

**From:** [Government of British Columbia](#)  
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NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Children and Family Development

Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport

B.C. BOOSTS BEFORE- AND AFTER-SCHOOL CARE PROGRAMS

VICTORIA - B.C. is making it possible to expand before- and after-school child-care programs for all school-age children and also help families get ready for full-day kindergarten this September, announced Mary Polak, Minister of Children and Family Development.

"While a full school day will eliminate or reduce child-care needs for some families, others who plan to return to work may need child care for the first time," said Polak. "We are boosting capacity for these families, in particular."

The new space limits for group facilities that care for school-age children are as follows:

- \* Facilities with kindergarten and Grade 1 students present can take in four additional children, to a new maximum of 24.
- \* Facilities with no kindergarten and Grade 1 students present (Grade 2 and up) can increase by five spaces, to a maximum of 30 children.

With approximately 1,100 group school-age facilities licensed across the province - nearly half of them on school grounds - the increase has the potential to create hundreds of new before-and after-school spaces. Each centre that expands is eligible for increased operating funding from the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

"This is about increasing the availability of school-age child care, but it's also about creating healthy options," said Ida Chong, Minister of Healthy Living and Sport. "Children in before- and after-school care are more likely to have positive recreational outlets and develop healthy habits for life."

"As a council, we've advocated for consistency between child-care licensing and early years initiatives," said Jack Keough, Provincial Child Care Council member. "This is a consistent approach from government that gives child-care providers and parents greater flexibility with before- and after-school care programs."

The Province will invest more than \$300 million in child-care support programs this year and \$144.5 million in capital funding to provide classroom space that will help accommodate full-day kindergarten. This is

in addition to B.C.'s three-year, \$280 million commitment to implement full-day kindergarten, which will be available for up to 50 per cent of kindergarten students in September 2010 and for every five-year-old starting school in 2011.

"We know that when many of our youngest learners enter school, they are not quite ready to reach their full potential. Offering full-day kindergarten will provide educators with more time to help their students become better prepared for the rest of their schooling," said Education Minister Margaret MacDiarmid.

Child-care operators can visit [www.hls.gov.bc.ca/ccf/child\\_care.html](http://www.hls.gov.bc.ca/ccf/child_care.html) to view the revised child-care licensing regulation.

Parents can find information about before- and after-school care at [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/cc\\_resource.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/cc_resource.htm).

For information on full-day kindergarten, visit [http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early\\_learning/fdk/](http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/fdk/).

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