

Child Care Facilities and Spaces Over Time

DATA DICTIONARY

Last Updated: July 2024

This table provides the monthly data on the count of child care facilities and spaces since 2018/19 at the provincial and school district 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.

While this table provides the count of licensed facilities and spaces aggregated for Ministry of Education and Child Care programs, they do not represent *all* licensed child care facilities. These programs require providers to opt in, enabling providers to receive funding from the Government and concurrently pass on benefits to families through offering qualitative, inclusive, and affordable child care. However, there are providers who have not opted in to these programs but are offering child care to families.¹ Data from these providers are not included in our table. Users should not interpret the total count of facilities and spaces in this table as the overall count of child care facilities and spaces in British Columbia.

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

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) The number of child care spaces and facilities in this table have been estimated at the province and school district (SD) levels. By mapping each child care facility’s postal code to the geographic area, facilities were assigned to school districts. 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 specific geographic boundary like other school districts. Instead, SD 93 child care facilities are included within the school district 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 count 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/space-creation-funding/open-licensed-child-day-care/licensed-child-care-facility>)

VARIABLE NAME	VARIABLE DESCRIPTION
Year_Month	<p>This variable is a numeric representation of the year and month in the format YYYYMM. For example, '202311' corresponds to November 2023.</p> <p>This column refers to the service date² of the program. In the table, the earliest month 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>In the table, earliest date available 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 data set, the earliest fiscal year corresponds to '2018/2019'.</p>
Data_Level	<p>An indicator reflecting 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' that reflects data at the province level. • 'District' that 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 BC School Superintendents Association (BCSSA). As of 2023-2024, there are six 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 facility based on its corresponding postal code/physical location. 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>

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
Total Facility Count	<p>The total count of licensed facilities that have opted in to participate in Ministry of Education and Child Care programs. The count includes both Group 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 providers in British Columbia (<i>see Background information above</i>).</p>
Group Child Care Facilities	<p>The total count of child care facilities offering Group Child Care (i.e., child care services in a community-based facility or centre).</p> <p>The different categories of Group Child Care are:</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 in all of the above categories. The definition for each of the above categories are explained below.</p>
Family Child Care Facilities	<p>The total count 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 count 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 belong to both Group 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>
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 count 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 count of spaces available in licensed Group Child Care facilities for 30 months to school aged children.</p>

VARIABLE NAME	VARIABLE DESCRIPTION
Group Preschool	<p>This column represents the count 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 count of spaces in licensed Group Child Care facilities providing care to school-age children, including Kindergarten, during school closures or before/after school hours.</p> <p>The column also includes numbers from licensed facilities offering Child Care on School Grounds –i.e., services to school-age children at a school.</p>
Group Child Care (Multi-Age)	<p>This column represents the count of spaces available in licensed Group Child Care facilities for children of various ages.</p>
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 own home.</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>