for Child Care Facilities” both suggest natural light sources equivalent to at least 10 per cent of the wall area; the U.S. General Services

- Administration “Child Care Center Design Guide” suggests a minimum of 8 per cent of the floor area along with other guidance.
- 16 For example, the City of Vancouver’s “Child Care Design Guidelines” and Technical Guidelines are strong on this front.
  - 17 For example, provincial requirements and standards of practice do not yet incorporate positive sun exposure, covered play areas, natural and living elements or reflect the increasing evidence around the importance of nature-based outdoor play and learning.
  - 18 As of writing, the subject of RFP #12943.
  - 19 The new design guidelines could build on existing resources such as “Advancing Environmental Health in Child Care Settings: A Checklist for Child Care Practitioners and Public Health Inspectors” (Canadian Partnership for Children’s Health & Environment, 2010) and on green building frameworks that include well-established criteria associated with occupants’ health (e.g., LEED), and could be reviewed by BC’s Environmental Health Services team.
  - 20 This process could also involve BC’s Environmental Health Services team and/or incorporation of child safety and environmental health expertise onto any existing standing committees re: the Building Code.
  - 21 Available at [gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/climate-change/action/cleanbc/cleanbc\\_roadmap\\_2030.pdf](http://gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/climate-change/action/cleanbc/cleanbc_roadmap_2030.pdf).
  - 22 Current programs supporting this transition include the CleanBC Better Buildings program that provides funding and capital incentives to encourage energy-efficient design, construction and renovation of commercial buildings, the CleanBC Better Homes program with incentives for individual homeowners, and a range of programs supporting the retrofit of public housing, schools and other public-sector buildings.
  - 23 Climate resilient design means ensuring the building can withstand or mitigate climate-related structural and health risks e.g., associated with floods, heat waves, fires and smoke. Many of these same measures (e.g., those associated with air exchange and filtration) also increase buildings’ resiliency to events like the current pandemic.
  - 24 “CleanBC Roadmap to 2030,” p. 23.”
  - 25 For the purposes of this recommendation, “publicly-funded” includes centres that receive public capital funds and, to maximize the health benefits for children promptly, should be expanded to include public and non-profit centres that are participating in all available child care funding programs.
  - 26 For example, this could be done by (a) including publicly-supported non-profit child care facilities in the “public sector buildings” classification for the purpose of the accelerated 2027 commitment in the CleanBC Roadmap, (b) by similarly including them as priority facilities in the comprehensive strategy for public sector buildings due 2024, and by (c) increasing capital funding for this objective in the interim (e.g., by adding child care facilities to the list of eligible recipients for Carbon Neutral Capital Program funding currently available to school districts, and increasing that program’s budget).
  - 27 We flag this due to the urgency of motivating an economy-wide shift away from this primary energy source.
  - 28 See p. 42 of the “CleanBC Roadmap to 2030.” PACE programs link an energy improvement loan to a specific property through a municipal tax lien and allow property owners to undertake capital-intensive upgrades with no upfront costs and low interest rates.
  - 29 The scope of the PACE program should allow for this entire range of upgrades (i.e., not solely be focused on GHG emissions).
  - 30 Including trips to child care, but also new trips to work and school as parents are freed up to engage in these activities.
  - 31 For example, pp. 17–21 of the community “2022 Roadmap for \$10aDay Child Care in BC”.
  - 32 Including multi-family residential developments, community and recreation centres, neighbourhood villages, etc.
  - 33 For example, existing or planned active transportation corridors and well-served public transit routes. Care must be taken to avoid siting facilities on or too-near major roadways due to associated pollution.
  - 34 Fossil-fuel vehicle pollution is associated with a range of health impacts including asthma. While clustering of services can reduce *overall* pollution, care should be taken to mitigate any increased concentration of vehicle pollution during pick-up/drop-off times via anti-idling policies, etc.
  - 35 Including parents who require child care before or after school hours, and parents whose children are split between school-aged care and preschool-aged care.
  - 36 A.k.a. “Active School Travel Planning Initiatives”; these are defined as neighbourhood-based, school catchment area planning processes aimed at enabling and encouraging students to walk and wheel (bike, scooter, rollerblades, skateboard,



- wheelchair) fully or part-way to and from school, and help to identify required infrastructure investments. They often include field trip activities, development of individual maps, traffic safety education and parent participation. Often organized and funded locally, the BC government's Active Transportation Strategy currently supports these programs with technical program guidance, \$10,000 grants, and supporting materials administered through BC Healthy Communities Society.
- 37 Both form part of BC's broader "Move Commute Connect: BC's Active Transportation Strategy," which aims to double the percentage of [all] trips taken by sustainable, active transportation by 2030 and to help achieve "Vision Zero," meaning no fatalities or serious injuries resulting from collisions or crashes on the road.
  - 38 I.e. the potential for the introduction of active transportation options to younger children (and their parents) to lead to habits and routines that continue as the child progresses to school.
  - 39 For example, "Young Children and Parental Physical Activity Levels Findings from the Canadian Health Measures Survey" (Adamo et al. 2012). A main challenge for parents of young children is to 'fit it around' their caring responsibilities. Helping parents fit physical activity in on the way to and from care, then, is a good option.
  - 40 For example, "Active Transport for Childcare Centres: A Case Study and Resource for Councils" (Partridge, 2007), involving Australia's Southern Sydney Regional Organization of Councils. Also outlined in "Evaluation of Active Transport Strategies for Parents and Children at Council Preschools and Childcare Centres" (UTS: Centre for Local Government, 2007).
  - 41 Currently being administered by BC Healthy Communities and supported with \$10,000 grants to individual schools.
  - 42 At ~\$10,000 per school, full coverage of BC's public schools would cost ~\$15 million in one-time project funding.
  - 43 This policy note highlights intersections with child care, but e.g., strengthening BC's elder care infrastructure would also help support families seeking more time in the workforce.
  - 44 "Evaluation and Analysis of Childcare BC Universal Prototype Sites" (Malatest & Associates, 2020), p. 41.
  - 45 See "Socioeconomic impact analysis of the \$10aDay child care plan for British Columbia" (Fairholm and Anderson, 2017).
  - 46 For example, p. 15 of BC's 2020 Climate Change Accountability Report signals an intention to track gender equality impacts of the CleanBC Plan.
  - 47 "What would a Feminist Green New Deal look like? Briefing from the UK Women's Budget Group and Women's Environmental Network" (MacGregor and Cohen, 2020).
  - 48 See "Socioeconomic impact analysis of the \$10aDay child care plan for British Columbia" (Fairholm and Anderson, 2017).
  - 49 *Ibid.*
  - 50 "Evaluation and Analysis of Childcare BC Universal Prototype Sites" (Malatest & Associates, 2020), p. 39.
  - 51 *Ibid.* (p. 41).
  - 52 For example, as extensively outlined — in the American context — in "Building Narratives for a Caring Green Economy: A Feminist Green New Deal Coalition Report" (Novello, 2021).
  - 53 For example, p. 15 of BC's "2020 Climate Change Accountability Report" signals an intention to track gender equality impacts of the CleanBC Plan.
  - 54 This is one of five main initiatives in the CleanBC Plan.
  - 55 For example, as laid out for climate change in "The Dragons of Inaction: Psychological Barriers that Limit Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation" (Gifford, 2011).
  - 56 For example, see [thepolicycircle.org/brief/whats-whys-civic-engagement/#section\\_3](https://thepolicycircle.org/brief/whats-whys-civic-engagement/#section_3).
  - 57 For example, those faced by Indigenous peoples, newcomers, youth, older adults, people with diverse abilities, and families with young children.
  - 58 Survey results and discussion at [ourchildrenoregon.org/survey-findings-civic-engagement/](https://ourchildrenoregon.org/survey-findings-civic-engagement/).
  - 59 *Ibid.*
  - 60 "Evaluation and Analysis of Childcare BC Universal Prototype Sites" (Malatest & Associates, 2020), p. 43.
  - 61 Indeed, for some the additional time and disposable income may be spent on consumption and behaviours that *increase* their environmental footprint.
  - 62 BC's Early Learning Framework, p. 12.
  - 63 For example, see "Democracy as First Practice in Early Childhood Education and Care" (Moss, 2021).
  - 64 With updates to the Childcare BC plan guided by the 2022 Roadmap for \$10aDay Child Care in BC and BC's community-centric Early Learning Framework.



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