

Child Care Facilities and Spaces Over Time

DATA DICTIONARY

Last Updated: May 2025

This table provides the monthly data on the number of child care facilities and the number of spaces since Fiscal Year 2018/19 at the provincial and school district (SD) levels for licensed child care providers that have opted in to participate in Ministry of Education and Child Care programs - either the [Child Care Operating Funding](#) (CCOF) program or the [\\$10 a Day ChildCareBC](#) program; however, the data does not represent *all* licensed child care facilities and spaces in the province. Participation in these programs is voluntary, allowing providers to receive government funding and concurrently pass on benefits to families through offering quality, inclusive, and affordable child care. Therefore, the total facility and space numbers should not be interpreted as the overall child care facilities and spaces in British Columbia.¹

To learn more about how to work with this dataset, please refer to the document “*Working with Child Care Facilities and Spaces data*”.

Key references: [Child Care Operating Funding](#)

[\\$10 a Day ChildCareBC Program](#)

[\\$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centres Policy and Procedures Manual](#)

Technical Notes:

- (i) A child care space is defined as the existence of a space/seat in a licensed facility offering child care services. This space can either be occupied (i.e., a child is enrolled) or be vacant.
- (ii) This table provides estimated numbers of child care spaces and facilities at both the provincial and SD levels. By mapping each child care facility’s postal code to the geographic area, facilities were assigned to SDs. However, given that SD 93 (Conseil scolaire francophone) represents all Francophone schools located across the province of British Columbia, it is not possible to assign a child care facility to SD 93 using the postal code, as SD 93 is not defined by a specific geographic boundary like other SDs. Instead, SD 93 child care facilities are included within the SD where the facility is located.
- (iii) A child care facility is different from a child care provider. A facility refers to a physical location where child care services are provided, whereas a provider is an individual or organization responsible for offering these services. A provider may operate multiple facilities, however, each facility functions as a distinct location where child care is offered. This table provides the number of facilities participating in Ministry of Education and Child Care programs.

¹ These are providers with different license care types. The Ministry of Health manages licencing of child care facilities. Any questions related to licencing procedures can be addressed to the regional health authority Community Care Facility Licensing office (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/information-for-partners-providers/licensed-child-care-facility>)

VARIABLE NAME	VARIABLE DESCRIPTION
Year_Month	<p>This variable represents the program's service date² in the format 'YYYYMM' (e.g., "202311" for November 2023).</p> <p>The earliest date in the datasets is '201804'.</p>
Month_Year_Label	<p>This variable displays the date in the format 'MonthYYYY' (e.g., 'Nov2023'), offering a more descriptive and easily interpretable alternative to the Year_Month variable column.</p> <p>The earliest date in the datasets is 'Apr2018'.</p>
Fiscal_Year	<p>The fiscal year commences on April 1 and ends on March 31 of the following year.</p> <p>For this dataset, the earliest fiscal year corresponds to '2018/2019'.</p>
Data_Level	<p>An indicator to reflect the grouping of data for which estimates are presented. Use this column to view results at the province or school district level.</p> <p>Values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Province' reflects data at the province level. • 'District' reflects data at the school district level. Select from the SD_Number (or SD_Name) column to observe results for a particular school district.
Region	<p>This reflects the name of the Chapter according to the British Columbia School Superintendents Association (BCSSA). As of 2023-2024, there are six geographic Chapters associated with school districts.</p> <p>The mapping of school districts to BCSSA Chapters can be found here: https://bcssa.org/about-us/chapters/</p>
SD_Number	<p>This column is the geographic school district number assigned to each care location based on its corresponding postal code/physical location.</p> <p>For the name of the district, see the column SD_Name.</p> <p><i>(Note: Missing or NA values indicate results shown at the province level).</i></p>
SD_Name	<p>The name of the geographic school district.</p> <p>For the number of the district, see the column SD_Number.</p>
Total Facility Count	<p>The total number of licensed facilities that have opted in to participate in Ministry of Education and Child Care programs. The number includes both Group Child Care and Family Child Care facilities and can be estimated by summing the 'Group Child Care Facilities' and 'Family Child Care Facilities' columns.</p> <p>Note: This variable does not reflect the total number of child care facilities in British Columbia (<i>see information above</i>).</p>

² Child care data also includes claim date (date on which providers submit claim) and payment date (date on which payment is received).

VARIABLE NAME	VARIABLE DESCRIPTION
Group Child Care Facilities	<p>The total number of child care facilities offering Group Child Care (i.e., child care services in a community-based facility or centre).</p> <p>Different categories under Group Child Care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under 36 Months • 30 Months to School Age • Preschool • School Age • Multi-Age <p>This column includes the sum of facilities across all categories. Definitions for each category are explained below.</p>
Family Child Care Facilities	<p>The total number of child care facilities offering Family Child Care (i.e., child care in the provider’s own home).</p>
Total Child Care Spaces	<p>The total number of child care spaces in licensed facilities that have opted in to participate in Ministry of Education and Child Care programs. The number of spaces include both Group Child Care and Family Child Care facility types, and can be estimated by summing the ‘Total Group Child Care Spaces’ and ‘Total Family Child Care Spaces’ columns.</p> <p>Note: This variable does not reflect the total number of child care spaces in British Columbia (<i>see information above</i>).</p>
Total Group Child Care Spaces	<p>The total number of childcare spaces in licensed Group Child Care facilities that have opted in to participate in Ministry of Education and Child Care programs.</p> <p>This column represents the sum of spaces across the different categories of Group Child Care (explained below).</p>
Group Child Care (Under 36 Months)	<p>This column represents the number of spaces available in licensed Group Child Care facilities for children under 36 months.</p> <p>Please refer to the Ministry’s overview on different types of child care in B.C. for more information on licensing regulations governing child care by different age groups.</p>
Group Child Care (30 Months to School Age)	<p>The column represents the number of spaces available in licensed Group Child Care facilities for 30 months to school-aged children.</p>
Group Preschool	<p>This column represents the number of spaces available in preschool for children between the ages of 30 Months to school age (kindergarten).</p> <p>The primary difference between Preschool (30 Months to School Age) and Group Child Care (30 Months to School Age) is that a preschool is a half-day program, and so must not provide care for more than 4 hours per day to each child.</p>
Group Child Care (School Age)	<p>This is the number of spaces in licensed Group Child Care facilities providing care to school-aged children (kindergarten and up) during school closures or before/after school hours. The column also includes numbers from licensed facilities offering Child Care on School Grounds – i.e., services to school-aged children at a school.</p>

VARIABLE NAME	VARIABLE DESCRIPTION
Group Child Care (Multi-Age)	This column represents the number of spaces available in licensed Group Child Care facilities for children of various ages (from birth to 12 years old).
Total Family Child Care Spaces	<p>Family Child Care programs refer to child care services offered to children from birth to age 12 in the child care provider’s personal residence.</p> <p>This column provides the total number of child care spaces in licensed Family Child Care facilities that have opted in to participate in Ministry of Education and Child Care programs.</p> <p>The family categories include the following licensed care types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Child Care where the licensee is a Responsible Adult providing care in the licensee’s personal residence to no more than 7 children • In-home Multi-Age Child Care where the licensee is an Early Childhood Educator providing care in the licensee’s personal residence to no more than 8 children of various ages <p>This column represents the sum of child care spaces across the two main family child care categories defined above.</p>