



# Village of Nakusp and Area

## Snapshot of Child Care Need

Affordable, accessible, and quality child care is an integral element of healthy, sustainable communities and is foundational to early childhood development. The child care availability in Nakusp and area is very low, leaving many families without child care, parents unable to work, perform daily tasks, participate in community and for some, needing to leave the community to find the services they need.

School District 10, with funding from the Columbia Basin Trust, commissioned this snapshot of child care need for Nakusp and area by CitySpaces Consulting. The purpose is to provide a better picture of the current state of child care and the number of spaces needed.

Although this report is not a full needs assessment, it is the first of its kind in providing a preliminary understanding of child care needs in the community. This study highlights the

need for suitable, affordable child care that meets the needs of families and can assist with child care strategic decision-making and funding development.

Further research and a full needs assessment are required in order to have a more robust understanding of child care need. We recommend further engagement with families, child care providers and service providers to better understand the need for child care spaces, for underserved populations, and in order to further refine the targets.

## A Summary of this Study

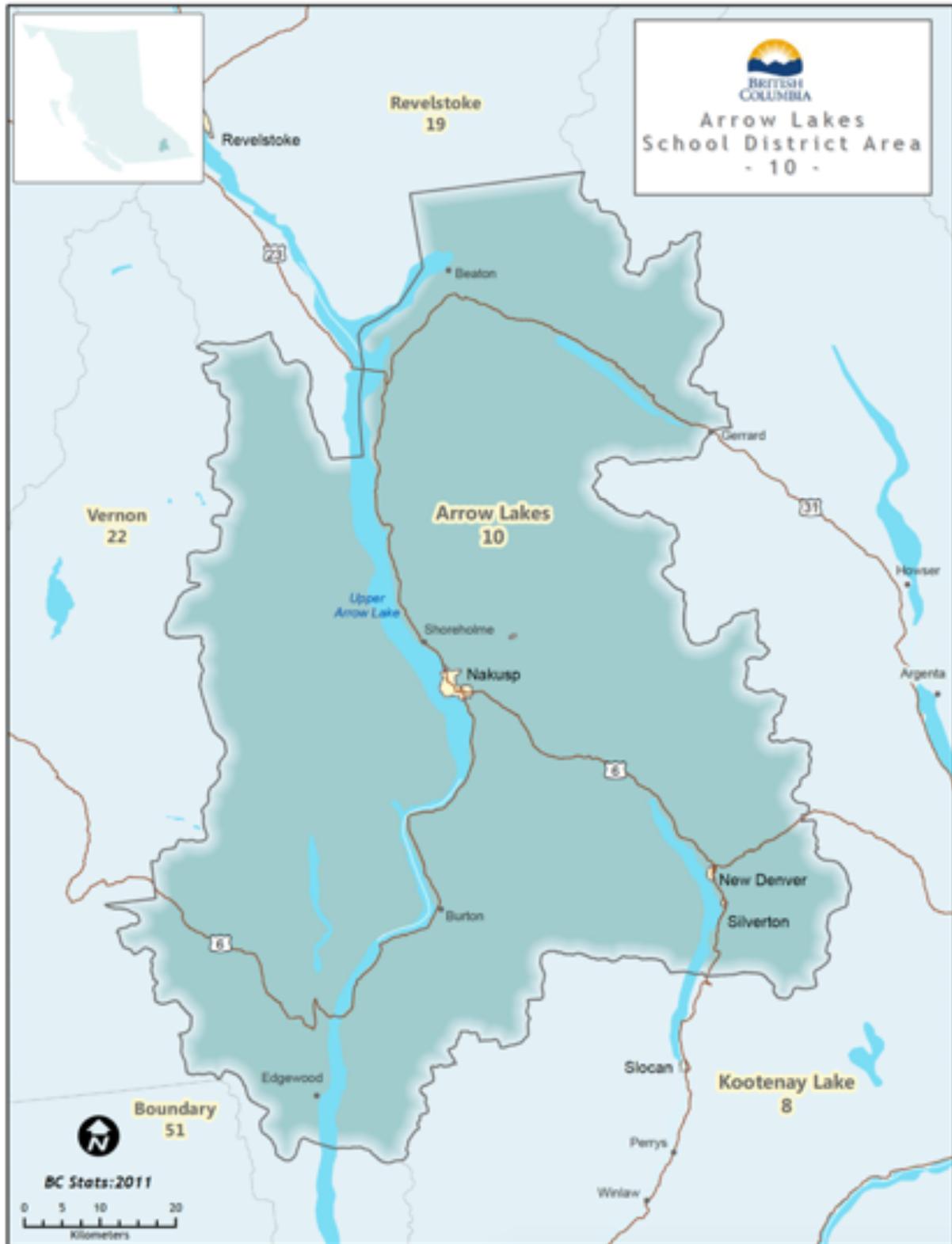
This study was carried out by gathering information from families through an online survey, as well as statistical data assembled and analyzed to determine the need and demand for child care.

The quantitative data is based on the current and projected population of children and families in both the Village of Nakusp and the surrounding area. The surrounding area was determined from the Arrow Lakes School District Area 10, Health Authority area of Arrow Lakes 124 and the Regional District of Central Kootenay's Electoral Area K – Arrow Lakes. Both population and projection numbers are based on BC Population Projections data, with additional information gathered from the 2016 Canadian Census (Age in Single Years Data), Interior Public Health Birth Rates and School District 10 Enrollment Statistics.

Key findings of this study indicate:

- ◆ The majority of survey respondents said there is an inadequate supply of child care services in Nakusp and area for their needs. The availability of infant and toddler (0-3 years) care and before and after school care is of particular concern. Drop-in, flexible and expanded hours are a common need.
- ◆ There are 23 child care spaces for 292 children between the ages of 0 to 12. The result is a coverage rate of **6%**, meaning there is **0.6** spaces for every 10 children.
- ◆ Breaking down the coverage rate for the different age groups, it is **4%** for under 3 years, **19%** for 3 to 5 years, and **0%** for school age children.
- ◆ Moving forward the recommendation is to increase the coverage rate to 70% for 0 to 5 years and 55% for school age children.
- ◆ In order to meet these targets, there needs to be an increase of **206** spaces, **47** spaces for under 3 years, **73** spaces for 3 to 5 years, and **109** spaces for school age children.

## Nakusp and surrounding Area



# The Survey

A total of 85 parents and guardians, representing 156 children, completed the online survey between April 7<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> 2020.

## Who Responded

Of the survey respondents, 59% live in the Village of Nakusp and 41% live in the surrounding area. Most survey respondents have one (32%) or two (39%) children, while a smaller portion had three children (20%), and only a few had 4 or more (5%).

59% are looking for child care or additional child care, 20% already have child care and 21% do not need child care.

Most households were couples with children (63%), while another 19% were couples with children where one parent worked remotely. 13% of households were single parents, and 6% of parents were under 25 years old.

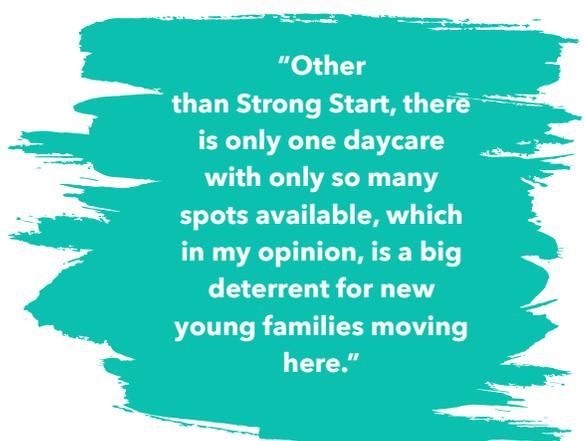
Half of the parents are employed full-time, 18% are employed part-time and 26% are stay-at-home parents.

Approximately 20% of families are considered low-income<sup>1</sup>. The largest share of households (42%) had annual incomes of \$40,000 - \$80,000, while 22% made \$80,000 - \$120,000, and 24% had incomes of less than \$40,000.

The primary language spoken by families at home is English. 10% of the respondents identify as Indigenous, none identified as Francophone and only 3% are new immigrants (arriving in Canada within the past 5 years).

## The Current Child Care Situation

Of the families with child care, the most common arrangement is an unpaid extended family member or friend, followed by group child care or preschool, and finally, care in the child's own home. Respondents appreciate the quality of care and the facility, ease of transportation to the facility, location of care and education/experience level of staff. They are less satisfied with the



**“Other than Strong Start, there is only one daycare with only so many spots available, which in my opinion, is a big deterrent for new young families moving here.”**

<sup>1</sup> From the 2016 Canadian Census [measure of low-income](#).

accommodation of siblings and hours of care.

Approximately 50% of respondents pay \$500 or under a month for child care, although most were fairly neutral about if the cost is affordable. However, these numbers are influenced by the fact that 45% of families are receiving free child care from family or a friend. Looking at actual monthly child care spending 21% spent 0-\$250; 28% spent \$250-\$500; 21% spent \$500-\$1000; meanwhile, 17% spent more than \$1000.

**"We moved here 4 years ago from Kelowna and I was surprised to learn that childcare was much more expensive here. Further, I was shocked that there was no infant/toddler childcare options."**

## **Child Care Needs**

The majority of respondents said that there is an inadequate supply of child care services in Nakusp and area for their needs. The availability of infant and toddler (0-3 years) care is of particular concern, as well as before and after care for school age children. Drop-in, flexible and expanded hours are a common need.

Families are looking for licensed child care with staff who are trained as Early Childhood Educators (ECEs). Parents require child care Monday through Friday, school holidays and Pro-D days. Most families (67%) also need full day care from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, although only 11% of those with child care have full-time care. Others only need care in the morning (31%) or afternoon (27%); approximately 15% of families had inconsistent schedules, were shift workers, or only required care after school or on Pro-D days.

Parents want to see play based learning (61%) and outdoor or environmental education and learning (59%) available to their children.

**"If I am unable to find licensed care, I will have to quit my full-time job with benefits and a pension."**

**"When we were in need of childcare, it was hard to find and no full-time childcare."**

**"More child care for children under 2.5 years old/not fully potty trained. Full day special needs childcare. Childcare to 5pm would be amazing."**

## **Child Care Needs of Underserved Families**

Although there are a few families who are in need of extra supports for children with extra support needs, there is low demand for multi-cultural, Francophone or Indigenous programming.

Single parents are in particular need of full-time child care. The ability of single parents to attend work, appointments, run errands or perform daily tasks is affected by a lack of access to care. Most single parents have a budget of \$500 per month for child care, and 60% are spending over that.

Although many single parents and young parents (under the age of 25) receive child care subsidies, this is not enough to make up the difference between their ability to pay and the cost.

## **Challenges Finding Child Care**

The primary challenge experienced by respondents in securing suitable child care are services not being available when needed (62%), followed by both a lack of full-time spaces, and the cost being too high for 42% of families. 38% also struggled to find part-time care.

The price of child care is a challenge for most families, most families looking for child care have a budget of \$500 or less. 45% are currently receiving a child care subsidy, while 14% feel they do not need it and 35% do not qualify.

# Child Care Space Inventory

Currently, in Nakusp and area, there are only two licensed child care providers. Stepping Stones Children’s Centre offers 16 group child care spaces for 3 to 5 year olds. Hibberson’s Family Child Care offers multi-age care, and currently has three children under the age of 3 years old and four children 3 to 5 years old.

The child care coverage rate is a percentage based on the number of licensed child care spaces available for every 10 children. The child care coverage rate in Nakusp and area is 8%. To put this in context, a child care desert<sup>2</sup> is considered a coverage rate below 33%, and in 2002 all European Union member states committed to a coverage rate of 90% for children ages 3 to 5 and 33% for children under 3 years old<sup>3</sup>.

**Table 1: Current Child Care Coverage Rates**

This table shows the current population of children in Nakusp and area from 0 to 12 years old, their access to child care, the child care availability in the community.

Age Group	Number of Children	Number of Child Care Spaces	Current Coverage Rates
Under 3 years	67	3	<b>4%</b>
3 to 5 years	104	20	<b>19%</b>
6 to 12 years	198	0	<b>0%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>6%</b>

Source: BC Population Projections 2019, 2016 Census (Age in Single Years Data), Interior Public Health Birth Rates and School District 10 Enrollment Statistics

<sup>2</sup> The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) 2018 report, Child Care Deserts in Canada

<sup>3</sup> The European Parliament, Directorate-General for Internal Policies 2013 compilation of briefing notes, Barcelona Targets Revisited

# Child Care Space Creation Targets

The child care space creation targets are the number of child care spaces required to adequately address the needs of families in Nakusp and area. The methodology used to determine space creation targets is informed by other child care studies, including the Surrey Child Care Gap Assessment (2011), the Comox Valley Child Care Action Plan (2019) and the Township of Langley Child Care Action Plan (2020). The results from the survey confirm that additional child care spaces are needed.

Based on these sources, the target for children under 3 years and 6 to 12 years is 70% and the target for children 3 to 5 years is 90%.

To meet these targets, an additional **206** child care spaces are needed. **47** spaces for under 3 years, **53** spaces for 3 to 5 years and **109** spaces for 6 to 12 years.

**Table 2: Targets For Child Care Coverage Rates**

This table shows the targets for child coverage rates and how many new child care spaces are required to meet the targets.

Age Group	Number of Children	Target Coverage Rate	Target Child Care Spaces	New Spaces Required to Meet Targets
Under 3 years	67	70%	47	44
3 to 5 years	104	70%	73	53
6 to 12 years	198	55%	109	109
<b>Total</b>	<b>369</b>		<b>229</b>	<b>206</b>

Source: BC Population Projections 2019, 2016 Census (Age in Single Years Data), Interior Public Health Birth Rates and School District 10 Enrollment Statistics

## Future Child Care Spaces Needed

The tables below show the number of child care spaces needed to meet the target coverage rates for each age group. The total target spaces and net new spaces required are laid out for the current child care population, projections of what the child care population will be in 5 years and in 10 years.

**Table 3: Children Under 3 Years**

Year	Number of Children	Current Child Care Spaces	Target Coverage Rate of 70%	
			Target Child Care Spaces	Net New Spaces Required (Total Spaces - Existing Spaces)
2020	67	3	47	44
2025	71		50	47
2030	83		58	55

Source: BC Population Projections 2019, 2016 Census (Age in Single Years Data), Interior Public Health Birth Rates and School District 10 Enrollment Statistics

**Table 4: Children 3 to 5 years**

Year	Number of Children	Current Child Care Spaces	Target Coverage Rate of 70%	
			Target Child Care Spaces	Net New Spaces Required (Total Spaces - Existing Spaces)
2020	104	20	73	53
2025	78		55	35
2030	83		58	38

Source: BC Population Projections 2019, 2016 Census (Age in Single Years Data), Interior Public Health Birth Rates and School District 10 Enrollment Statistics

**Table 5: Children 6 to 12 years**

			Target Coverage Rate of 55%	
Year	Number of Children	Current Child Care Spaces	Target Child Care Spaces	Net New Spaces Required (Total Spaces - Existing Spaces)
2020	198	0	109	109
2025	244		134	134
2030	219		120	120

Source: BC Population Projections 2019, 2016 Census (Age in Single Years Data), Interior Public Health Birth Rates and School District 10 Enrollment Statistics

## Conclusion

This study has found that families living in Nakusp and area are in dire need of additional licensed child care spaces, particularly for children under the age of 3 and school age children. Care on school holidays, Pro-D days, drop-in, flexible and expanded hours are common requirements. There needs to be a continued focus on support for children with extra support needs, in addition to support for low-income families, single parent households and young parents.

Moving forward, the recommendation is to increase the child care coverage rate to 70% for 0 to 5 year old children and 55% for school age children. In order to meet these targets, there needs to be an increase of **209** spaces, **47** for under 3 years, **73** for 3 to 5 years, and **109** for school age.