

Province of British Columbia

**Canada-British Columbia Canada Wide Early Learning and Child
Care Agreement: Report on Progress and Results Achieved in
2021/2022**

November 2022

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Description of the CW-ELCC Initiatives	5
Affordability	5
Accessibility.....	6
Quality.....	7
Inclusion.....	8
Indigenous-led Child Care	9
Consultations with Stakeholders	11
Census	10
Administration of the CW-ELCC	11
Other Canada Wide-ELCC Reporting Indicators.....	12

Introduction

In July 2021, the Government of British Columbia (B.C.) and the Government of Canada signed the Canada-British Columbia Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement - 2021-2026 (CW-ELCC or “the Agreement”), which provides B.C. with approximately \$3.2B over five years for the purpose of enhancing its early learning and child care system (ELCC). While this remains a historic and bold investment, the agreement also provides room for critical reflection. The negotiation and announcement of this agreement was done without the direct involvement of Indigenous governments. This approach has been recognized as regrettable.

As part of the CW-ELCC Agreement, an officials-level Implementation Committee was established in July 2022 to monitor progress, in consultation with external partners, towards achieving key commitments and implementation of new initiatives.

Working together as part of the Implementation Committee, the Government of Canada and the Government of BC are guided by the principles of [the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework](#) (Multilateral ELCC Framework) and recognize the importance of the [Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework](#) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

- While a tripartite relationship between the Government of Canada, the Government of BC and Indigenous Peoples was not established at the outset of the CW-ELCC Agreement, representatives/designates of both First Nations Leadership Council and Métis Nation of BC were invited as members in the Implementation Committee. This is a positive step towards moving forward together, alongside Indigenous Peoples, in a good way.
- Going forward, the Province’s work will be guided by the [Interim Approach to Implementing Section 3 of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#) (Provincial Interim Approach) to ensure transparency, consistency and alignment between the laws of BC and UNDRIP.

B.C.’s priority areas of investments under the Agreement are focused on:

1. **Improving affordability** by working with the federal government towards achieving an average parent fee of \$10 per day for all regulated child care spaces for children age 0 to 5 by the end of the 5 year agreement;
2. **Increasing access** by creating a total of 30,000 new regulated spaces for children age 0 to 5 years by fiscal year 2025/26, increasing to a total of 40,000 new regulated spaces for children under age 6 by 2027/28;
3. **Supporting quality and inclusive care** by expanding access to Indigenous-led child care options and expanding access to Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development.

In 2021-22, B.C received \$352M through the CW-ELCC Agreement to support the expansion of regulated child care, and to prioritize not-for-profit early learning and child care programs and services, for children under the age of 6. Due to challenges in investing CW-ELCC funds during the COVID-19 pandemic, B.C. sought and received permission from the Government of Canada to carry-over

approximately 89% of the 2021/22 funding to 2022/23. Details on how this carry-over was invested will be included in the 2022/23 Annual Report.

Aligned with the objectives of the CW-ELCC Agreement, B.C.:

- Created 1,271 new licensed child care spaces for children under 6 years of age,
- Developed options and costing for child care design standards, and;
- Conducted exploratory work to support the development and implementation of a wage grid for ECEs.

The Federal funding provided to B.C. under the CW-ELCC Agreement complements the \$2.7B over four years since 2018 investment that B.C. has made under the [ChildCare BC Plan](#) in 2018 and the \$321M over four years investment through the Canada-British Columbia Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (ELCC) Agreement. The CW-ELCC supports the Province's ten-year commitment to implement an affordable and inclusive system of child care that is available for every family that wants or needs it.

This report provides an update on progress on each of the initiatives funded by the CW-ELCC during fiscal year 2021/22.

Description of the CW-ELCC Initiatives

Affordability

CW - ELCC Budget Allocation

Table 1 2021/22 CW-ELCC Budget and Expenditures for Affordability initiatives (\$M)

Table 1 – Affordability						
Program Initiative	Indicators	Baseline ¹ (2020)	Targets	Funding Allocated (\$M) (2021-22)	Funding Spent (\$M) (2021-22)	Results (2021-2022)
\$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centres	Number of \$10 per day spaces at \$10 per day sites	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	There is no CW-ELCC investment for 2021/22. A target of 12,500 spaces and an investment of \$178.43M has been set for 2022/23.
Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative	Reduction in average parent fees	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	There is no CW-ELCC investment for 2021/22. A target has been set to reduce average fees for full-day licensed child care for children aged zero to five by 50% (based on 2019 levels) by December 2022.

Description of the Activities and Results of the CW-ELCC Initiative

Under the CW-ELCC, B.C. has committed to increasing the number of \$10 a Day spaces in B.C. to a total of 12,500 by December 2022. While no CW-ELCC funding was allocated toward \$10 a Day spaces in 2021/22², B.C. continued to learn from the existing approximately 2,500 \$10 a Day spaces funded through the Canada-British Columbia Early Learning and Child Care Agreement 2020/21 (ELCC) and added an additional 4,015 provincially-funded \$10 a Day sites under B.C.'s Budget 2021. Planning for a further expansion to a total of 12,500 total spaces in 2022/23 (including an additional approximately 6,000 spaces funded by the CW-ELCC Agreement) was underway in the 2021/2022 fiscal year.

B.C. also undertook significant planning and preparation in 2021/22 in order to meet the CW-ELCC commitment to reduce average fees for full-day care for 0–5-year-olds in licensed child care spaces by 50% (based on 2019 levels) by the end of 2022. This reduction in average fees will be achieved through enhancements to the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI), including increasing funding to reduce parent fees from up to \$350 per month, per child, to a new maximum of up to \$900 per month³, per child (depending on the child's age and type of care). The CCFRI was chosen as the mechanism for B.C.'s fee reduction targets to ensure the least amount of additional administrative burden for providers and to allow the greatest number of parents to benefit.

¹ Baseline data should be based on 2020 levels, unless otherwise specified in the Agreement.

² Funding for the 2021 expansion of the \$10 a Day ChildCare BC initiative was committed to under BC's Budget 2021, prior to the signing of the CW-ELCC Agreement.

³ Includes the existing up to \$350 in provincially-funded CCFRI and an additional up to \$550 in CW-ELCC funding CCFRI

The CCFRI provides child care operators with funding to reduce parent fees and 96% of eligible child care spaces participate in the initiative. The CCFRI is an optional program, and child care providers must register to participate in the CCFRI each fiscal year, with the “renewal” process starting mid-winter (typically in late January or early February) for the upcoming fiscal year starting April 1. The Funding Guidelines for the CCFRI are typically updated annually and are publicly released when the annual renewal processes begin.

In 2021/22, B.C. developed policy refinements to the CCFRI Funding Guidelines that will be introduced in 2022/23. These refinements support parent affordability and improve fairness and transparency for facilities. Specifically, B.C.:

- Clarified the types of expenses that can be approved if a facility is requesting a fee increase due to exceptional circumstances;
- Established upper limits for fee increases that may be approved under the Guidelines, including historical fee increases, and fee increases due to exceptional circumstances; and
- Clarified that any increases to existing (or introduction of new) administrative fees will be considered a parent fee increase subject to Ministry review.

These policy changes help “set the stage” for increases to the parent fee reductions that begin in December 2022.

Accessibility

CW-ELCC Budget Allocation

Table 2 2021/22 CW-ELCC Budget and Expenditures for Accessibility initiatives (\$M)

Table 2 - Accessibility						
Program Initiative	Indicators	Baseline (2020)⁴	Targets	Funding Allocated (\$M) (2021-22)	Funding Spent (\$M) (2021-22)	Results (2021-2022)
Improved access to licensed child care settings	Increase the number of Indigenous Government, non-profit, public and/or family child care spaces for children under 6	0 GOC funded spaces	Approximately 850	\$35.2	\$35.2	1,271 new, licensed child care spaces for children under 6 Years funded by GOC CW-ELCC ⁵
Improve access to licensed child care settings	Development of options and costing for child care design standards and modular designs	No design standard to provide guidance on child care builds	Options and costing for designs are developed	\$1.2	\$0.05	Options and costing for child care design standards are in development

⁴ Baseline data should be based on 2020 levels, unless otherwise specified in the Agreement.

⁵ Thirty-two projects creating new licensed child care spaces for children 5 years and under were funded with the federal investment.

Description of the Activities and Results of the CW-ELCC Initiatives

ChildCare BC outlines B.C.'s 10-year plan to build a quality, inclusive child care system that families can rely on when they need it, at a price they can afford. Improving access to child care is a fundamental pillar of this plan and has been supported by provincial investments since 2018. B.C. has a suite of space creation initiatives including:

- **New Spaces Fund** – B.C.'s primary space creation program, which provides grants to applicants to support equipment purchases, renovations and ground-up builds that will create new licensed child care spaces; and
- **Start-Up Grants**– This program provides incentive funding for home-based child care providers to become licensed.
- Child care as a priority is considered in the planning for new provincially funded capital projects.

Through the signing of the CW-ELCC, B.C. committed to “creating a total of 30,000 new regulated spaces for children under age 6 by fiscal year 2025 to 2026; and creating 40,000 new regulated spaces for children under age 6 by fiscal year 2027 to 2028” which are being funded through both federal and provincial contributions. Additionally, B.C. committed to “[invest] in child care space planning and design, including consideration of a modular strategy, to facilitate accelerated space creation in year 3 (fiscal year 2023 to 2024) and beyond.”

The 2021/22 CW-ELCC Action Plan set a target to create approximately 850 new licensed child care spaces for children 0-6. B.C. invested \$35.2M of the CW-ELCC funding to support this goal. The target was exceeded and 1,271 child care spaces were funded with CW-ELCC funding in 2021/22. The breakdown of the 1,271 spaces is as follows⁶:

- 117 spaces - Public post-secondary education institutions
- 234 spaces - school districts
- 244 spaces – local governments/municipalities
- 101 spaces - indigenous agencies
- 575 spaces – societies

Additionally, in 2021/22 B.C. began the development of a child care facility design standard to provide consistent design guidance, facilitate public and not-for-profit space creation, and support equitable outcomes. This work is underway and continues into 2022/23.

Quality

CW-ELCC Budget Allocation

⁶ These numbers are subject to change as projects are developed or withdraw from a funding agreement.

Table 3 2021/22 CW-ELCC Budget and Expenditures for Quality initiatives (\$M)

Table 3 – Quality						
Program Initiative	Indicators	Baseline ⁷ (2020)	Targets	Funding Allocated (\$M) (2021-22)	Funding Spent (\$M) (2021-22)	Results (2021-2022)
Wage Grid	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	There is no CW-ELCC investment for 2021/22.

Description of the Activities and Results of the CW-ELCC Initiatives

B.C. recognizes the value of the early childhood workforce and the importance of providing training and development opportunities to support their growth and ensure quality child care. Various initiatives related to the recruitment and retention of a quality child care workforce have been funded through the ELCC Agreement and the early childhood workforce funding annex. Please refer to the 2021/22 ELCC Annual Report for further information.

Under the CW-ELCC Agreement, B.C. has committed to develop and implement a wage grid for ECEs. In 2021/22, B.C. conducted exploratory work to inform the development of options for the wage grid, including consideration of wage rates, implementation timing, funding mechanisms, and sequencing and interaction with related initiatives, such as the ECE Wage Enhancement. This work will continue into 2022/23.

Inclusion

CW-ELCC Budget Allocation

Table 4 2021/22 CW-ELCC Budget and Expenditures for Inclusion Initiatives (\$M)

Table 4 – Inclusion						
Program Initiative	Indicators	Baseline (2020)	Targets	Funding Allocated (\$M) (2021-22)	Funding Spent (\$M) (2021-22)	Results (2021-2022)
Expansion of Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development	Average number of children receiving service per month	7,166 (2019/20) ⁸	238 additional children receiving services per month	\$5	\$0.00	\$5M released for carryover due to additional, planned funding enhancements and current sector capacity.

⁷ Baseline data should be based on 2020 levels, unless otherwise specified in the Agreement.

⁸ 2019/20 data used as the baseline as service levels dropped in 2020/21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic (6,000 children served on average per month).

Description of the Activities and Results of the CW-ELCC Initiative

Leveraging the expertise of the Supported Child Development (SCD) and Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD) programs is a critical component to building capacity for inclusion among child care providers. These community-based programs offer a range of consulting and support services to children, families, and child care centres so that children with support needs can participate in fully inclusive child care settings. The ASCD program provides these supports in a culturally relevant and meaningful way.

In 2021/22, the \$5M investment in these programs was released for carryover. In addition to new investments under the ELCC Agreement, the CW-ELCC will invest an additional \$15M in SCD/ASCD in 2022/23, which is intended to provide service to an additional nearly 1,500 children. The sector currently does not have sufficient capacity to absorb and operationalize an additional \$5M in one-time-only funding in 2022/23. As a result of capacity challenges in the sector, it is expected that this target will not be reached until 2023/24.

Indigenous-led Child Care

CW-ELCC Budget Allocation

Table 5 2021/22 CW-ELCC Budget and Expenditures for Indigenous-led Initiatives (\$M)

Table 5 – Indigenous-led Child Care						
Program Initiative	Indicators	Baseline (2020)	Targets	Funding Allocated (\$M) (2021-22)	Funding Spent (\$M) (2021-22)	Results (2021-2022)
Expansion of Aboriginal Head Start Program	Space increases	643 spaces	400 additional spaces	\$8.66	\$0	Deferred to 2022/23 to allow enough time for consultation with AHS partners. Approximately 568 spaces funded by CW-ELCC will be converted in 2022/23.
Minor Capital for AHS	Quality improvement	0		\$1.34	0.93	Deferred to 2022/23 to allow enough time for consultation with AHS partners
Engagement	engagement		Comprehensive engagement with First Nations and Métis people	\$0.50	\$0.02	Metis engagement implementation plan complete. Deferred First Nation engagement to 2022/23 to enable time for First Nations Leadership Council to determine how they would like to proceed.
Métis ACCRR	Training and supports		Families and providers reached	\$0.50	0.08	Deferred to 2022/23 to allow time for Métis Nation B.C. to establish program.

Description of the Activities and Results of the CW-ELCC Initiative

The Aboriginal Head Start (AHS) Program supports activities focused on early childhood learning and development for Indigenous children up to six years of age. The programs are designed and delivered by Indigenous communities in a way that meets their unique needs. The goal is to support the spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and physical growth of children. The AHS program provides participating families with Indigenous-led child care based in culture and connected to community. Families participating in AHS programs often experience:

- An increased sense of cultural identity and belonging;
- Access to no cost child care for Indigenous families;
- Language revitalization and preservation;
- Improved outcomes for children; and
- Improved access to additional supports due to a wrap-around approach (early intervention therapies).

Throughout the 2021/22 fiscal year, both the Aboriginal Head Start Association of B.C. (AHSABC) and the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) worked closely with Indigenous communities and child care providers to ensure that community needs as well as capacity were central to funding decisions. This was accomplished through an application process that included dedicated advisors (AHS/FNHA) working with applicants to support them through the process. Converted spaces will be operational in 2022/23.

In 2021/22, the Ministry and Métis Nation B.C. (MNBC) worked in partnership to begin planning to address gaps in services for Métis families and for the implementation, in Spring 2022, of the Métis specific Child Care Resource and Referral program to support Métis families and providers.

Engagement with First Nations, Métis and Indigenous partners to inform distinctions-based child care will be key to planning the next 2023/24- 2025/26 CW-ELCC Action Plan. Grant funding has been completed with MNBC to lead engagements with Métis families and providers on approaches to support Métis specific families and implementation of this engagement will begin in Spring 2022.

Engagement with First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) is needed to determine how to proceed with engaging directly with 203 First Nations to address short-term engagement needs while a First Nations-led Tripartite approach to future ELCC planning is being considered and will be initiated by FNLC.

Consultations with Stakeholders

B.C. undertook a significant public engagement process in 2021/22 to inform the work of the CW-ELCC commitments.

Focus groups were held in September and December 2021 to inform development of a wage grid for Early Childhood Educators, with a wide range of child care organizations, including Indigenous and inclusion-focused groups. These engagements focused on role definitions in the wage grid. The Provincial Child Care Council's Affordability Working Group was also engaged to provide recommendations for a wage grid.

In August and September 2021, an inclusion training needs survey was shared with child care professionals to better understand professional learning needs for inclusive child care delivery. This was completed by over 990+ child care professionals, including operators, Early Childhood Educators, Special Needs Educators, Early Childhood Assistants, Responsible Adults, and ASCD and SCD support workers. The Provincial Child Care Council and ChildCareBC Reference Group also advised on inclusive child care and provided feedback on the current ASCD and SCD approach.

From December 2021 to March 2022, the ministry held a broad consultation to gather directional insights on thematic topics, including governance, cultural safety and inclusion, funding, recruitment and retention, and space creation. This engagement included a sector-wide webinar, 19 subject matter expert (SME) panels, 10 focus group sessions, and an online survey with 365+ responses. This engagement is informing ongoing policy development and an integrated communications approach for supporting the child care community. The ministry began planning engagement on design standards in 2021/22, supported with ongoing feedback from the Provincial Child Care Council. Engagement with the child care sector and municipalities is taking place in 2022/23.

In addition to the above noted direct consultations with key stakeholders, the ChildCareBC Bulletin keeps the broader child care sector and parents informed of up-coming initiatives on a bi-weekly basis. Topics may range from program updates on key initiatives, such as \$10 a Day ChildCareBC Centres, to informational articles, such as new providers being welcomed into certain programs, and friendly reminders for providers. The Bulletin is unrestricted, and anyone can sign up to receive it directly to their inbox.

Census

The provider profile survey

B.C. conducts an annual Provider Profile Survey of all 5000 child care facilities participating in the Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) program or the \$10 a Day ChildCareBC program. The 2021/22 survey

was sent in early May and responses were collected until early July when a 91% response rate was achieved. The survey includes both group (private and not for profit) and family facilities.

Administration of the CW-ELCC

General administration costs comprised of staffing and operational costs in support of the development and delivery of federally funded programs and initiatives under the Canada Wide agreement. These investments will be reflected in the audited financial statements provided under the terms of the Agreement.

Table 6: Other Canada Wide-ELCC Reporting Indicators

Table 6: Canada-wide ELCC Indicators																					
Principle	Outcome	Indicator	Results																		
Affordability	Decrease the average daily child care fee	Average daily parental out-of-pocket fee for regulated child care spaces at the beginning of 2021-2022 and at the end of 2022	Affordability projects not funded by CW-ELCC in 2021/22.																		
		Number for children under age six receiving fee subsidies, broken down by families receiving partial and full subsidies through CW-ELCC funding	Affordability projects not funded by CW-ELCC in 2021/22.																		
Access	Increase number of ELCC spaces available	Total number of spaces for which operational funding is provided available during the fiscal year, broken down by age groups of child and type of setting (for example, for profit/not-for-profit/public regulated child care centres, regulated family child care homes, etc.)	Government Supported Child Care Spaces ⁹ <table border="0" style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td>5 Years and Under</td> <td style="text-align: right;">98,807</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Family</td> <td style="text-align: right;">11,693</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Group Private</td> <td style="text-align: right;">51,832</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Group Not for Profit</td> <td style="text-align: right;">35,282</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6 to 12 Years</td> <td style="text-align: right;">33,222</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Family</td> <td style="text-align: right;">850</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Group Private</td> <td style="text-align: right;">12,941</td> </tr> <tr> <td>• Group Not for Profit</td> <td style="text-align: right;">19,431</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td style="text-align: right;">132,026</td> </tr> </table>	5 Years and Under	98,807	• Family	11,693	• Group Private	51,832	• Group Not for Profit	35,282	6 to 12 Years	33,222	• Family	850	• Group Private	12,941	• Group Not for Profit	19,431	Total	132,026
5 Years and Under	98,807																				
• Family	11,693																				
• Group Private	51,832																				
• Group Not for Profit	35,282																				
6 to 12 Years	33,222																				
• Family	850																				
• Group Private	12,941																				
• Group Not for Profit	19,431																				
Total	132,026																				

⁹ Includes Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) spaces and \$10 a Day ChildCareBC centre spaces.

Table 6: Canada-wide ELCC Indicators

Principle	Outcome	Indicator	Results
		Number of net new spaces created during the Fiscal Year - broken down by age groups of child and type of setting (for example, for profit/not-for-profit/public regulated child care centres, regulated family child care homes, etc.)	<p>Total New Spaces Funded¹⁰ 4,820</p> <p>New Spaces Funded by Age Groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Years and Under 3,919 • 6 to 12 Years 901 <p>New Spaces Funded by Type of Setting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family 1,082 • Group Private 185 • Group Not for Profit 3,553
		Information about waiting lists to access regulated ELCC spaces	77% of facilities maintain a waitlist
Quality	Increase quality early learning and child care	Number of staff working in regulated child care programs who fully meet the certification/ educational requirements	<p>Quality projects not funded by CW-ELCC in 2021/22.</p> <p>Estimated Number of Staff by Certification¹¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECE+ 12,797 • ECE Assistant 3,835 • Responsible Adult 3,811 • Unknown 2,320 • Total 22,763
		Wages of the early childhood workforce according to the categories of certification, including any wage enhancements, top-ups and/or supplements	<p>Wage Enhancement not provided by CW-ELCC in 2021/22.</p> <p>Median Hourly Wages by Certification¹²</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECE+ Staff \$21.00 • Non-ECE Staff \$18.50
		Annual public expenditure on training and professional development of the early childhood workforce	Quality investments not made under the CW-ELCC agreement for fiscal year 2021/22.

¹⁰ Includes 1,271 federally funded 0-5 spaces, 2,648 provincially funded 0-5 spaces and 901 provincially funded 6-12 spaces from the New Space Fund and Start Up Grant spaces. Family includes In-Home Multi-Age (IHMA) spaces. Excludes Neighbourhood Learning Centre (NLC), Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) and City of Vancouver MOU spaces.

¹¹ ECE+ includes staff with ECE, ITE, or SNE certifications. Unknown is comprised of non-ECE certified providers and staff at family child care facilities. Family providers who are ECE certified are included in the ECE+ count.

¹² ECE+ staff includes basic ECE certification, Infant/Toddler certification, and Special Needs certification. Non-ECE staff includes ECE Assistants. ECE+ wages do not include the ECE Wage Enhancement.

Table 6: Canada-wide ELCC Indicators

Principle	Outcome	Indicator	Results
		Child-to-staff ratio among licensed child care service providers	Staff-to-child ratios depends on the type of care and age of children. Please refer to Schedule E of the Child Care Licensing Regulations for detailed information.
Inclusivity	Increase number of inclusive spaces	Number and proportion of children under age six in flexible regulated ELCC arrangements	N/A
		Number and proportion of centers/providers that provide flexible arrangements (i.e. non-traditional arrangements such as flexible/irregular hours, weekend and emergency services; and geographic distribution of spaces) for harder-to-serve populations of children	N/A
		Number of children under age six with disabilities and children needing enhancing or individual supports that are in regulated ELCC spaces	N/A
		Number or proportion of child care service providers who provide services that are adapted to the needs of children with disabilities and children needing enhanced or individual supports	A total of 39% of facilities provide care for children with support needs.
		Number of Indigenous children under age six years in regulated ELCC spaces, distinction-based (First Nations, Inuit, Metis) where possible.	N/A

Table 6: Canada-wide ELCC Indicators

Principle	Outcome	Indicator	Results
		Number of racialized Canadian children, including Black Canadian children under age six in regulated ELCC spaces	N/A