

Whistler Child Care Planning Project

FINAL REPORT – AUGUST 2020

Resort Municipality of Whistler
whistler.ca



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INTRODUCTION

This report is the outcome of the Whistler Child Care Planning Project that was conducted by the Whistler Centre for Sustainability (WCS) between June 2019 and March 2020. The overall purpose of the Whistler Child Care Planning Project was to gain a better understanding of current and future child care needs for children aged 0 to 12 years in Whistler. The WCS designed and conducted community and stakeholder engagement activities, generated the population growth scenarios and associated target modelling, and prepared a draft of this report. The Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) provided overall project oversight and finalized this project report.

The Whistler Child Care Planning Project was supported by a provincial grant under the Community Child Care Planning Program. The purpose of this program is to provide funding for local governments to engage in child care planning activities to develop a community child care space creation action plan.

This introductory section of this report provides a brief background to the Whistler Child Care Planning Project. It then describes the report's overall structure and the project's methodology. Afterwards it highlights unique features of the Whistler content. Finally, this introductory section concludes by identifying the potential implications of the COVID-19 situation.

Background

On January 4, 2019, RMOW Council received a letter from the British Columbia (B.C.) Minister of Children and Family Development and the Minister of State for Child Care announcing a provincial partnership with the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) to provide funding for the creation of child care space and for community child care planning. This funding is offered under two programs that are administered by UBCM: the Community Child Care Space Creation Program and the Community Child Care Planning Program.

On January 22, 2019, Council passed a resolution directing staff to make an application to the Community Child Care Planning Program. The RMOW was successful in obtaining the grant. On June 25, 2019, Council received Information Report No. 19-080, which informed Council of the UBCM grant funding and provided an outline of the Whistler Child Care Planning Project and its work plan. The RMOW and WCS subsequently embarked on the project.

Under the Community Child Care Planning Program, funded projects must collect information regarding the child care needs of the community, create an inventory of existing child care spaces, identify space creation targets over the next 10 years, and identify actions that can be taken to meet those space creation targets. UBCM shares the information gathered with the Ministry of Children and Family Development, and the information may be used in future provincial funding decisions such as the grants for funding child care space creation.

Report Content and Study Methodology

The content of this report addresses the UBCM program requirements.

The content and findings of the report were primarily derived from an inventory of Whistler child care providers, surveys of Whistler parents and child care providers, and community engagement conducted through three stakeholder workshops. These elements are discussed further below. The report content is also based on a policy context analysis as well as population growth scenario and space creation modelling carried out by the WCS.

Using the information derived from the activities listed above, this report presents information about Whistler's current child care space inventory and availability, and parents' needs and satisfaction with current child care availability in Whistler as expressed through the parent and provider surveys. It then includes an assessment of existing provincial and local RMOW policies and resources that influence the provision of child care in Whistler. Afterwards, the report presents population growth scenarios and space creation targets for the next five and 10 years. Finally, the report presents a preliminary action plan for further consideration and implementation for the delivery of child care in Whistler. These actions focus on addressing the key issues and needs identified through the planning process, as well as the projected child care needs of the community.

Inventory

A partially completed Whistler child care provider inventory was supplied by the Ministry of Children and Family Development. The inventory was further developed through the WCS's direct communication with providers and the provider survey as part of the initial work for this project. Lastly, a review by providers confirmed the final content.

Parent Survey

An online voluntary survey of parents was developed and then promoted from September 25 to October 20, 2019. It was aimed at parents and guardians with children under 13 years of age, with the intent being to better understand the types of child care Whistler families use, their needs and access to child care, child care challenges, and their preferred child care scenario moving forward.

In total, 241 people responded to the survey. Estimating that there are approximately 850 families in Whistler with children under 13, this means that the survey results could represent approximately 27 per cent of these families. While this represents a very good response rate for this target stakeholder group, the survey was voluntary (participants were not randomly selected). Therefore, the results cannot be considered a statistically valid/accurate representation of all Whistler parents with children under 13, as parents facing child care challenges would probably have been more likely to take the survey.

Regardless, the survey was designed to shed light on child care needs and challenges, and therefore the results from the 241 people that opted to take the survey provide valuable information that supplements the child care inventory data from other sources.

Most (87 per cent) of the 241 respondents live in Whistler, and 90 per cent work in Whistler. Ninety per cent of respondents live in two-parent households. Nearly 20 per cent work in the accommodation and food/beverage sector, followed by the arts, entertainment and recreation sector.

Summary results are included throughout this document as relevant and the complete results are attached to this report as Appendix A.

Provider Survey

An online voluntary survey of child care providers was promoted between September 25 and October 20, 2019. It was aimed at current child care providers or those considering offering child care. The intent was to better understand the types of child care offered (or being considered), child care capacity, staffing and facility type considerations as well as operational dates and times.

In total, 31 participants responded to the survey, however some represented the same organization multiple times and others were incomplete after the first question (likely due to starting then stopping, etc.). Once the list was filtered, a total of 17 mostly complete surveys remained. Survey participants included those providers currently offering child care (14 respondents) and those considering providing child care (three respondents).

Of the 14 providing child care, eight were activity-based child care providers, six were licensed child care providers and one was a licence-not-required child care provider. All except one of the major licensed child care providers took part in the survey. This missing provider was contacted individually and directly provided feedback pertinent to the inventory and child care offering types. All but two of the known child care activity providers participated in the survey. These organizations were contacted individually to provide feedback pertinent to the inventory and child care offering types.

Summary results are included throughout this document as relevant and the complete results are attached to this report as Appendix B.

Stakeholder Workshops

A meeting with a group of Whistler child care providers was held in September 2019. The purpose of the meeting was to present an overview of the Whistler Child Care Planning Project and gather feedback on the parent and provider survey objectives and some of the draft survey questions.

In February 2020, two stakeholder workshops with child care providers and key Whistler organizations and representatives were held to inform the target setting and action planning aspects of this project. Stakeholders were subsequently offered the opportunity to review and comment on the draft action plan electronically.

The Whistler Context

Whistler offers families much more than licensed child care options. Whistler's offerings include full-day ski school and biking for children beginning at the age of three, a few after-school programs and a variety of summer camps that assist working parents. These activity-based offerings are helpful to parents and support Whistler's tourism-based economy. These activity-based offerings also resulted in an extended scope for the Whistler Child Care Planning Project—this scope is beyond what most other communities explore and include in similar reports.

Whistler's process included and this report covers: licensed child care; licence-not-required home-based child care; and activity-based programs covering after-school hours (multi-hour), non-instructional days and summer periods. It does not include short (single-hour) programming that is intended more for learning or short-term child-minding. Appendix C to this report provides further details on the types of child care available in B.C.

The COVID-19 Situation

It is important to recognize that the activities associated with the Whistler Child Care Planning Project were carried out between June 2019 and March 2020, before the COVID-19 pandemic arose. As such, it is reasonable to expect that child care providers are operating differently since the data for this project was collected through the provider survey and stakeholder workshops. It is also reasonable to anticipate that the types of child care used by Whistler families, the barriers being experienced by parents and guardians, and the preferred child care scenarios of families moving forward have changed since the parent survey was conducted and may be

uncertain in the near-term. As Whistler addresses and recovers from the COVID-19 situation, it will be important to monitor trends and needs related to child care in the community.

CURRENT CHILD CARE INVENTORY AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Community Child Care Planning Program requires grant recipients to present information on the current state of child care in the community. In particular, funded projects are to provide information on:

- child care utilization patterns and stakeholder concerns;
- programs and services that currently exist in the community to meet the child care needs of underserved populations and/or provide additional support services as required; and
- a description of the programs and services that are most needed in the community to meet the child care needs of underserved populations and/or provide additional support services as required.

Additionally, the Community Child Care Planning Program requires grant recipients to identify and interpret trends related to the number, location and care types of licensed child care facilities and spaces in the community.

This section of the report presents information on the current state of child care in Whistler and associated trends. After providing an overall summary, this section offers detailed information on the following topic areas related to child care in Whistler: space inventory; access and utilization; locations; staffing; facilities; diverse population and services; affordability; quality of care; and priorities if additional funding became available.

Overall Summary

- Whistler has a variety of child care programs that include the typical group care, occasional care and family home-based care, as well as numerous activity-based care such as recreation, arts and other outdoor offerings that take advantage of Whistler's diverse amenities.
- Full-time licensed group child care services are provided by six active operators with a total capacity of 205 spaces. While their capacity is lower than the activity providers, these are the only operators that offer consistent full¹ daytime care programs (8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.) year-round.
- Part-time licensed occasional care programs offered in three locations by Whistler Blackcomb are somewhat limited in capacity and run for the winter season only. These occasional care programs are primarily targeted at visitors; however, they play an important role in aftercare for locally-based residents with children in winter activity programs.
- To date, the provision of licensed family home-based care programming is limited and could represent an underutilized opportunity.
- Activity-based camps captured in the inventory have the greatest variety of programming with several providers and capacity levels of approximately 450 plus; however, the offerings and capacities can fluctuate dramatically throughout the seasons in the year.

¹ Kids on the Go, operated by the RMOW, combines with school programming to offer full-day programming for ages Kindergarten to Grade 7.

- There is a higher level of need for additional child care spaces for the 0-3 years age group; the parent and provider surveys and stakeholder workshops indicate that this is the age category in the community with the most unmet demand. There is significant programming in the community for the 5-12 years age group and the 3-5 years age group is generally well-served.
- The information in this section is based on stakeholder consultation, including the parent and provider surveys. Ongoing collaboration amongst stakeholders will be important moving forward. The RMOW also has agreement in principle from key partners to reconvene the Child Care Working Group. This will be vital to monitoring the trends presented in this section of the report, as well as implementing the action plan that is provided later in the document.

Space Inventory

Key Findings

- Full-time licensed group child care services are provided by six active operators with a total capacity of 205 spaces. The largest providers are the Whistler Children's Centre and the Whistler Waldorf School, followed by Teddy Bear Daycare and Mountain Minis.
- Of the care spaces offered by **full-time licensed care** operators, just over half (54 per cent) are for children 3-5 years of age, 17 per cent are for children 0-3 years of age (with most allotted to the 1-3 age group), and the other 29 per cent of the spaces are for children in Kindergarten to 12 years of age.
- **Licensed after-school care** for children in Kindergarten to 12 years of age is entirely located at one facility (Myrtle Philip Community School), whereas the care for those aged 0 months to pre-Kindergarten are concentrated in two general areas (Whistler Village/Spruce Grove and south of the Village, in Spring Creek and Cheakamus Crossing). There is one small home-based child care operation north of Whistler Village.
- **Activity-based child care** providers run most of their programming during school summer breaks and target their offerings to children in Kindergarten to 12 years of age. An exception to this rule is the popular 3 years of age to pre-Kindergarten winter ski/snowboard programming and fall/spring season bike programs. In Whistler, there is an extensive number of activity-based programs that supplement licensed care facilities and introduce Whistler children to local recreation and physical literacy as well as outdoor activities and an appreciation of nature.
- **Part-time activity-based programs** for children 3 years to pre-Kindergarten are offered during the winter at three Whistler Blackcomb ski/snowboard locations. Spring, summer and fall programming for this age group is offered by the Whistler Sports Academy, currently operating from the Whistler Racket Club adjacent to Whistler Village.
- **Recently initiated activity-based after-school care programs** (offered one to three days per week) for children in Kindergarten to 12 years of age are available in 2019/2020 at both the Whistler Racket Club and through Whistler Sport Legacies programming at Spring Creek Community School. Both program offerings were mostly subscribed in the first year.

Detailed Number of Spaces

A detailed listing of Whistler's child care providers and the spaces they provide is presented in the two tables below on the following pages. Table 1 covers full-time licensed care offered in Whistler and Table 2 focuses on part-time options, both licensed and activity-based.

Table 1 Full-time child care providers

FULL-TIME—LICENSED							
Name	Type	Structure	0–36 months	30/36 months to school-age	School-age	Multi-age	Active capacity
Smarty Pants Daycare	Provider's home-based care	Private				4	
Les Petits Loups	Provider's home-based care	Private				7	7
White Gold Playhouse	Provider's home-based care	Private			5		
	Home-based subtotal				5	11	7
Whistler Children's Centre	Community-based facility	Non-profit	24	50			74
Kids on the Go ²	Community-based facility	Non-profit			54		54
Whistler Waldorf School	Commercial-based facility	Non-profit		30			30
Teddy Bear Daycare	Commercial-based facility	Private	2	14			16
Mountain Minis	Commercial-based facility	Private	8	16			24
	Facility-based subtotal		34	110	54		198
Total Full-Time			34	110	59	11	205

² Provides after-school care and day camps on non-instructional days and during the summer.

Table 2 Part-time child care providers

PART-TIME—LICENSED							
Name	Type	Structure	0-36 months	30/36 months to school-age	School-age	Multi-age	Active capacity
Whistler Kids Child Care Centre at The Westin	Occasional – Commercial-based facility – winter	Private	16				16
Whistler Kids Child Care Centre at Blackcomb	Occasional – Commercial-based facility – winter	Private	12				12
Whistler Kids Child Care Centre at Creekside	Occasional – Commercial-based facility – winter	Private	8				8
	Facility-based subtotal		36				36
PART-TIME ACTIVITY-BASED—LICENCE-NOT-REQUIRED							
Name	Type	Structure	0 – 36 months	30/36 months to school-age	School-age	Multi-age	Active capacity
Whistler Sports Academy Midweek – Kiddy	Activity-based group – fall	Private					
Whistler Blackcomb – Valley Kids	Activity-based group – winter	Private					
Whistler Blackcomb – Mini-Shredders	Activity-based group – spring	Private					
Whistler Outdoor Learning	Activity-based – mix	Private					
Whistler Blackcomb – DFX	Activity-based group – summer	Private					
WORCA	Activity-based group – summer	Non-profit					
Whistler Sailing	Activity-based group – summer	Non-profit					
AWARE – Nature	Activity-based group – mix	Non-profit					
Sports Legacies	Activity-based group – mix	Non-profit					
Whistler Gymnastics	Activity-based group – mix	Non-profit					
Whistler Racket Club Explore Sports	Activity-based group – school year	Private					
	Activity-based subtotal			40-150+	20-487+	7	27-494+
Total Part-time			36				63-530+

Note: The range in the part-time subtotal and totals is due to the variability of offerings and capacity throughout the year.

Access and Utilization

Key Findings

Care Needs

- Child care demand is high year-round, but generally highest during the winter. Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays are in most demand mid-week.
- Kindergarten to 12 years of age care is needed year-round and spikes during the summer school break. Fortunately, most families can find care during this time.

Care Gaps

- Of the 241 parent survey respondents, 42 per cent indicated a need for more child care.³
- Groups 0-12 months of age and 1-3 years of age are lacking care options year-round; and for the Kindergarten to 12 year old age group, care gaps mostly exist during the school year for after-school care.
- Throughout the year, care is more available and accessible for the 3 years to pre-Kindergarten age group compared to the other age groups.
- There is a desire for more facility-based group child care options for all age groups by both respondents with and without care.

Waitlists

- Three of the five licensed child care provider survey participants indicate that they have active waitlists with most of the needs in the younger years (i.e., birth to 12 months of age and 1-3 years of age).
- The waitlist time for children under 3 years of age at one of the providers is 18-24 months.
- One provider has a waitlist of 145 children with 135 under 3 years of age.

Care Access Benchmarks

- Results from the 2017/2018 Ministry of Children and Family Development⁴ accessibility⁵ review (Table 4 later in this section of the report) indicated that there was some difficulty finding care in the age group from birth (0) to toddler (3 years old) for the Whistler region, and general difficulty (i.e., more difficulty) for the neighbouring region.
- Whistler's child care access rate is 14.3 (14.3 full-time care places per 100 children aged 0-12), which is generally comparatively lower (meaning care is less available) than some other communities in the region. It should be noted that the access rate is defined to include only licensed facilities, and does not account for Whistler's

³ The parent survey was voluntary and therefore parents in need of child care were likely more interested in responding.

⁴ <https://mcfcd.gov.bc.ca/reporting/services/early-years/performance-indicators>

⁵ Accessibility is indicated by the average number of enrollment days for each space each week. A space that is enrolled five days of each week is inaccessible. A space that is enrolled for four days each week is accessible for one day each week. If that one particular day each week is all that a family needs, then that space is accessible; it would not be accessible for a family requiring more than that one particular day of child care each week.

extensive activity-based programs. Most care locations are already in the vicinity of employment areas and schools which bodes well for access, given this is where most parents have a preference or desire for care.

- The creation and buildout of the Cheakamus Crossing and Rainbow employee housing neighbourhoods provided housing for local families and contributed to the current populations of children and associated child care needs. Potential future population growth, and growth in the number of children in the child care age categories, will significantly affect future child care space needs. The extent to which further expansion of the Cheakamus Crossing neighbourhood, and additional employee housing throughout the community, or further in-migration of permanent residents and families, will create additional needs, or simply replace the existing child age group population, needs to be carefully monitored and considered over time.

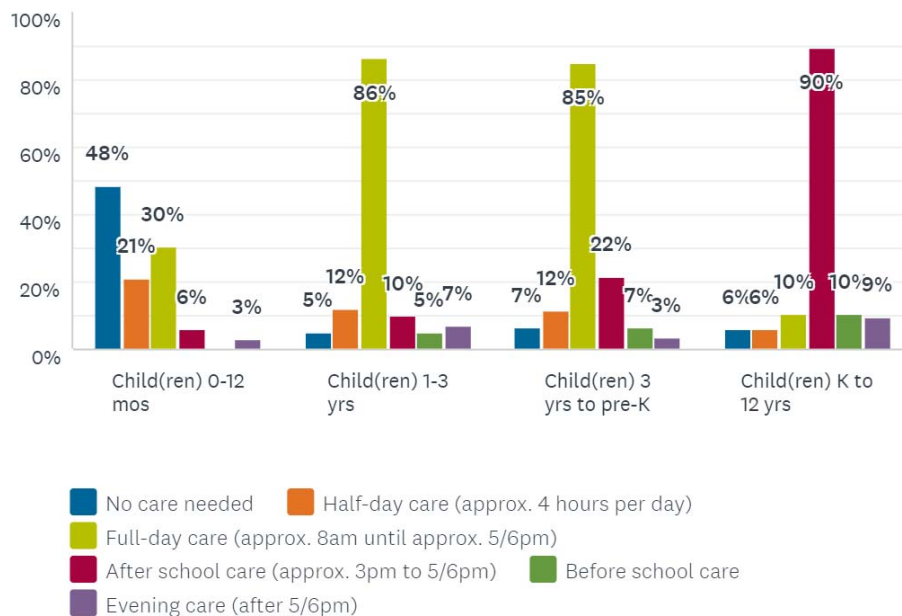
Other (staffing, special programming, etc.)

- Staffing challenges and the stability of facility space are barriers to increasing the size or capacity of child care programs.
- Providers have special programming for children with unique needs; however, providers are challenged to support some groups due to staffing and special training requirements.

School Year Child Care Needs and Gaps

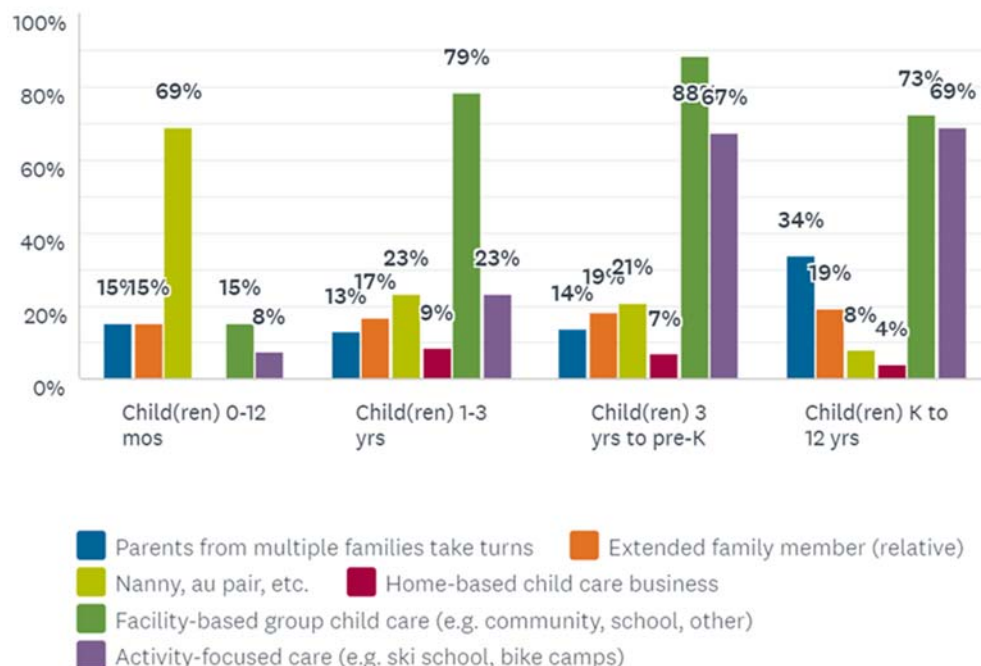
When asked what times of day parents with children in care need care for their children during the school year (Figure 1), not surprisingly, the majority of respondents with children from 1 year to pre-Kindergarten need full-day care and the majority with school-aged children need after-school care. Just over half of respondents with children 0-12 months need care, and 30 per cent need full-day care.

Figure 1 School year needs



Respondents with children in care reported using a mix of child care types for all ages during the school year (Figure 2). Facility-based group care is the most frequently used type of care for children 1-12 years of age, with the activity-based care gaining popularity as children age.

Figure 2 School year child care usage types by age group



Of the respondents with children aged 0-12 months requiring care, almost 70 per cent of those reported using a nanny or an au pair. These same respondents also reported: a) the highest levels of dissatisfaction (65 per cent were very or somewhat dissatisfied) with their current arrangement; and b) most prefer a facility-based group child care provider instead.

Key school year child care challenges cited by respondents included: affordability (25); space availability and the length of the wait to gain access (36); scheduling and employment challenges due to the inflexibility of child care programs (40); the Kids on the Go registration process (12); transportation (10); and then a number of other challenges were also listed (e.g., food, quality, nanny reliability, turnover).

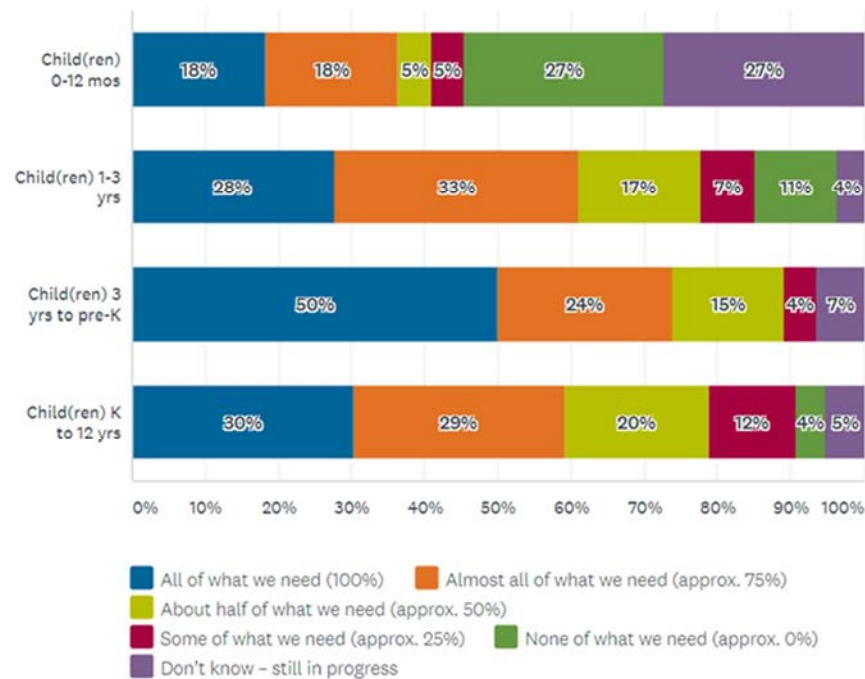
Respondents representing children of all ages who are not happy with their current arrangement indicate a preference for facility-based group child care. A similar sentiment is expressed by those respondents with children on waitlists.

The care for children aged 3 years to pre-Kindergarten is mostly met during the school year (50 per cent have all the care they need, 24 per cent have most of the care they need). That said, more child care capacity is needed, as only 18 per cent of families with children 0-12 months of age have all the care they need and about a third of children 1-3 years of age and Kindergarten to 12 years of age have all the care they need (Figure 3).

Impacts: Of the 121 respondents who have not been able to or do not expect to be able to secure all of the care they need for the school year, 55 per cent have had to reduce their work hours and even a few (five respondents) have ended their employment. For parents whose children are waitlisted (no care secured at all for any children), the situation has meant reduced work hours for nearly half (33) of those 73 respondents, and 16 have ended their employment to provide care.

Figure 3 School year care access by age group

Answered: 134 Skipped: 107



Summer Child Care Needs and Gaps

During the summer, child care needs stay about the same as the school year for two-thirds of respondents, but needs increase for one-third of respondents reflecting the increased needs of children Kindergarten to 12 years of age.

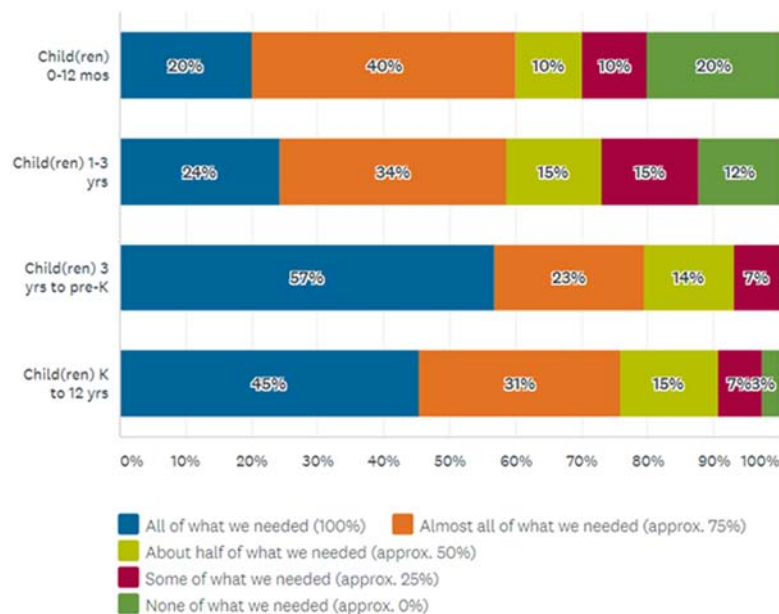
The type of child care used in the summer is similar to the school year care for most age groups; however, activity-based care programs for children Kindergarten to 12 years of age gain in popularity in the summer surpassing the use of facility-based care. This trend reflects the general increased need for care for school-aged children and the importance of activity care providers during the summer months. Fortunately, securing the care needed for the two older age groups in the summer is relatively easy as a result of the activity-based care offerings available such as bike, multi-sport and nature camps in Whistler.

While the care for older children may be mostly met in the summer, care for those aged 0-3 years during the summer is still needed; only 20 per cent of families with children 0-12 months of age secured all the care they needed and only 24 per cent with children 1-3 years of age secured all they needed (Figure 4).

Figure 4 Summer child care access by age group

This past summer (2019), how much child care were you able to secure?

Answered: 124 Skipped: 117



Weekly Needs

During the school year, most parents indicate a need for child care Monday to Friday and more reported care need on Tuesday to Thursday. Some care is needed on the weekends, but much less than weekdays where the need ranges from 69 per cent of survey participants requiring care on Mondays to 87 per cent requiring care on Thursdays. Summer child care needs are highest during the week, but generally about 10 per cent points less per day compared to during the school year.

Child care providers indicate a range of use depending on the type of care provided, and in general their responses reflect the weekly and seasonal family child care needs. Winter child care, for example, is in higher demand than summer (less spaces available). Also, mid-week days, rather than Monday and Friday, are in greater demand year-round. Activity-based summer camp programs are mostly subscribed through the middle summer with some space available early or late in the summer.

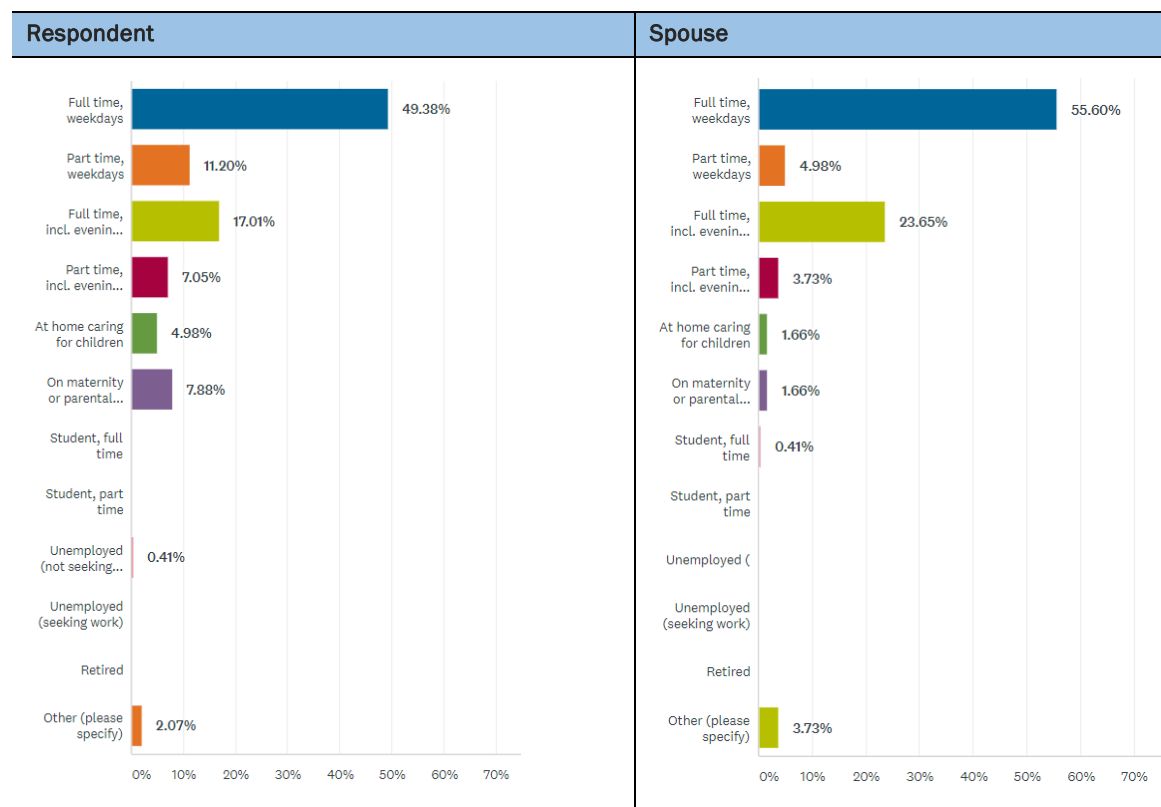
Needs on Special Days and Special Times

Child care providers operate programs on a variety of “special days and times.” Special days and times include statutory holidays, school breaks and professional development (PD) days, early morning care and late day care. Of these special days and times, statutory holidays and winter holidays have the least daily coverage. Very few providers offer early drop off or before or after-school care or late pick up after 6 p.m.

Providers indicate that the most requested child care “special days and times” include after-school care for those children in Kindergarten to 12 years of age, school PD days and other school breaks. The demand for after-school care and lack of offerings may present an unfilled opportunity for providers.

With roughly 17 per cent of respondents and 24 per cent of their spouses working full-time in the evenings and on weekends (Figure 5) there is also some demand for weekend care, especially on Saturdays with 13 per cent of parent survey respondents requiring Saturday care during the school year and 10 per cent requiring Saturday care in the summer.

Figure 5 Respondent and spouse work schedule



Overall Care Gaps

Table 3 below provides a high level summary of the level of child care need and service gaps for each age category based on the survey responses, conversations with child care stakeholders, child care waitlists, Ministry of Children and Family Development assessments of access and the access rate comparisons to other benchmarks. This summary was developed to help identify the areas of greatest need, and helped form the basis of the action planning workshop conducted with community stakeholders.

Table 3 Child care need and service gaps

Age Group	Summer	School Year
0-12 months	Moderate need/larger service gap	Moderate need/larger service gap
1-3 years	Moderate need/larger service gap	High need/larger service gap
3 years to pre-K	Moderate need/smaller service gap	High need/smaller service gap
K-12 years	High need/smaller service gap	Moderate need after school/larger service gap

Note: The darker shaded cells indicate the age group and time of year requiring the most attention by the Whistler Child Care Planning Project action plan and lighter shaded cells indicate the age group and time of year requiring less attention by this plan.

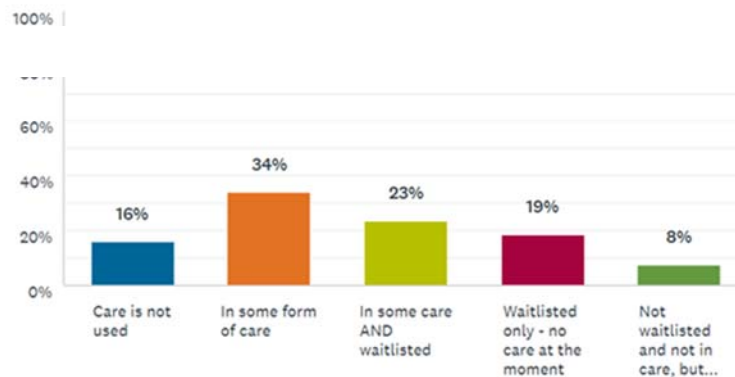
Overall Access to Child Care

Overall, about 57 per cent of parent survey respondents indicated that their children are accessing some amount of child care. One-third of respondents' child(ren) are in some form of care, 23 per cent are in care and waitlisted, though 19 per cent do not have any child care at the moment. Of the 16 per cent who responded that child care is not used, just under a third of them (or five per cent of the total) indicated that care is needed but is not affordable. **So, while 34 per cent have some form of the child care required, another 42 per cent need more.** This is illustrated in Figure 6 below.

Figure 6 Current child care utilization

Which general scenario best describes the child care you currently have for your child(ren) for this school year (2019-2020)?

Answered: 240 Skipped: 1



Non-Whistler Care Needs

Use of full-time Whistler based child care by families living in Squamish, Pemberton and the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) area represented five per cent or less (less than 15 total) of the spaces for most operations. One smaller operation, however, has 30 per cent or nine of its spaces utilized by non-Whistler families.

Activity-based programs are more subscribed by Squamish, Pemberton, SLRD and visiting families than the full-time child care operations. In many cases, children from these families make up over 50 per cent of the participation. Based on the responses to the survey, about 80 spaces (during full summer operation) are subscribed to by non-Whistler children.

The lack of access expressed by 42 per cent of survey respondents on waitlists (23 per cent and 19 per cent from Figure 6 above) and in the survey may also be reflected in objective measures of utilization and access.

As mentioned above, results from the 2017/2018 Ministry of Children and Family Development accessibility review (Table 4) indicated that there was some difficulty finding care in the from birth (0) to toddler (3 years old) age group for the Whistler region, and general difficulty (i.e., more difficulty) for the neighbouring region.

Table 4 Ministry of Children and Family Development accessibility review for the region

	Accessibility	
	Sunshine Coast—Pemberton (including Whistler)	North Shore—Squamish
Infant/toddler	Some difficulty finding care	General difficulty finding care
Age 3 to 5 years	Care is generally available	Some difficulty finding care

Waitlists

The finding by the 2017/2018 Ministry of Children and Family Development accessibility review is echoed by three of the five licensed child care provider survey participants who indicated that they have active waitlists with most of the needs in the younger years (i.e., birth to 12 months of age and 1-3 years of age).

As there may be overlap in the child care provider waitlists, looking at just one waitlist revealed 145 children under the age of 5 on the waitlist with those 0-3 years of age making up 135 of those waitlist spaces. Children on the waitlist have no care at the facility and even providing two days of care to each would require another 58 full-time care spaces.⁶ Another provider indicated the waitlist time for children under 3 years of age is 18-24 months.

Access Rate

A key measure of child care availability, that is commonly referenced, is the access rate. The access rate equals the number of licensed child care spaces per 100 children from birth to 12 years of age. **Whistler's child care access rate is 14.3, meaning there are 14.3 child care spaces per 100 children who are from birth to 12 years of age.**

Whistler's access rate is lower (meaning care is less available) than the provincial average of 18. It is also lower in comparison to most communities in the region⁷ (Table 5). It is however higher than Pemberton's 2016 access rate of 12.5 while Squamish had an access rate of 20 in 2019.

⁶ 145 children on the list x 2 days = 290/5 days= 58 full-time spaces needed now.

⁷ A Municipal Survey of Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver. (December 2015)

It should also be noted that Pemberton and Squamish are in the process of completing their own child care needs assessments and both are targeting an increase in access rates. Additionally, access rate comparisons to other rural communities using preliminary UBCM inventory data for this project show that Whistler's access rate is lower than other communities such as Sechelt (20), Gibsons (22), Kimberley/Cranbrook (14), Revelstoke (20), and Courtenay (17); many of these communities also have half day preschool programs that were not included in these calculations, while Whistler has the diverse range of recreational activity programs that are also not included.

Part-time activity-based care program capacity should also be taken into consideration when considering the availability of child care opportunities for Whistler residents. However, these programs also serve children from outside of Whistler that take part in these programs. This is of special concern during the summer when school-aged children from outside of Whistler take part in programs. Additionally, the care quality may be high in activity-based child care learning programs, but the part-time, shorter day offerings that often require investments in sports equipment and after program care costs can make these programs inaccessible for families who require full-day care. Finally, as noted earlier, most survey respondents are seeking facility-based care programs.

Table 5 Access rate regional comparison

Community	Access Rate (licensed care) Age 0-12	Pop. Year
Pemberton	12.5	2016
Whistler (2020 spaces)	14.3	2018
Squamish	20	2019
City of North Vancouver	24 23 in 2011	2019
West Vancouver	30 22 in 2011	2019
District of North Vancouver	29 22 in 2011	2019
Pitt Meadows	34 20 in 2011	2019
UBC	42	2019
Metro Vancouver	18.6 16 in 2011	2019
British Columbia	18	2016
Canada	27	2016
Quebec	37-55 age 0-5 & 0-12	2016

The access rate can also be calculated for various age groups (Table 6). In this comparison, Whistler is generally lower than most other communities.

Table 6 Access rate regional comparison by age group

Community	ALL Ages	0-35 mos.	4-5	0-5	5-12	Pop. Year
Pemberton	12.5	23	24	23	4	2018
Whistler (2020 spaces)	14.3	17*	43	24	6	2018
Squamish	21	20*	41-51	29-35	10	2019
City of North Vancouver**	24	18	49	33	11	2019
West Vancouver**	30	15	74	44	16	2019
District of North Vancouver**	29	31	59	46	16	2019
Pitt Meadows**	34	33	78	55	14	2019
British Columbia	18			25	18	2016
Canada	20.5			27	28	2016
Quebec	37			36	38	2012

*Very few 0-12 month year olds in care, population not considered

**Allocates based on average for Statistics Canada age groupings for the more specific age groups

The table above provides access rates by more refined age categories. Moving forward, this report uses the following generalized current access rates by age category in Whistler. Unlike Table 6, the access rate for the 0-35 months age category below includes the 0-12 month year olds:

- Age 0-35 months, access rate of 11
- Age 3-5 years, access rate of 41
- Age 5-12 years, access rate of 7

Locations

Whistler child care programs are located throughout the community (Figure 7), with most of the after-school care programs targeted at children from Kindergarten to 12 years of age co-located with other children or family facilities. Where these programs are not physically co-located, a seamless transition is provided by both child care operators and the school district busing services (e.g., Kids on the Go, Whistler Sport Legacies, Whistler Racket Club Explore Sports Program).

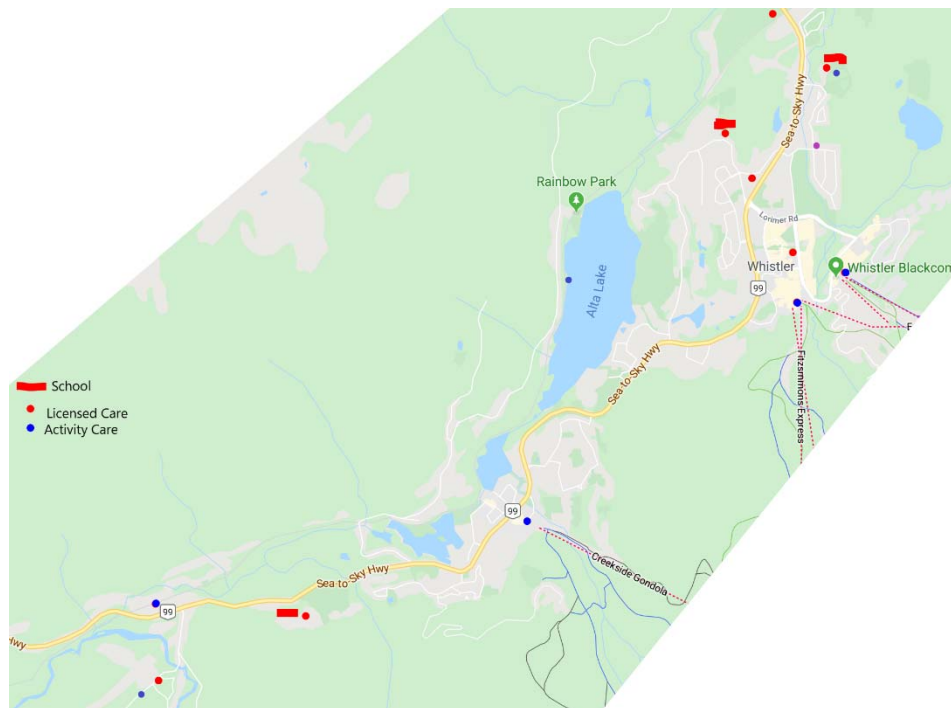
Early-years programs and summer programs tend to be located in stand-alone areas throughout Whistler, with a few of these locations close to common places of work (e.g., Whistler Village), two adjacent to schools, and one operation located in a relatively densely populated neighbourhood in Cheakamus Crossing.

Most care locations are already somewhat proximal to work or school locations in Whistler, but these work and school locations like much of Whistler's built environment are relatively dispersed. Due to the lack of child care spaces, families are sometimes not able to access the facilities most convenient for them.

For Whistler respondents who currently have child care, 100 per cent reported that their child care is located in Whistler. When asked about the preferred location of child care within Whistler, 'close to home' ranked the highest, followed by 'close to elementary schools' and then 'close to work.' With this knowledge, stakeholders could possibly work toward preferred locations for child care facilities and/or programs.

The recent development and population growth in the Cheakamus Crossing neighbourhood and the future plans for this area likely indicate an incremental need and opportunity for child care services in this area or neighbouring subdivisions or schools.

Figure 7 Care locations in Whistler



Staffing

There is clear demand today for additional child care facilities and programming in Whistler; however, the ability to serve this demand is limited, in some cases, due to the lack of qualified staff.

When asked about their staffing shortage, seven of 13 providers indicated a combined shortfall of four full-time and 13 part-time staff (10.5 full-time equivalents (FTEs)). A greater percentage of activity-based providers cited a shortage of staff compared to the facility-based or in-home group care operations. Activity providers also needed more staff (six FTEs versus 4.5 FTEs for the facility-based), but lack of staff was an issue for both types of care providers.

“No one is going into the ECE field anymore. The wage is just too low. The housing rent is very high in Whistler, the fees charged would have to increase and that doesn't help families.” —Local Care Provider

Wages were noted by a few providers as one of the variables that needs to change to attract additional care providers. Currently, the non-Early Childhood Educator (ECE) average wages on the higher end of the scale are \$21/hour and for ECE staff the high end of the scale average is \$25/hour, while the Living Wage for Whistler for 2019 ranged from \$21.22/hour and \$25.73/hour depending on the household structure. It appears that wages may or may not be the driver of attracting staff, but may be more a general limitation of people in B.C. considering ECE as a career choice, or how transferable an ECE qualification is between provinces.

Noted impacts of the staffing shortfall include fewer: child care spaces; days and/or hours of care provided; “special days” programming; and types of care provided.

Facilities

Of the 13 child care provider survey respondents, 10 indicated they use leased or rented facilities and only three indicated some level of ownership. The stability of using these facilities for child care varies across the providers with four indicating very stable access (approximately 100/100 on a stability scale, with 100 being very stable), three indicating relatively unstable access (>30/100) and the four remaining indicating somewhere in the middle of the stability scale. The stability of locations for facility-based group care varies from full stability to unstable, which is of some concern given the expressed demand for these operations. Further investigation should be done to understand the issues concerning those facilities that expressed lack of stability in the access to their facilities.

When asked about the ability to expand existing child care facility areas, five providers indicated they are “unsure of room to expand” and five indicated “no room to expand.” If given additional space or clarity on current capacity, however, three full-time care providers and three activity care providers indicated that they could host more children.

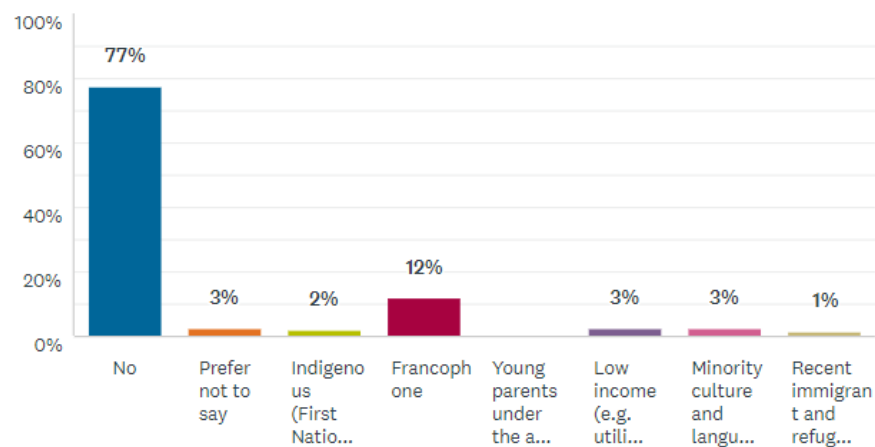
Of the providers, three full-time child care providers indicated that they would like to expand within the next 10 years. These expansion plans are primarily aimed at care for children 0-12 months of age and 1-3 years of age, which fortunately match the current gaps in service. Two activity care providers indicated a desire to expand, but only one of them during the school year (after school) when care is most needed.

For those providers not expanding, the main issue for facility-based group care is staffing (which is cited, by some, due to poor pay and no recruits), while in-home care concerns center on the risk of renting. Activity providers not expanding cite no need or interest, and that they currently have a desirable and safe ratio of staff to children.

Diverse Population and Services

Approximately 24 per cent of respondents identified with the special user groups included in the parent survey; 77 per cent did not (Figure 8). Francophones were the largest self-identified group, represented by 12 per cent of the respondents.

Figure 8 Respondents identifying with a special child care user group



Most parents (94 per cent) responding to the survey do not have children with an identified or diagnosed special need. Five per cent (12) do have children with an identified or diagnosed

special need and three respondents preferred not to say. The intent of this aspect of the parent survey was to better understand what challenges might be faced by different groups. While there were too few of these respondents to be able to present quantitative results, in reviewing their comments, their main challenges and concerns were not unlike the other parent survey respondents.

While there are not any specific child care programs targeted at these different groups, current child care providers most frequently noted program attendance includes “children from low-income families”, “children with extra support needs” and “children from minority cultures and language groups.” Not surprisingly, these three groups are the top three that providers indicated must be given greater consideration during staffing, training and programming decisions.

Despite these considerations, child care providers cite challenges such as: requiring extra staff to support children with extra support needs; staffing, financial assistance and/or transportation for indigenous children; accessing funding grants and communicating funding to low-income families; communicating and accessing financial support for recent immigrants; and French-speaking staff for francophone children.

Some caregivers indicate that demand will likely grow for: children with extra support needs; children from low-income families; and children and families with unique language needs (minority cultures and language groups). Therefore, the ability to provide care to these different user groups may get more challenging without special attention.

Affordability

Program Fees

Child care program fees in Whistler vary by age and hours of care, and many programs offer discounts for multiple days/weeks of care or programming. In Table 7 below, the single day session rate averages, high and low amounts, and the range for most providers are listed by age grouping.

In general, the programs targeted at younger children have higher fees and these fees decrease as children age due to the reduced ratios and supervision requirements. Program fees on average are higher in Whistler than in the rest of B.C.; and the larger group care facilities for the pre-Kindergarten programs share similar fees compared to the Coast/North Shore region. After- and before-school care programs are difficult to compare, as only one operation in Whistler offers before-school care services.

Table 7 Child care program fee comparison

Child Care Fees	Children 0-12 Months	Children 1-3 Years	Children 3 Years to Pre-K	Children K-12 Years Day Programs	Children K-12 Years After-/ Before-School Care
Whistler					
Average	\$88	\$74	\$65	\$62	\$17.30*
High	\$120	\$100	\$80	\$80	\$20.00
Low	\$70	\$55	\$50	\$50	\$14.00
Most frequent range	\$70-\$75	\$55-\$75	\$50-\$60	\$50-\$75	\$17-\$18.50
Benchmarks					
Coast/North Shore median/month 2017/18 ⁸	\$1,300 (\$60/day)	\$1,250 (\$58/day)	\$958 (\$44/day)	No data	\$443-\$559** (\$20-\$26/day)
B.C. median/month 2017/18	\$1,088 (\$50/day)	\$1,000 (\$46/day)	\$800 (\$37/day)	No data	\$330-\$412** (\$15-\$19/day)

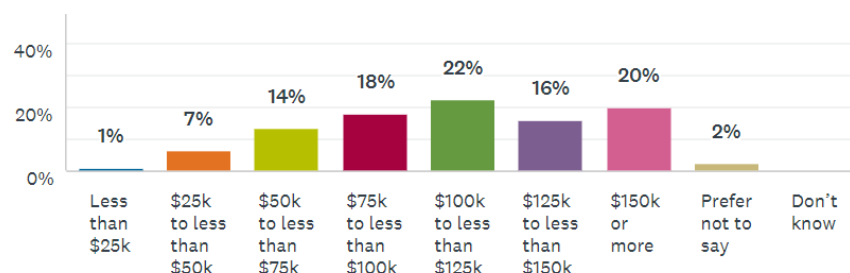
*Includes a mix of before- and after-school care program prices

** Includes before- and after-school care program price combined
21.62 days in a month

Income Mix

Income available is the other side of the affordability equation and the combined gross income of the parent(s) supporting the child care needs of the child(ren) was fairly evenly distributed across the middle and higher income ranges, with fewer at the lowest income levels. Figure 9 below presents the gross income of the parent(s) supporting child(ren) as gathered through the parent survey, providing the basis for the affordability perspectives in the next section.

Figure 9 Respondent income distribution

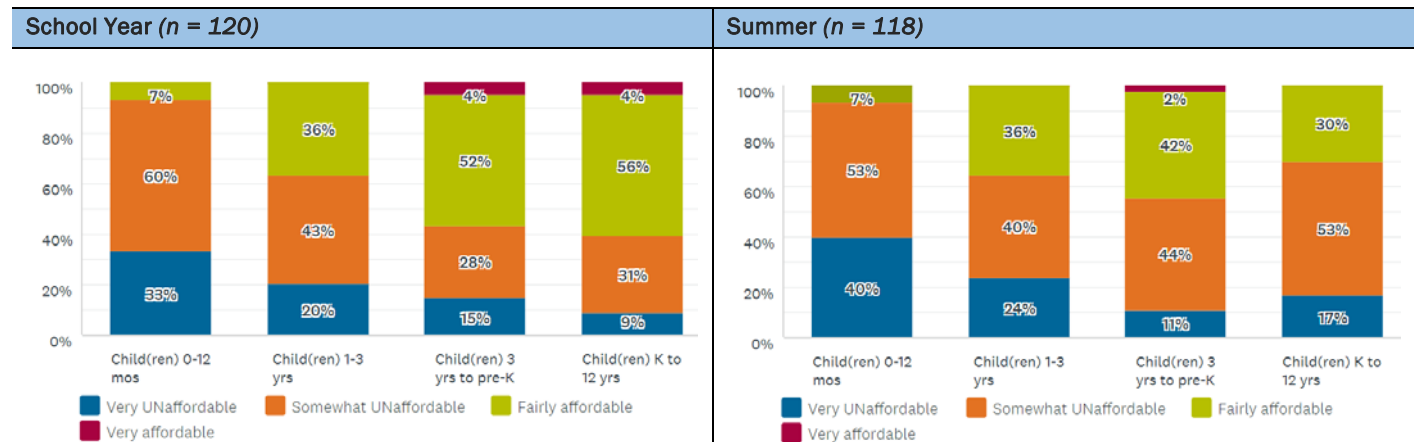


Affordability Perspectives

When asked whether they felt their monthly cost of child care per child in each category was affordable or unaffordable, the results indicate that affordability generally improves with child age in both the school year and the summer (Figure 10). This is consistent with child care pricing where the higher caregiver to child ratio for the younger age group means the price per session is higher for families. For the 20 respondents from other cultural and language groups, the results related to the affordability of care are similar to the results below for all respondents. Only six respondents with children identified or diagnosed with special needs responded to this question, therefore similarities and differences cannot be drawn.

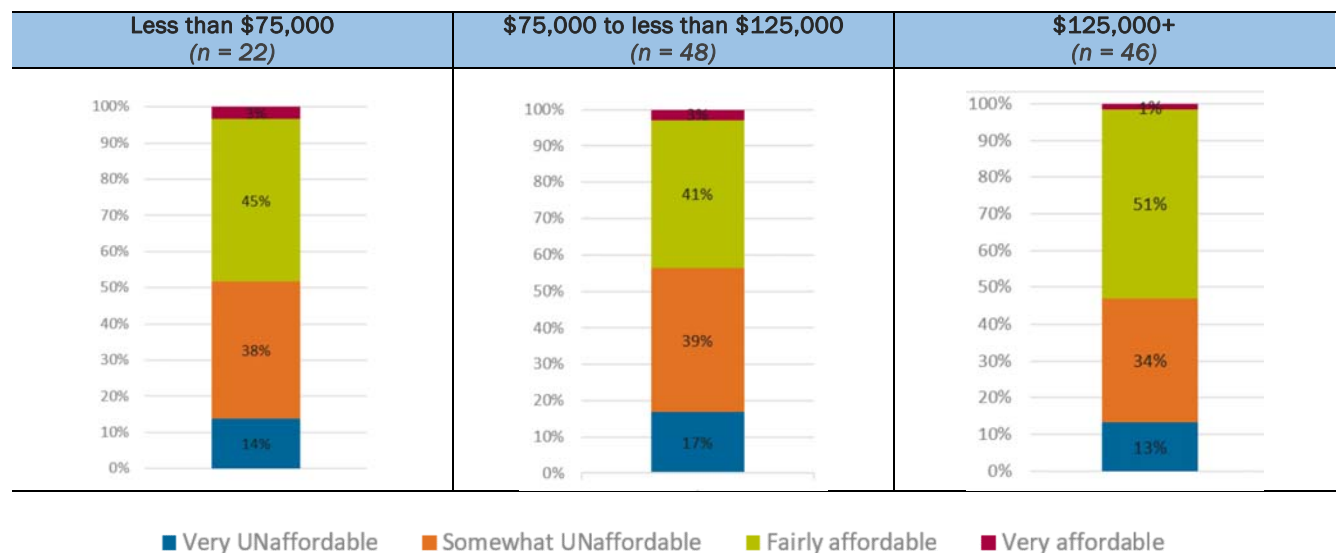
⁸ <https://mcfcd.gov.bc.ca/reporting/services/early-years/case-data-and-trends>

Figure 10 Affordability by season and age group



The results for the school year are shown in Figure 11 below for three income groupings, showing similar perceptions of affordability.

Figure 11 Affordability perception by income grouping

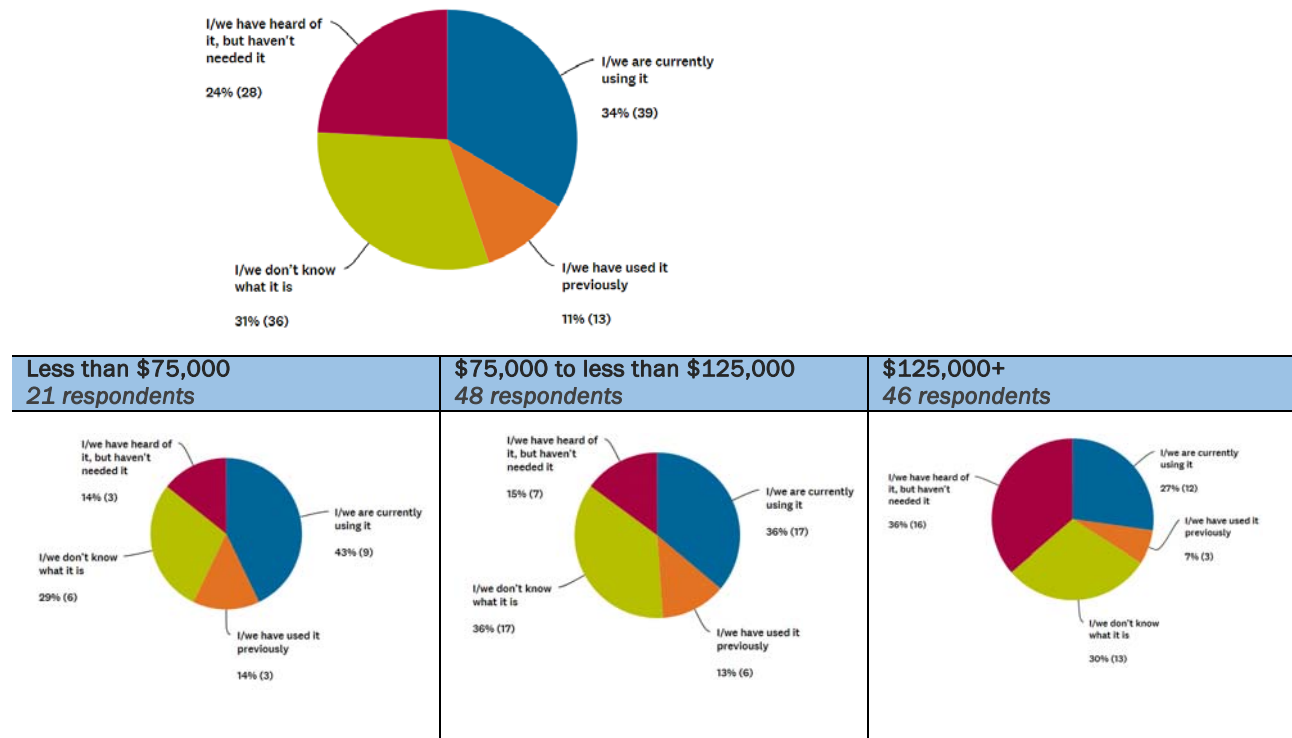


Use of the provincial Affordable Child Care Benefit is presented below for all respondents and below that, it is presented for each of the three gross income groupings (Figure 12).

Figure 12 Affordable child care benefit usage

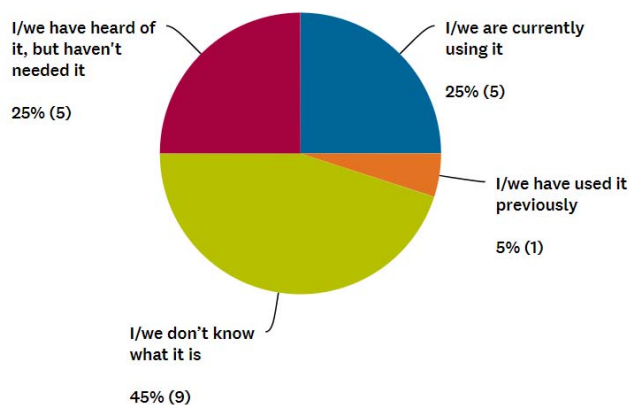
Please indicate your use of the Affordable Childcare Benefit, which is provincial funding that helps families with the cost of child care, depending on factors like family size, type of care and household income.

Answered: 116 Skipped: 125



For the 20 respondents belonging to other cultural or language groups, 45 per cent did not know about the child care benefit (Figure 13).

Figure 13 Usage and knowledge of the child care benefit by those identifying as belonging to other cultural or language groups



Quality of Care

When asked about the overall quality of care offered by their primary provider for each age group, the highest level of satisfaction was reported by parents of children from 3 years of age to pre-Kindergarten, followed by children from Kindergarten to 12 years of age, and then children from 1-3 years of age. The lowest satisfaction was reported by parents with children from 0-12 months of age (Figure 14).

Figure 14 Quality of care by age group

Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of child care provided by your current or past primary provider during the school year?

Answered: 117 Skipped: 124



When asked about quality of care related to a number of specific attributes, schedule flexibility was rated lowest satisfaction for all age groups, except where registration process received the lowest satisfaction rating for children from Kindergarten to 12 years of age (Figure 15).

Figure 15 Satisfaction with child care attributes

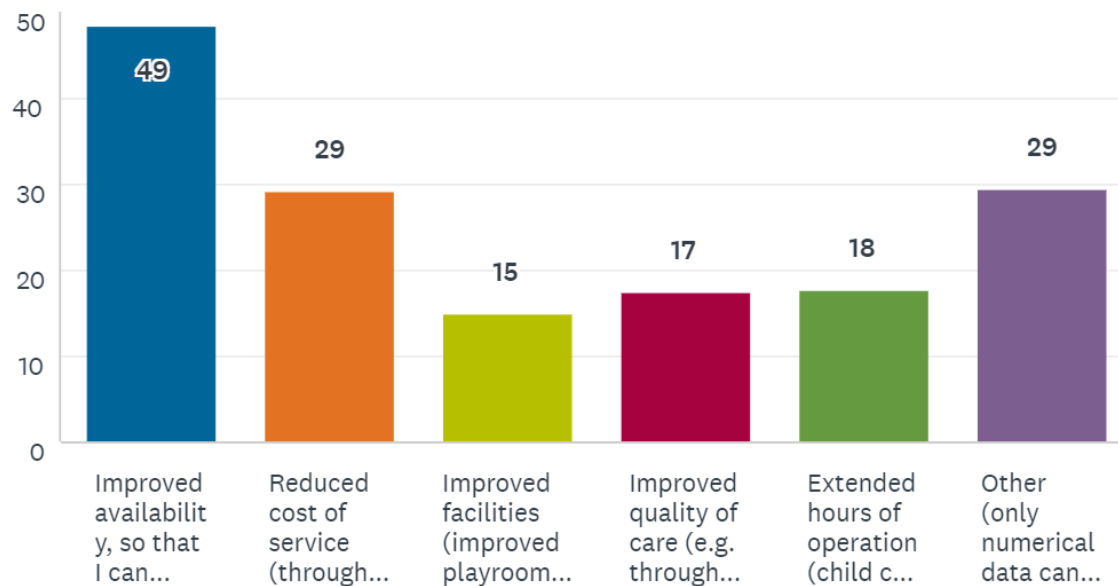


When asked about areas of dissatisfaction in an open ended question, 47 respondents provided input, with many citing Kids on the Go registration (20), affordability (8) and schedule flexibility (15) as the areas they are least satisfied with.

If I Had \$100 Dollars

Respondents were given 100 points and asked to allocate them across six categories based on where they would like to see local child care providers spend additional resources if they had them. Respondents allocated close to 50 points on average to improve child care availability (more spaces), and nearly 30 points on average were allocated to the category of reduced child care costs and 'other,' which predominantly focused on providing child care staff with affordable employee housing and higher wages (Figure 16).

Figure 16 Priority improvements



When asked to suggest ways to increase access to child care, the most responses were received in these categories:

- School schedule changes, including longer school days, longer school year and better coordinated or fewer non-instructional and early dismissal days
- New facility—enabled by government funding and/or subsidized/free land
- Increase ECE staff—streamline certification for international ECE workers, lower standards, pay living wages, and offer/improve benefits and incentives
- Increase staff who are trained to do after-school and summer care
- Enable more home-based care—lower taxes, and reduce or streamline regulations
- Engage businesses in identifying and delivering solutions
- Dedicate some Whistler Housing Authority (WHA) housing for ECE staff

When asked what else they would like to share about their current or upcoming child care situation, respondents listed affordability, availability and employment challenges most frequently.

POLICY CONTEXT ANALYSIS

The Community Child Care Planning Program requires grant recipients to carry out a review of local plans, policies and bylaws. The primary purpose of this analysis is to identify any aspects that may form barriers to the creation of licensed child care spaces in the community. The secondary purpose is to identify actions that can be taken to eliminate these barriers and encourage the creation of child care spaces and growth of services.

The delivery of child care is primarily regulated by provincial agencies who set regulations covering: indoor/outdoor space; health and safety standards; staff education/qualifications, training and certification; and insurance. Municipalities can: permit or restrict a particular business through business licensing; determine where child care facilities are permitted or prohibited through zoning; set parking requirements; provide financial support through grants or property tax exemptions; provide community space for child care programs; and operate child care programs.

After identifying key findings, this section of the report provides an overview of provincial regulations in order to identify the broader context of the B.C. regulatory framework. It then provides an in-depth analysis of RMOW policies, regulations and initiatives. The section ends with a brief overview of regional initiatives.

Identifying and documenting potential policy barriers at the provincial level was beyond the scope of the Whistler Child Care Planning Project and this report, but actions that aim to influence provincial changes are not outside of the project scope. The Action Plan and Implementation section of this report provides more information about influencing provincial policies and regulations.

Key Findings

- The biggest barriers to providing child care in Whistler relate to the ability to attract and retain qualified staff in existing facilities, as well as access to facilities (due to limited availability and cost of land and construction and lease rates).
- RMOW municipal policies and initiatives supporting child care in Whistler include the Official Community Plan (OCP), tax exemptions passed onto some of Whistler's key facility-based providers, a cost-recovery approach to programs delivered to children, and staff dedicated to delivering municipal child care programs.⁹
- RMOW residential zoning permits child care as a home occupation use, however providers would need to consider other relevant regulations.
- Whistler utilizes the zoning process to negotiate community amenities for new developments on a case by case basis to achieve community needs and address the impacts of proposed developments. OCP policies support consideration of child care facilities and space through new development.
- Provincial regulations relating to child care are in place to protect children and ensure a quality care and learning environment; they prescribe requirements related to space, caregiver training and more. Work is being done by the Province to address some of the

⁹ There are 3.5 FTE staff dedicated to delivering municipal child care programs (i.e., Kids on the Go), plus another six to eight program leaders who provide after-school care or full-time care on non-school days and in the summer.

key barriers affecting child care in Whistler and around the province, especially those related to increasing the supply of ECEs.

Provincial Regulations

The Province is currently working to increase access to affordable, quality child care in B.C. In particular, the Province is contributing \$1 billion to reduce fees for parents, build more licensed spaces, increase the number of qualified ECEs and support ECEs already working in the field. There is still work to be done to streamline the process to allow out-of-province ECE workers to more easily (less paperwork and lower cost) and quickly (less processing time) work in B.C.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development is responsible for child care and early childhood development programs and policies. Child care in B.C. is legislated under the *Child Care BC Act*, the *Child Care Subsidy Act* and *Child Care Subsidy Regulation*. The Ministry of Children and Family Development supports licensed child care providers with the costs of delivering quality child care programs, provides funding to create new licensed child care spaces, and supports low-income parents with the costs of accessing child care.

Through the ECE Registry, the Ministry of Children and Family Development is also responsible for the certification of ECEs, the investigation of practice concerns, and making decisions on an individual's right to practice, which may result in the cancellation of or placement of terms and conditions on an individual's certificate. The ECE Registry maintains the list of recognized post-secondary ECE educational programs and works with these programs to approve the educational curriculum and programs offered to students.

The Ministry of Health oversees child care licensing and monitoring and sets the minimum health and safety standards that must be met by licensed child care providers pursuant to the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* and the *Child Care Licensing Regulation*.

The Ministry of Education supports early learning programs for children aged 0-8 years, including full school-day Kindergarten for 5 year olds and Strong Start BC, which is a no-cost, drop-in, play-based early learning program facilitated by a certified ECE for children aged birth to 5 years and their parents or caregivers.

RMOW Policies, Regulations and Initiatives

Official Community Plan

Whistler's new OCP was adopted by RMOW Council on June 23, 2020. The new OCP's Health, Safety and Community Well-Being chapter (Chapter 8) includes an objective and corresponding set of policies focused on improving access to preschool and child care facilities and services (see Objective 8.9.1. and the associated policies in the text box below on the following page). This is fairly standard community policy, and 69 per cent of Metro Vancouver community OCPs also have content related to child care (Table 8). The OCP's Growth Management chapter (Chapter 4) also provides a policy that enables facilities like daycares to be located anywhere in the community, provided other requirements are met. This policy is excerpted as follows:

4.1.4.3. Policy: Community facilities, utilities, parks, schools, daycare facilities, places of worship, home occupation and live-work uses may be located anywhere within the municipality subject to municipal zoning requirements and any additional regulatory approvals and permitting criteria, giving consideration to the policies contained in this OCP.

RMOW OCP Content Relevant to Child Care

8.9.1. Objective: Improve access to preschool and childcare facilities and services.

8.9.1.1. Policy: Encourage the availability of licensed childcare facilities, including facilities providing infant care.

8.9.1.2. Policy: Support licensed childcare programs within municipal facilities.

8.9.1.3. Policy: Consider neighbourhood multi-use facilities with space for childcare programs.

8.9.1.4. Policy: Encourage development of a network of in-home family childcare with appropriate licensing, throughout the community.

8.9.1.5. Policy: Encourage new development and redevelopment to provide appropriately scaled space that may be leased at affordable rates to licensed childcare operators.

8.9.1.6. Policy: Explore opportunities to partner with School Districts No. 48 and No. 93 to provide services and incorporate childcare facilities into the design of new schools.

Whistler utilizes the zoning process to negotiate community amenities for new developments on a case by case basis to achieve community needs and address the impacts of proposed developments. OCP policies support consideration of child care facilities and space through new development.

Table 8 Municipal child care strategies, plans, policies in Metro Vancouver

Strategies/Plans/Policies on Child Care	Number of Municipalities	
	No.	%
Child Care Strategy/Policy	8 of 21	38
Child Care is addressed in OCP	16 of 20	80
Child Care is addressed in Social Plan	8 of 12	67
Child care is defined as Community Amenity	11 of 21	52

Source: Metro Vancouver, 2019 Survey of Licensed Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver (August 2019)

Zoning and Parking Bylaw

The RMOW's *Zoning and Parking Bylaw No. 303, 2015* permits facilities related to child care in a number of zones throughout the municipality. Zones where this use is permitted are:

- CC1 (Commercial Core One)
- CC2 (Commercial Core Two)
- CL1 (Commercial Local One)
- CC1-E (Commercial Core One Employee)
- CD1 (Comprehensive Development One)
- RLW-1 (Residential Live Work-One)
- RM61 (Residential Multiple Sixty-One)
- ID1 (Institutional Daycare One)
- All zones within Lands North which permit "personal services"

- RR1 (allows school)
- IC2 (allows preschool)

RMOW Development and Licencing Fees

If a child care provider wishes to rezone a property, build or renovate a space to allow for child care, there are currently no municipal fee discounts or exemptions offered in Whistler. Some municipalities are lowering their fees (e.g., rezoning, permitting and licensing fees) for child care providers. For example, a District of Squamish business licence for a child care provider has been lowered to \$1 per year. Whistler's business licence fee is currently \$190 per year; however, there is no annual licence fee charged to registered societies.

Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Policy

The RMOW *Parks and Recreation Fees and Charges Policy* (Council Policy I-06) sets out the municipality's approach to setting the costs charged for the use of municipal facilities and programs.

The overall goal of RMOW recreation program pricing (including Kids On The Go and summer camp offerings) is to recover all direct program costs from fees and charges. Facility and administration costs are not fully recovered by program fees as the RMOW Recreation Department's (not including Meadow Park Sports Centre (MPSC) and skating at Whistler Olympic Plaza) annual operating subsidy is approximately \$1.1 million funded by Whistler taxpayers.

Currently, the RMOW requires a 25 per cent deposit for its summer camps. This is intended to help with program administration and improve certainty of enrollment. However, this deposit may present a barrier to some families, especially those registering for many weeks in the summer since the resulting deposit may be relatively high depending on how many days and how many children are being registered.

As for the rental of municipal facilities, all registered non-profits (including child care operators with non-profit status) receive a 15 per cent discount on facility rental rates compared to commercial operators. This would apply to any non-profit group using the community spaces at Whistler's community schools, MPSC or other auxiliary buildings such as the Lost Lake PassivHaus and Spruce Grove Field House. Community facility rental rates were noted by some of the child care provider survey respondents as a barrier that could be reduced further or eliminated for child care and children's activity-based providers.

The Spring Creek Social Services building is currently home to Sea to Sky Community Services at no charge for the facility or the land. The organization is required to cover all operating costs associated with the building and outside areas, and is permitted to sub-lease to other non-profit social services tenants at a rate the parties agree upon. Space was recently sub-leased to the Whistler Waldorf School for its child care program at this location.

Property Tax Exemptions

Whistler Children's Centre receives a permissive tax exemption on its property, as does Sea to Sky Community Services for the Spring Creek building it leases to the Whistler Waldorf School's child care program. Teddy Bear Daycare is housed in the RMOW's Maury Young Arts Centre and the RMOW is tax exempt, so no property tax charges are passed onto this daycare. No other child care providers receive property tax exemptions.

Grants

The RMOW's Community Enrichment Program supports funding requests for various community serving organizations. These requests are considered on an annual basis and do not provide a consistent funding stream, such as is provided for under current fee-for-service agreements.

Regional Initiatives

Administered in Whistler and the Sea to Sky region by Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), the *Child Care Licensing Regulation* sets the maximum number of children in care for each of the child care types and the minimum area of indoor and outdoor space per child that is required. It also sets out other facility requirements related to the needs of each age group. VCH is currently supporting child care providers to expand from eight to 16 spaces (and the District of Squamish is working to facilitate this in its community), but the provincial building code then requires the home to be converted to a business and potentially include ramps, exit signs and removal of sliding doors.

Figure 17 Building code considerations in expanding spaces

VCH supports child care providers to expand their facilities from 8 to 16 spaces, but District of Squamish building code (provincial policy) then requires the home to be converted into a business, resulting in extensive renovations that may include:



Source: Squamish Child Care Needs Assessment

Both the District of Squamish and Village of Pemberton have undertaken child care assessment and action planning initiatives with the intent to increase access to child care in their communities. The District of Squamish was also successful in securing a provincial grant worth nearly \$1 million to develop a new child care facility. These initiatives are important to note given that many Squamish and Pemberton residents work in Whistler; if their child care needs can be met in their communities, this will allow Whistler to focus on meeting the child care needs of Whistler residents.

FUTURE CHILD CARE NEEDS AND CHILD CARE SPACE TARGETS

The Community Child Care Planning Program requires grant recipients to identify short-term (one to two years), medium-term (two to five years) and long-term (five to ten years) space creation targets that will meet the community's licensed child care space needs. In particular, reports must identify:

- the number of licensed child care spaces that are required to meet the identified need;
- the child care age groups and licence types that are most in demand, and how many licensed spaces in each age group and licence type are needed to meet this demand;
- where new spaces need to be located to best meet families' needs;
- the number of new spaces that need to be flexible (i.e., offered outside of regular business hours); and
- the number of spaces that can be created using public assets.

Setting targets helps to provide direction and clarity for action planning and implementation. Targets also capture intentions and provided a benchmark against which efforts to improve access to child care can be assessed. The RMOW recognizes that it will be important to take incremental steps to create new spaces. It will also be important to monitor the targets provided in this section of the report as well as the ongoing needs and ideals of the community, especially in light of the COVID-19 situation.

This section of the report first presents projections for Whistler's population under three scenarios (decline, flat and growth), for both total as well as age-specific populations for children aged 0-12 years in Whistler. It then discusses Whistler's current overall access rate and presents future targets for the overall rate. This section then discusses Whistler's current age-specific access rates and presents future targets by age category. This section concludes by presenting a table that shows the extra spaces required based on the access rate targets and the growth scenarios.

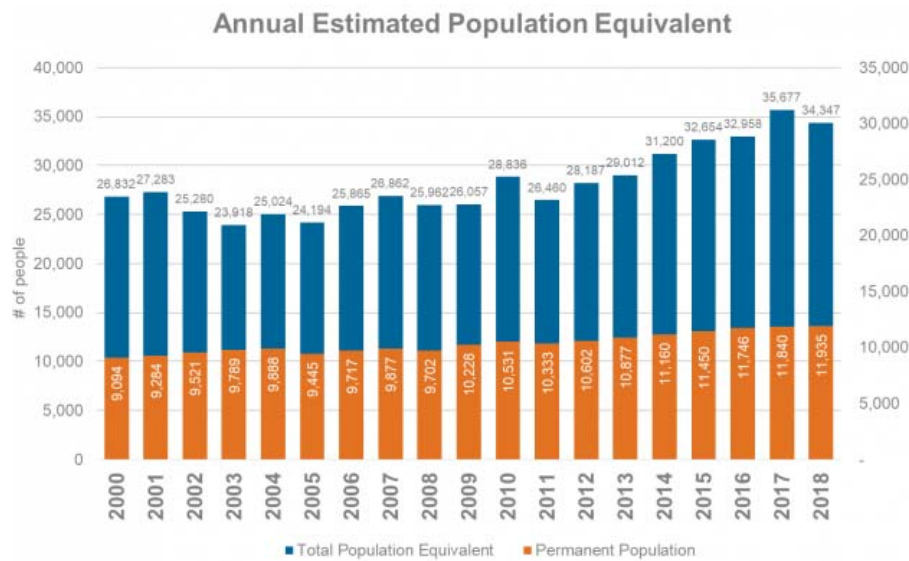
Population Growth Scenarios

Before identifying the number of licensed child care spaces that are required in Whistler in the future, it is first necessary to estimate the projected number of children in Whistler over the short- to long-term planning horizons.

As of 2018, Whistler's permanent population (orange bar below) was 11,935 (Figure 18). Although visitors to Whistler do make some use of Whistler's child care spaces, particularly the occasional care and activity-based program offerings, the Whistler Child Care Planning Project is to focus on the child care needs of the community's permanent population.¹⁰

¹⁰ Whistler's population equivalent includes permanent residents, seasonal residents and the average number of visitors in Whistler on any given day.

Figure 18 Whistler's annual estimated population equivalent



An analysis of Whistler's population trends shows that Whistler has experienced significant growth since 2001 and this growth is projected to continue into the future (Figure 19). In particular, existing modelling conducted for the SLRD Regional Growth Strategy projected a 2% growth rate between 2016 and 2021 and a 1.6% growth rate between 2016 and 2031.

Figure 19 Population projections for Whistler, 2001-2036

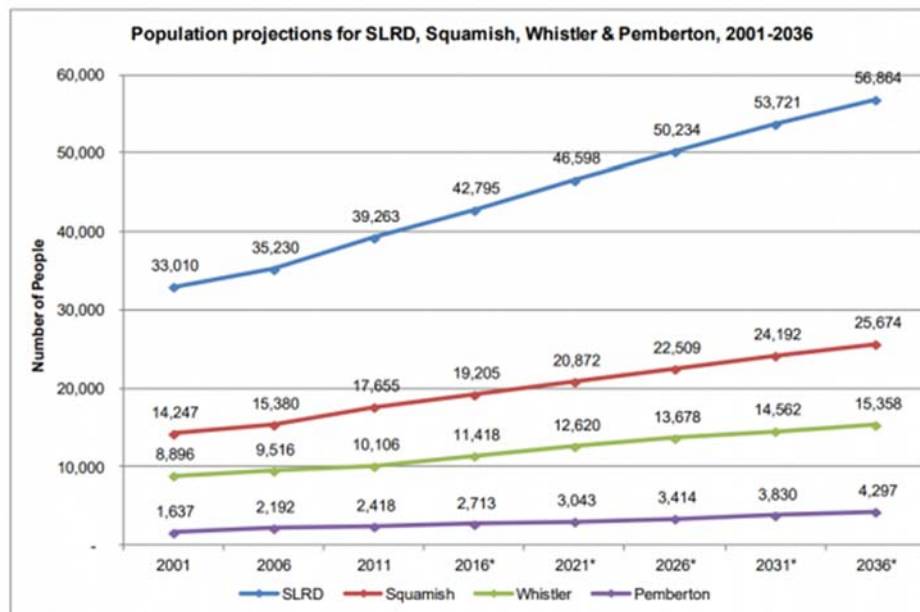


Figure 6: Population Projections for SLRD, Squamish, Whistler, and Pemberton 2001-2036
Source: Urbanics Consultants Ltd. & Census 2006 & NHJS 2011

As a first step, three growth scenarios were developed for the purposes of the Whistler Child Care Planning Project based on historic trends. These scenarios are: 1) growth scenario, with a projected average annual growth rate of 2% per year; 2) flat scenario, with a 0% growth rate; and 3) decline scenario, representing a decrease in the current child care age population of 1% per year. The projections provide for a range of potential outcomes and need to be carefully

monitored and considered over time. Essentially, future growth scenarios must consider the extent to which the current child care age population will age out of this group over time, and the extent to which there will be new births and in-migration that will replace or grow the current number. The method employed for the projections in Figure 20 and Table 9 used the 2017 MSP cardholder counts for children aged 0 to 12 years in Whistler as a base and then projected to 2030 using the three growth scenarios. There are no other variables included in this base projection, such as local development growth or other local drivers. A more detailed/accurate estimate may become available through the population projection work being done to support the RMOW Strategic Planning Committee.

Figure 20 presents the age population projections for each of these growth scenarios for children aged 0-12 years in Whistler.

Figure 20 Age population growth scenarios

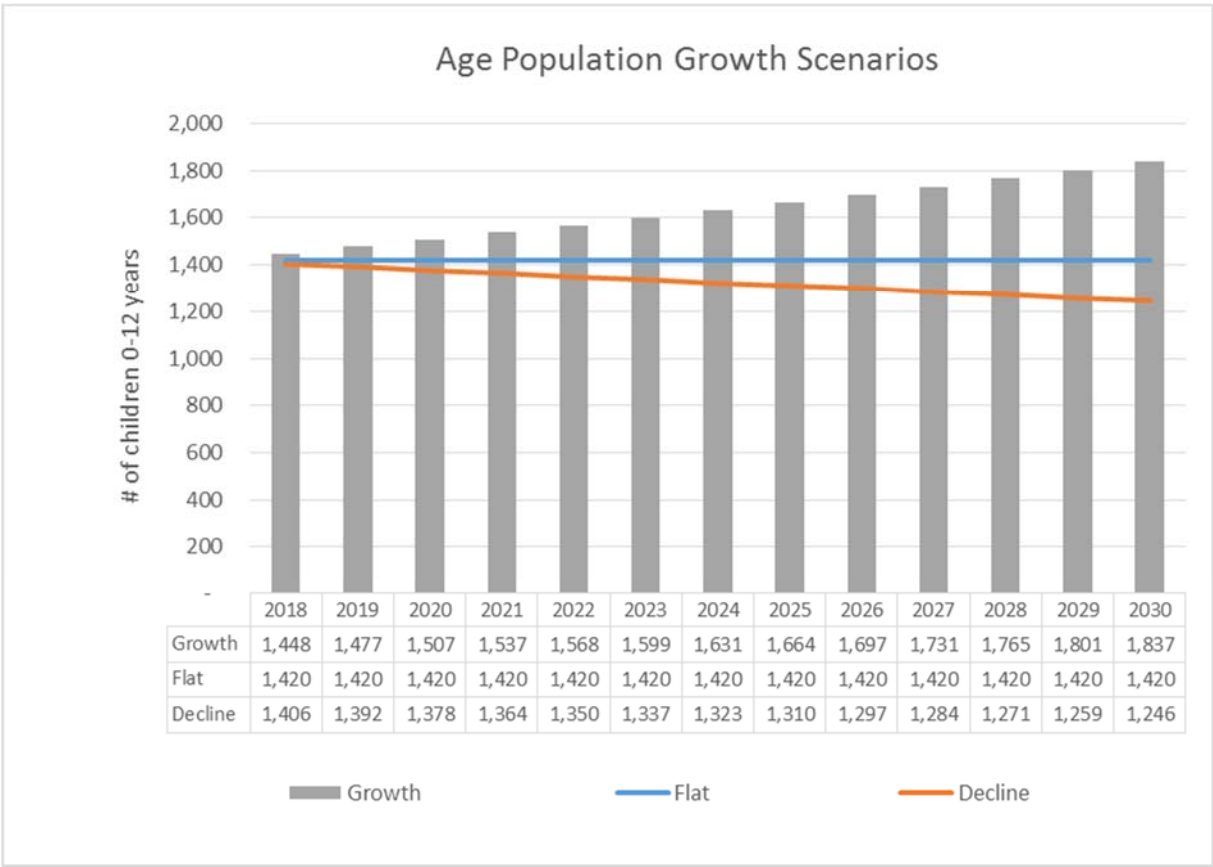


Table 9 presents age population projections for each of these growth scenarios for the more refined age categories of 0-2 years, 3-5 years and 5-12 years. For added clarity, ages distributed over these categories are as follows: the 0-2 year age category is 0-35 months of age; the 3-5 years category is 36 months to 5.5 years of age; and the 5-12 years category is 5.5 to 12 years of age.

Table 9 Age population projections for growth scenarios

Years	Age Categories			Total 0-12
	0-2	3-5	5-12	
Base Scenario—Using 2017 MSP Cardholder Counts for Children Aged 0 to 12 Years in Whistler				
2017	331	268	821	1,420
Flat Scenario				
2020	331	268	821	1,420
2025	331	268	821	1,420
2030	331	268	821	1,420
Decline Scenario				
2020	321	260	796	1,378
2025	305	247	757	1,310
2030	290	235	720	1,246
Growth Scenario				
2020	351	285	871	1,507
2025	388	314	962	1,664
2030	428	347	1062	1,837

Overall Access Rate: Current and Future Targets

As presented in the Access Rate section of this report, there are an estimated 14.3 licensed full-time child care spaces per 100 children aged 0-12 in Whistler. This access rate is below most other neighbouring communities in the Sea to Sky region as well as some comparable rural communities outside the region. Further, recent reviews by the Ministry of Children and Family Development for Whistler's health area identify general difficulties finding care for children 0-3 years of age, and waitlists at Whistler child care operations for this same age group are long. Finally, the parent survey indicates a care need for all children; most immediately for those aged 0-3 years and secondly after-school care for school-aged children.

In light of the COVID-19 situation, it will be most important in the short-term to maintain the *status quo*; in the short-term, work should focus on maintaining existing spaces in the community and supporting existing child care providers to remain in operation. In the longer-term, maintaining the *status quo* access rate of 14.3 would likely continue to challenge Whistler families and businesses. After considering the current COVID-19 situation, the provincial average of 18, regional benchmarks, neighbouring community targets¹¹ and the unique challenges and opportunities in Whistler and the suite of actions available, the following overall targets are recommended for Whistler:

- Short-term (2022): Maintain the *status quo* access rate of 14.3
- Medium-term (2025): Increase the access rate to 17 spaces per 100 children aged 0-12 years

¹¹ Pemberton has set a moderate target of 18.2 by 2023 and an ambitious target of 25 by 2023. Squamish has set a reach target of 30 by 2023, though this is in the process of being reviewed and potentially refined to a 2030 timeline.

- Long-term (2030): Increase the access rate to 24 spaces per 100 children aged 0-12 years

The recommended long-term overall access rate of 24 is viewed as being an aspirational goal for the Whistler community as it is a higher rate than other communities in the Sea to Sky region and other resort communities in B.C.

Age-Specific Access Rates: Current and Future Targets

As discussed in the Access Rate section of this report, while Whistler's overall current access rate is 14.3, the rate differs when looking at specific age ranges within the community. The following are the current access rates by age category in Whistler:

- Age 0-35 months, access rate of 11
- Age 3-5 years, access rate of 41
- Age 5-12 years, access rate of 7

Similar to the overall access rate discussion, in light of the COVID-19 situation, it will most important in the short-term to maintain the *status quo*. However, maintaining the *status quo* in the long-term would likely continue to challenge Whistler families and businesses. Considering all factors, the following age-specific targets are recommended for Whistler:

- Age 0-35 months:
 - Short-term (2022): Maintain the *status quo* access rate of 11
 - Medium-term (2025): Increase the access rate to 20
 - Long-term (2030): Increase the access rate to 30
- Age 3-5 years:
 - Short-term (2022): Maintain the *status quo* access rate of 41
 - Medium-term (2025): Increase the access rate to 42
 - Long-term (2030): Increase the access rate to 45
- Age 5-12 years:
 - Short-term (2022): Maintain the *status quo* access rate of 7
 - Medium-term (2025): Increase the access rate to 8
 - Long-term (2030): Increase the access rate to 14

As illustrated by the recommended access rates by age category above, the Whistler community will focus on the 0-3 year age category in the medium-term. The parent and provider surveys and stakeholder workshops indicate that this is the age category in the community with the most unmet demand. A lower access rate for the 5-12 years age category is deemed appropriate as there is significant programming in the community for this age group. Finally, it is felt that there is not much room for growth in the 3-5 year age group and that community efforts are better focused on the 0-3 year category.

Number of Spaces to Meet Access Rates

Using the population projections and future access rate targets, it is possible to determine the number of licensed child care spaces that are required to meet the identified potential need in the future for the range of population growth projections utilized. The total spaces and extra spaces required for each age category by 2025 and 2030 are identified in Table 10.

Table 10 Number of spaces required based on population growth scenarios and access rates

Total Spaces												
	2020				2025				2030			
Access Rate	14	11	41	7	17	20	42	8	24	30	45	14
	Spaces				Spaces				Spaces			
Population Growth*	All	0-2	3-5	5-12	All	0-2	3-5	5-12	All	0-2	3-5	5-12
Decline	205	36	110	59	226	61	104	61	294	87	106	101
Flat	205	36	110	59	244	66	113	66	335	99	121	115
Growth	205	36	110	59	286	78	132	77	433	128	156	149
Extra Spaces Required												
	2020				2025				2030			
Access Rate	14.3				17				24			
	+ Spaces				+ Spaces				+ Spaces			
Population Growth*	All	0-2	3-5	5-12	All	0-2	3-5	5-12	All	0-2	3-5	5-12
Decline	-	-	-	-	21	25	-6	2	89	51	-4	42
Flat	-	-	-	-	39	30	3	7	130	63	11	56
Growth	-	-	-	-	81	42	22	18	228	92	46	90

*The population scenarios are: 1) growth scenario, with a projected 2% average annual growth rate; 2) flat scenario, with a 0% annual average growth rate; and 3) decline scenario, with a -1% average annual rate of decrease.

The results of the projections and targets selected for 2025 and 2030 bracket a range of potential space requirements. For 2025, to achieve an increase in the access rate from 14.3 to 17 spaces per 100 children would require 21 additional spaces under the population decline scenario, 39 spaces if the child care age population remained the same as the current population, and 81 spaces if population growth continued at two per cent per year, beyond the current child care age population. For 2030, and an access rate target of 24 spaces, the number of new spaces required increases significantly, ranging from 89 spaces for the population decline scenario to 130 spaces for the flat scenario and 228 spaces for the growth scenario. In percentage terms over the next 10 years, these additions represent increases of 43 per cent, 63 per cent, and 111 per cent beyond the current licensed capacity of 205 spaces.

Future Considerations

Future planning initiatives and engagement will be required to consider factors such as: where new spaces need to be located to best meet families' needs; the number of new spaces that need to be flexible; and the number of spaces that can be created using public assets. These and other considerations are included as part of the action plan presented in the next section of this report. In particular, a key action that will be carried out is a review of the availability and suitability of existing facilities (municipal and non-municipal) to better understand opportunities to locate child care in them before considering the need to build a new facility (action 23).

Additionally, the provincial priority of affordable child care and increased access means that even with a stable population mix of children from birth to 12 years of age, the demand for child

care in Whistler will likely grow¹². By illustration, if the Province introduces low-cost child care, just over 60 per cent of parent survey respondents indicated that they would increase their use of child care as a result of the improved affordability; the average increase in child care need was about 2.5 days. Monitoring provincial initiatives related to reduced pricing models is included in the action plan (action 28).

¹² Quebec's child care access rate (with \$10/day daycare) is 37. B.C.'s current access rate is 18. As such, Quebec offers approximately double the supply than B.C. (source: Municipal Survey of Child Care Space and Policies in Vancouver).

ACTION PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Community Child Care Planning Program requires grant recipients to identify short-term (one to two years), medium-term (two to five years), and long-term (five to ten years) actions that the local government and community will take to meet licensed space creation targets and improve access to child care services within the community. These actions are to focus on a number of topics including meeting specified targets, meeting the needs of underserved populations, leveraging public assets, engaging further with community stakeholders and seeking support from external agencies. The Community Child Care Planning Program also encourages grant recipients to consider other factors like helping to increase the number of ECEs serving the community in coming years and trends related to the affordability of child care in the community.

Prior to presenting the action plan that meets the above requirements, this section of the report first identifies two other considerations that informed the Whistler Child Care Planning Project's action planning process. It then presents the action plan developed through stakeholder engagement. This section concludes by presenting information on implementation of the action plan and related considerations.

Recent Achievements in Whistler

It is important to note that Whistler has a strong foundation of quality child care providers and a considerable diversity of offerings—with much to build on moving forward. Additionally, a number of providers have recently stepped up to help meet the current child care needs of our community. The Whistler Waldorf School opened its new program in Spring Creek in December 2019 and added 16 new spaces for children 30 months to school-age. In September 2019, the Whistler Racket Club (in collaboration with the RMOW) started an after-school program for up to 24 children three days per week. Whistler Sport Legacies began offering after-school care for Kindergarten and Grade 1 children at Spring Creek Community School on Mondays and Wednesdays for the 2019-2020 school year; the program filled on the Wednesdays, but not Mondays. Further, Whistler Sport Legacies recent rezoning of its parcel of land in Cheakamus Crossing provided for use of existing housing as a priority for essential workers with child care workers among them.

Other Considerations Informing the Action Planning Process

The information provided in the previous sections of this report laid the foundation for the action planning process. In addition, two other considerations informed the Whistler Child Care Planning Project's action planning process: the identification of challenges and opportunities by stakeholders; and an analysis of 2018 Regional Child Care Forum actions. These other two considerations are discussed below.

Challenges and Opportunities

To inform action planning, challenges and opportunities were identified and then prioritized by the child care stakeholders convened for the workshops in February 2020. The prioritized lists of challenges and opportunities are presented below.

Prioritized List of Challenges

The key challenges that affect Whistler's ability to increase access to child care spaces include:

- barriers to the recognition of out-of-province and international ECE training/certification;

- barriers to home-based options that may include the cost and size of homes and outdoor areas, and lack of information about how to open a home-based care operation;
- staffing challenges such as attracting qualified ECE staff to rural areas, and providing attractive wages, benefits and incentives;
- extra training/qualifications for infant-toddler staff make it harder to attract this critical staff group.
- staff housing challenges;
- limited hours for after-school staffing makes it hard to attract staff to these positions¹³;
- registration procedure administration and fairness;
- administration costs for programs and facilities;
- transporting children to some facilities (e.g., Whistler Sport Legacies facilities); and

Prioritized List of Opportunities

The key opportunities that might help Whistler’s ability to increase access to child care spaces include:

- facility funding/new space creation grants from the Province;
- modular buildings;
- school ground locations for new facilities;
- lease changes to existing users to allow options for more child care after or during school hours;
- School District No. 48 (SD48) revised demographic data for future forecasting initiatives; and
- large pool of 20-30 year olds working in other recreation instruction programs to draw from for child care staffing.

Analysis of 2018 Regional Child Care Forum Actions

A 2018 Regional Child Care Forum in Metro Vancouver brought together local government child care planners, health authority regulators and provincial policy makers to consider actions for increasing child care supply¹⁴. These ideas are summarized below with a note indicating whether they already exist in Whistler or were considered as part of the action review process for this needs assessment:

¹³ After-school staffing only provides three hours of work.

¹⁴ 2019 Survey of Licensed Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver.

Table 11 Analysis of 2018 Regional Child Care Forum Actions

Area	Action Categories	Examples	Considered or Existing
Local Government Tools	Child care strategy	Goals, targets, policy suggestions	Yes
	Needs assessment	Demographic review, survey and other	Yes
	Local government guidance for new providers	Step-by-step guides on how to set-up a child care offering	No, provided by VCH; not the biggest barrier for home care
	Incentives	Floor area exemptions, property tax exemptions, low cost space	Yes
Operational Aspects	Operator design	Involving operators in the design of spaces	Yes
	Staff recruitment and retention	Determining ways to recruit and retain staff	Yes
	Pick up and drop off times	Consider operational challenges with care timing (e.g., aftercare times/ weekend care)	Yes
Designing and Building Child Care Spaces	Underused spaces	Surplus school district space, club houses or other	Yes
	Coordinate building application review	Streamline review with other agencies to make it easier for developing spaces	N/A
Funding New Spaces	Child care as an amenity	Community amenity contributions/density bonusing	Yes
	Child care in new developments	Asking developers to building child care facilities	Yes

Whistler Child Care Project Action Plan

The actions presented here were developed with input from child care stakeholders during a February 2020 workshop and then refined by the RMOW and WCS with additional stakeholder input for further insight and refinement. In addition to the actions, the table also includes: a brief explanation of the background or rationale for each action; the key partners that will be involved in the implementation of the action; additional considerations regarding the action; and the timeframe for implementing the action.

The actions focus on two key areas of greatest need and the largest service gaps in Whistler, as follows: (A) after-school care for school-age children; and (B) full-time, facility-based group care for children 0 to 3 years of age. There is general agreement among stakeholder participants that the assets, partnerships, programs, policies and facilities enabling the current provision of child care need to be maintained and built on with the actions below, leveraging existing opportunities to the greatest extent possible.

A: After-school care for school-age children

Action	Rationale	Key Partners	Considerations	Timeframe
Facilities, Transportation and Providers				
1. Explore the barriers to after-school home care programs, remove barriers and communicate the options to potential providers.	Home-based care programs may be able to scale-up and down quickly to match child care demand, yet Whistler presently has only one home-based provider.	Sea to Sky Community Services: Child Care Resource & Referral Program; RMOW	Barriers are not related to the Zoning Bylaw or other planning regulations; the RMOW can improve communications on its website.	Short-term (one to two years)
2. Consider prioritizing access to community facilities for child care based after-school programs (2:40-5:45 p.m.).	Current aftercare programs are required to offer shorter sessions to accommodate the facility use by other community groups. The shorter sessions exclude many families that require care until 5:30-6 p.m. If access, was prioritized it would allow programs to service more families' care needs.	RMOW	May require Council endorsement/ support to formalize accordingly.	Medium-term (two to five years)
3. Consider opportunities to lower the facility costs for private child care/child activities operators.	Reducing facility rental costs or taxes for private or non-profit operators may reduce the need to expand municipal programs, help to ensure lower cost programs for families and support more viable operations.	RMOW	Explore providing some tax exemptions to all private facilities offering after-school child care. Explore offering RMOW space at a price that is similar to the rate paid by municipal programs (e.g., Kids on the Go).	Medium-term (two to five years)
4. Facilitate increased access to SD48 and School District No. 93 school/ community spaces (e.g., gyms, kitchens, music rooms, art rooms, libraries) for after-school activity or group care programs.	Facilities are often available after school and hosting aftercare programs in school facilities ensures a seamless transition for students and eliminates the need for specialized staff to transport children to other locations in Whistler.	RMOW	The gyms are available at Myrtle Philip and Spring Creek Monday/ Wednesday/Friday after school. All other spaces are currently booked at this time, but could be used in the future if anything changes. It may be possible to share spaces with after-school intermural activities.	Short-term (one to two years)

Action	Rationale	Key Partners	Considerations	Timeframe
5. Explore other institutional or private facilities within walking distance (1 km) of schools that might be able to host afterschool care programs.	Hosting aftercare programs near school facilities ensures a seamless transition for students and eliminates the need for specialized staff to transport children to other locations in Whistler. Examples include: Tennis Club, Churches, Passive House and Youth Centre for 10-12 year olds.	RMOW	Part of review of existing facilities (action 22).	Short-term (one to two years)
6. Coordinate the addition of after-school facilities and programs to help foster well-subscribed and successful new ventures.	Due to the variety of facilities, shorter care hours and potential diversity of providers, launching new aftercare programs in a coordinated fashion will help to ensure adequate participation rates for programs.	RMOW, Whistler Chamber, Whistler Sport Legacies		Short-term (one to two years)
7. Encourage additional weekend care programs for school-aged children in the summer.	Most of the group care and summer activity programs operate on a Monday to Friday schedule, yet many families work weekends and require some care.	Whistler Chamber		Short-term (one to two years)
8. Encourage Whistler recreation and arts program groups using municipal facilities to shift and extend their activity schedules to facilitate seamless after-school care.	Many children are already attending after-school programs that might start anywhere from 15 minutes to 1.5 hours after school. Aligning program start schedules and seamless transportation to programs would help provide continuous care, may increase program revenues for providers and may expose more children to the activity.	RMOW and groups such as Whistler Soccer, Gymnastics, Whistler Nordics, WORCA; Figure Staking		Short-term (one to two years)
9. Collaborate with BC Transit and SD48 to help facilitate afterschool		RMOW and SD48		Medium-term (two to five years)

Action	Rationale	Key Partners	Considerations	Timeframe
transportation to various after-school care programs.				
10. Create a tip sheet to help activity providers align with child care regulations and request that guidelines are modernized as needed.	Activity-based children's programming is exempt from the <i>Child Care BC Act</i> and allows for more flexibility in facilities, length of care, etc. This flexibility makes it easier to start-up and adjust to families' care needs.	VCH, Sea to Sky Community Services: Child Care Resource & Referral Program	Licence more child care activity providers as it is a relatively straightforward process and it could enhance the quality of care.	Medium-term (two to five years)
11. Centralize all after-school child care programming and registration through the RMOW recreation system.	This action will simplify the booking process for users and reduce the investment in IT infrastructure required for third party providers.	RMOW		Medium-term (two to five years)
Programs and Staffing				
12. Develop and launch a recruitment campaign to attract retired community members to work or volunteer in after-school care.	Aftercare staff are generally only needed for 2-3 hours per shift which makes it harder to attract staff requiring full-time employment. There may be retired residents interested in giving back or working for only a few hours per day.	Whistler Mature Action Community; RMOW		Medium-term (two to five years)
13. Fund one FTE recreation programmer if the RMOW was to offer an incremental Kids on the Go program at Spring Creek Community School.	This action needs to be coordinated with the facility action to collaborate on school/community facility use. Hosting aftercare programs at school facilities ensures a seamless transition for students and eliminates the need for specialized staff to transport children to other locations in Whistler. Afterschool care at Spring Creek Community School	RMOW	The RMOW can offer more programming and/or facilitate others to provide programming (e.g., RMOW branded programs run by third parties or perhaps the RMOW focuses on younger Kindergarten to Grade 3 programs and other providers focus on Grade 3 to 4).	Medium-term (two to five years)

Action	Rationale	Key Partners	Considerations	Timeframe
	could also be offered by others agencies such as Whistler Sport Legacies or AWARE. Licensing requirements might be an issue for any shared space.			
Other				
14. Attract/create funding for operations and not just capital.	Capital funding is often needed and may be accessible to develop facilities, however the ongoing facility costs or operations costs can make child care unaffordable. Funding these costs can make operations more viable and affordable.	RMOW	Both the federal and provincial funding programs offset costs for parents already.	Long-term (five to ten years)
15. Host special needs training so that caregivers can better support children with behavioural, mental and physical challenges.		Providers, coordinated with WASP		Medium-term (two to five years)
16. Advocate for increased funding to support special needs children requiring additional staff support.		MLA Jordan Sturdy's Office; Whistler Chamber; RMOW; providers		Medium-term (two to five years)
17. Coordinate with WASP to provide support to special needs program participants.	In cases, it may be possible for some local children in WASP programs to join in with activity provider care programs if a WASP volunteer/staff member joins in. This could help with the goal of inclusion.	After-school providers		Short-term (one to two years)
Not Prioritized				
Aftercare staff are prioritized on the WHA waitlist as an essential service.	Important consideration for all child care staff, but the group feels that	RMOW and WHA		Long-term (five to ten years)

Action	Rationale	Key Partners	Considerations	Timeframe
	ECE staff with younger children should be prioritized. (Covered by group B)			

B: Full-time, facility-based group care for children ages 0-3 years of age

Action	Rationale	Key Partners	Considerations	Timeframe
Staffing				
18. Continue to work with the ECE Registry to streamline the process involved in recognizing inter-provincial and international ECE training so these ECE qualified people can work as soon as possible in B.C.	There are ECE-trained people who are ready and willing to work, but the process to have their training/certification from other jurisdictions recognized in B.C. is time-consuming, lengthy and expensive.	MLA Jordan Sturdy's Office; Whistler Chamber	The MLA's office has been working with the Ministry on this issue and continues to address the need for a "pre-approved" institute list plus a response time reflective of the "on the ground demand" to help streamline the application process and get skilled ECE staff into roles.	Medium-term (two to five years)
19. Communicate and continue to provide exemptions to allow ECE-trained people from other jurisdictions to begin working before they receive their B.C. certification so long as they are enrolled in the necessary ECE program(s).	This would be an interim step that could help get more ECEs working while the steps are taken to streamline the B.C. certification (as above).	VCH, Medical Health Officer; MLA's office can assist with encouraging this approach to both VCH and the Ministry.		Short-term (one to two years)
20. Explore ways to offer ECE training locally in Whistler and/or the region.	Travel expenses and the inconvenience of taking ECE training in other communities is currently a barrier to Whistler ECEs when it comes to upgrading and recertifying as needed.	Whistler Learning Centre; Whistler Chamber; MLA's office can assist to bring training closer to Whistler.	Squamish is considering evenings/weekends and the Capilano University and Squamish partnership. Tszil Learning Centre at Lil'wat could also be an option.	Medium-term (two to five years)
21. Explore options to fund ECE staff training, benefits/perks (e.g., ski or	Whistler businesses benefit from the availability of staff (Whistler parents) who can work when	Whistler Chamber; providers	RMOW may be able to offer transit and/or recreation passes if asked and if approved by Council.	Short-term (one to two years)

Action	Rationale	Key Partners	Considerations	Timeframe
recreation passes) and improved wages, considering pooled resources from Whistler businesses.	there is adequate access to child care, which requires that Whistler attract and retain ECE staff. Currently, ECE positions are not as attractive as some other employment in Whistler. More could be done by Whistler businesses to support the attractiveness of ECE positions.			
22. Prioritize ECE child care staff for some units in new WHA rental developments.	Securing housing for ECE staff is a critical element to attracting them to Whistler into ECE positions and to retaining them.	RMOW and WHA	Consider this on a project-by-project basis.	Medium-term (two to five years)
Facilities				
23. Review availability and suitability of existing facilities (municipal and non-municipal) to better understand opportunities to locate child care in them before considering the need to build a new facility.	There may be existing facilities that are suitable to address Whistler's child care needs. These should be more fully explored first before new buildings are considered.	RMOW	Suitability criteria should include locations close to schools/jobs and quality indoor and outdoor environments critical to children.	Short-term (one to two years)
24. Refine and review the current and future demand for the 0-3 age group, including reviewing the projections.		RMOW		Short-term (one to two years)
25. Examine licensing regulations (related to space requirements, ratios, etc.) and explore innovative space-sharing permissions to reduce the barriers to child	The costs related to child care spaces are a barrier to providers going into business and making ends meet once they are in business—and to passing on savings to parents or as increased wages.	VCH; MLA's office can assist VCH and the Ministry on the review of the regulations	Early discussions have been had, but this is viewed as a long-term approach.	Long-term (five to ten years)

Action	Rationale	Key Partners	Considerations	Timeframe
care space creation.				
26. Explore the feasibility of modular building options to provide child care space for the 0-3 age group, and if feasible, explore potential locations, including SD48 sites.	Modular buildings (as SD48 has used on school sites for classrooms) could be a more affordable way to increase the number of child care spaces in Whistler so long as the staffing challenges can be addressed at the same time.	SD48 and providers; RMOW supports with permitting and other regulatory requirements as required		Medium-term (two to five years)
27. Consider potential for new or expanded facilities associated with new residential developments.	New residential developments may create demand for additional spaces and facilities may be integrated within the development.	RMOW	Suitability of location, capital funding and ongoing operating costs.	Medium-term (two to five years)
Other Actions—Related to affordability, underserved children, etc.				
28. Monitor opportunities to provide reduced pricing models in Whistler and work to secure these models if opportunities arise.	\$10/day programs are being piloted in B.C. Whistler should monitor this opportunity and try to secure it if possible.	Whistler Chamber		Short-term (one to two years)
29. Align child care operation waitlists, enrollment and other monitoring data to provide better information for decision-making.	Child care operators currently track waitlist and enrollment data somewhat differently and not always to the detail required to support planning.	RMOW		Short-term (one to two years)
Not Prioritized				
Explore integrating ECE learning into high school (curriculum and volunteers).		RMOW; SD48		Medium-term (two to five years)
Make space available at municipal facilities at below market rates allowing child care providers to transfer saving to increased wages.		RMOW		Medium-term (two to five years)
For home-based care, improve		Sea to Sky Community Services:	There is the potential that encouraging	Short-term (one to two years)

Action	Rationale	Key Partners	Considerations	Timeframe
understanding of barriers and better communicate the opportunity to potential home-based providers.		Child Care Resource & Referral Program	more home-based offerings could pull existing staff from facility-based providers.	
Explore opportunities for establishing inter-generational programs, whereby seniors interact with children from child care and recreation programs.		Whistler Mature Action Community		Short-term (one to two years)
Prioritize child care facilities as a community amenity when negotiating agreements with developers.		RMOW		Short-term (one to two years)

In addition to the actions above, there are a few key assets that should be maintained to help ensure the continuation and functioning of current after-school care offerings. This list presents some of these key items, but is not exhaustive:

- recent wage increases that improve the attractiveness of child care and help to retain staff;
- joint-use agreements between SD48 and the RMOW that allow for community facility use; and
- bus transportation from Spring Creek Community School that allow children to get to various after-school programs.

Implementation

The Community Child Care Planning Program requires grant recipients to consider the implementation requirements for developed action plans. In particular, it is necessary for local governments to identify: the internal resources and capacity needed to implement the plan; the supports required from external organizations to achieve space creation targets; and the continued engagement plan with stakeholders, including parents and child care providers, in meeting space creation targets.

The targets and actions presented in this report provide a sense of direction for Whistler moving forward—and implementation will require the efforts and contributions of all child care stakeholders in the community.

It is important to note that the actions will be considered for implementation by the various key partners. Actions that require significant resources will need to be weighed against other priorities and then pursued if resources are available and opportunities arise. The balancing of priorities is especially important in light of the COVID-19 situation.

Regarding any role the RMOW may play in implementation with key partners, the actions and targets will be used to inform and will in turn be refined through other research and planning

initiatives, including the RMOW's Strategic Planning Committee, the Recreation Department's annual work plans, and corporate budgeting.

Beyond integration into existing initiatives, key partners have agreed in principle that they will collaborate to reconvene the Child Care Working Group to further the efforts to review, refine and prioritize actions for implementation on an ongoing basis. This could be supported by the RMOW taking a coordinating role. Dedicating staff resources to this effort, will also need to be considered through the annual budgeting process.

APPENDIX A: PARENT SURVEY RESULTS

Introduction

An online voluntary survey of parents was developed and then promoted from September 25 to October 20, 2019. It was aimed at parents and guardians with children under 13 years of age, with the intent being to better understand the types of child care Whistler families use, their needs and access to child care, child care challenges, and their preferred child care scenario moving forward.

In total, 241 people responded to the survey. Estimating that there are approximately 850 families in Whistler with children under 13, this means that the survey results could represent approximately 27 per cent of these families. While this represents a very good response rate for this target stakeholder group, the survey was voluntary (participants were not randomly selected). Therefore, the results cannot be considered a statistically valid/accurate representation of all Whistler parents with children under 13, as parents facing child care challenges would probably have been more likely to take the survey.

Regardless, the survey was designed to shed light on child care needs and challenges, and therefore the results from the 241 people that opted to take the survey provide valuable information that supplements the child care inventory data from other sources.

Most (87 per cent) of the 241 respondents live in Whistler, and 90 per cent work in Whistler. Ninety per cent of respondents live in two-parent households. Nearly 20 per cent work in the accommodation and food/beverage sector, followed by the arts, entertainment and recreation sector.

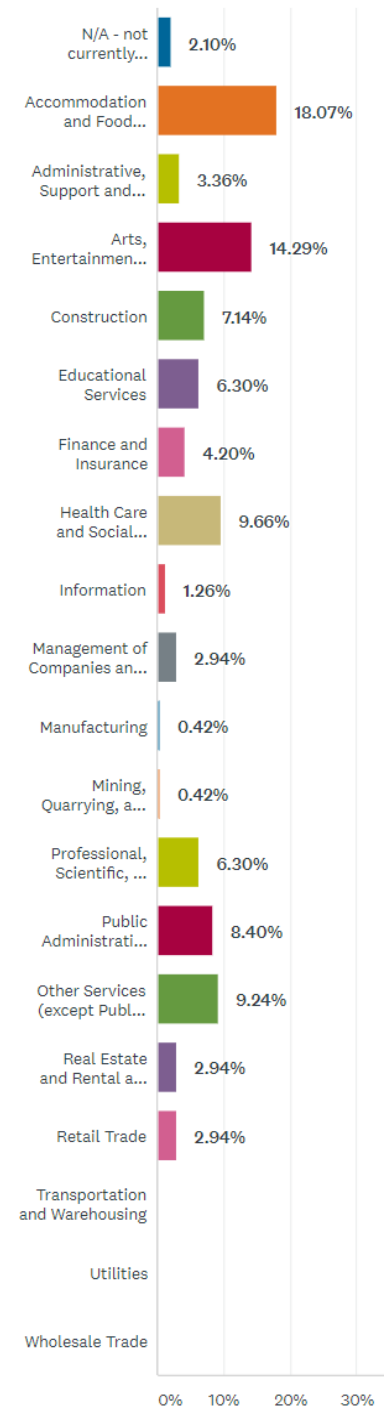
This appendix summarizes the results of the parent survey.

Respondent Demographics

Location of Residence

Most (87 per cent) of the 241 respondents live in Whistler, and 90 per cent work in Whistler. Ninety per cent of respondents live in two-parent households. Nearly 20 per cent work in the accommodation and food/beverage sector, followed by the arts, entertainment and recreation sector (Figure 1).

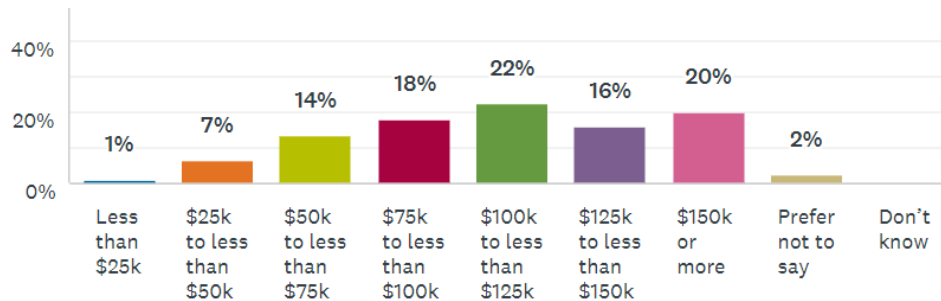
Figure 1 Employment sector



Employment and Income

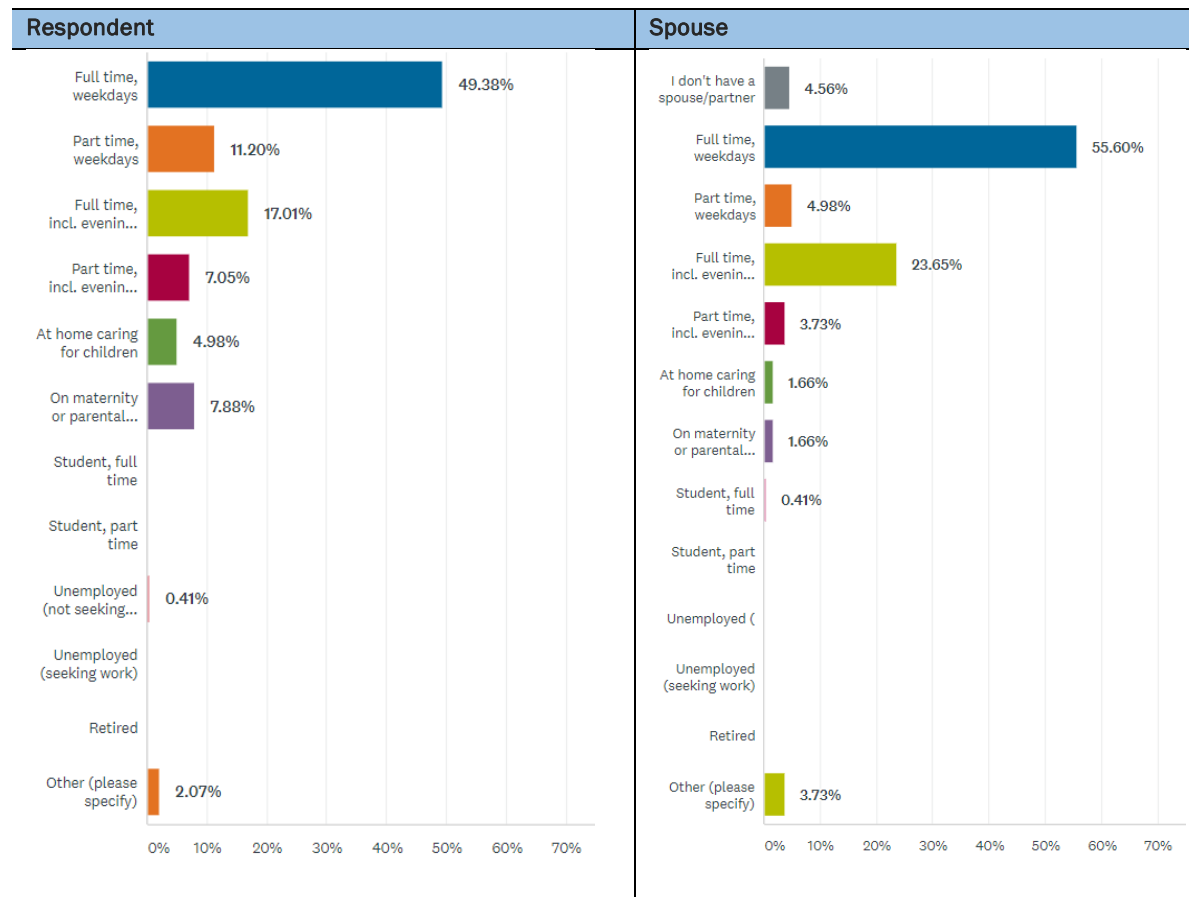
The combined gross income of the parent(s) supporting the child care needs of the child(ren) was fairly evenly distributed across the middle and higher income ranges, with fewer at the lowest income levels.

Figure 2 Gross income of parent(s) supporting child(ren)



Approximately half of the respondents and their spouses (of those that have spouses) are working full-time during regular weekday hours.

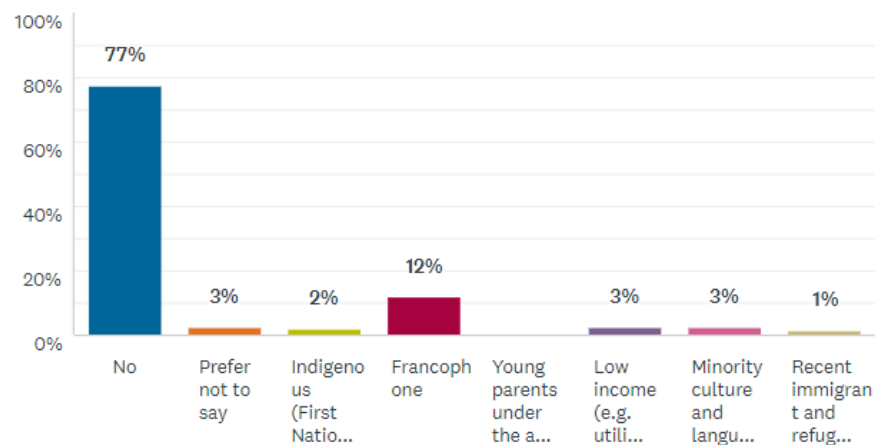
Figure 3 Employment status



Respondents by Child Care User Group

Just over three quarters (77 per cent) of respondents did not identify with the child care user groups used in the survey to better understand what challenges might be faced by different groups. Francophones were the largest self-identified group, represented by 12 per cent of the respondents. Most (94 per cent) do not have children with an identified or diagnosed special need. Five per cent (12) do and three respondents preferred not to say.

Figure 4 Identification with underserved user groups (n=231)



General Child Care Use

Overall, about one-third of respondents' child(ren) are in some form of care, 23 per cent are in care and waitlisted, and 19 per cent don't have any child care for the 2019-2020 school year (Figure 5). Of the 16 per cent who responded that child care is not used, just under a third of them said they don't need child care and the same proportion indicated that care is needed but not affordable (Figure 6).

Figure 5 General child care scenario currently in use

Answered: 240 Skipped: 1

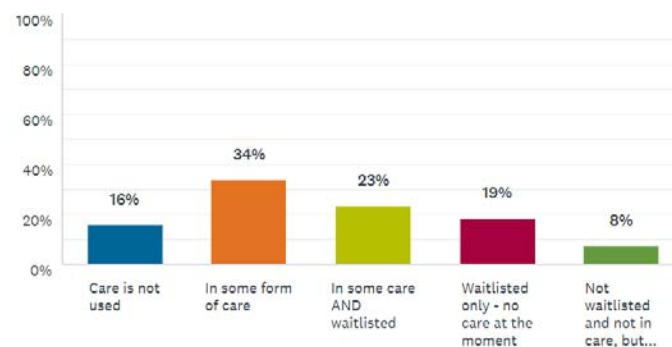
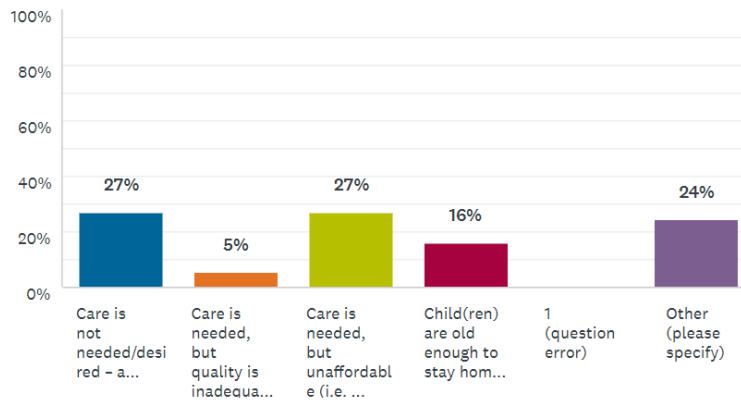


Figure 6 Reasons care is not used

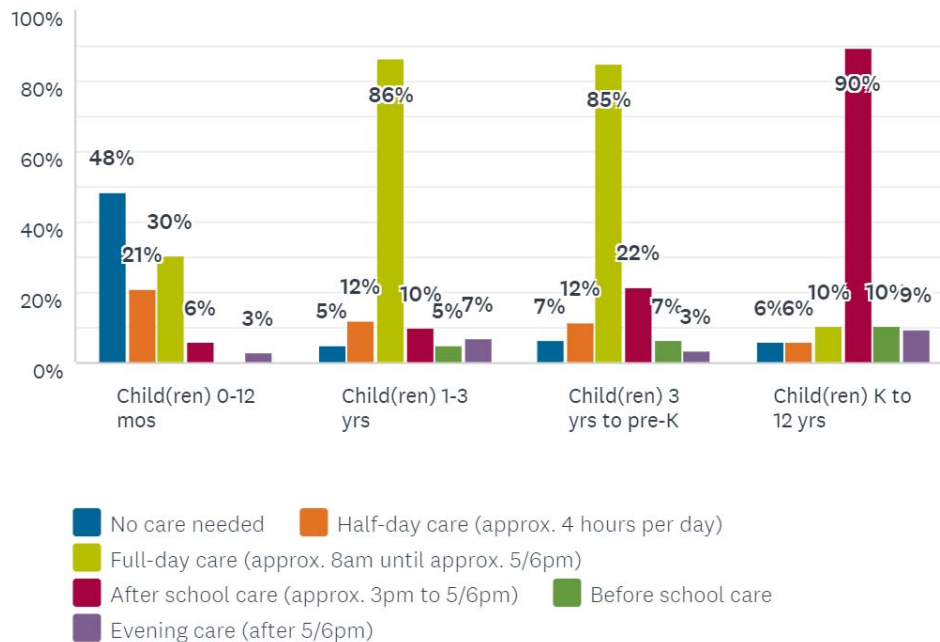
Answered: 37 Skipped: 204



School Year Needs and Use

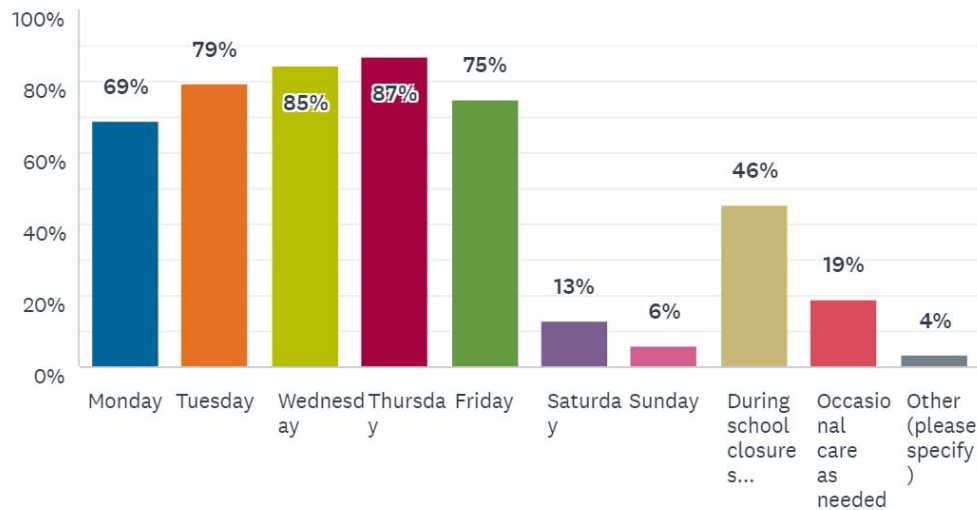
When asked what times of day parents need care for their children during the school year, not surprisingly, the majority of respondents with children from 1 year to pre-Kindergarten need full-day care and the majority with school-aged children need after-school care. Thirty per cent of respondents with children 0-12 months need full-day care.

Figure 7 Daily and weekly care needs by age group



Most respondents stated they need care Monday to Friday, but some need care on the weekends.

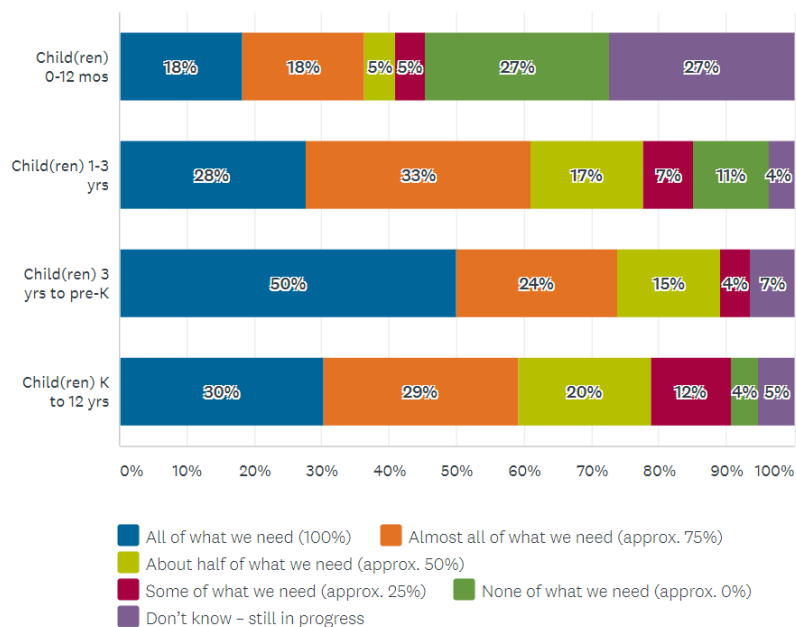
Figure 8 Day of the week care needs by age group



For the 2019-2020 school year, nearly one-third of parents with children 0-12 months had not secured any of the child care they need. Securing all needed child care appears to be the least challenging for those with children in the 3 years to pre-Kindergarten age group.

Figure 9 Amount of child care secured for 2019-2020 school year

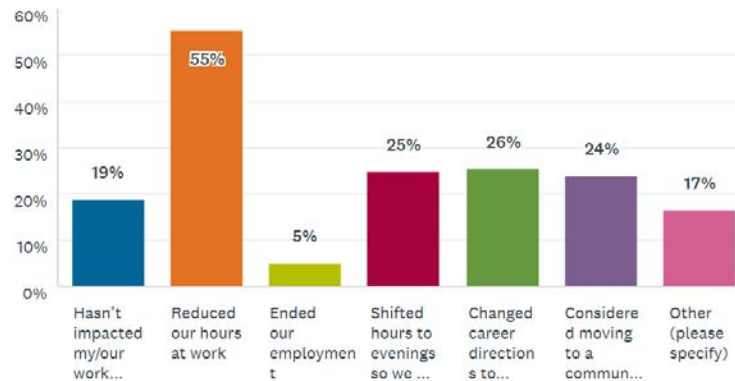
Answered: 134 Skipped: 107



Of the 121 respondents who haven't been able to or don't expect to be able to secure all of the care they need for the school year, 55 per cent have had to reduce their work hours and even a few (five respondents) have ended their employment (Figure 10). For parents whose children are waitlisted only (no care secured at all for any children), the situation has meant reduced work hours for nearly half (33) of those 73 respondents, and 16 have ended their employment to provide care.

Figure 10 Impact of not securing child care

Answered: 121 Skipped: 120



Respondents reported using a mix of child care types for all ages for the 2019-2020 school year. Almost 70 per cent of respondents with children 0-12 months reported using a nanny or an au pair, and when asked about their satisfaction with the arrangement for that age group, they reported the highest levels of dissatisfaction (65 per cent very or somewhat dissatisfied). Higher levels of satisfaction were reported for the child care arrangements achieved for the other three groups (i.e., 1-3 years, 3 years to pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten to 12 years).

Figure 11 Current mix of child care types used

For this school year (2019-2020), what type(s) of care have you secured? (select all that apply)

Answered: 129 Skipped: 112

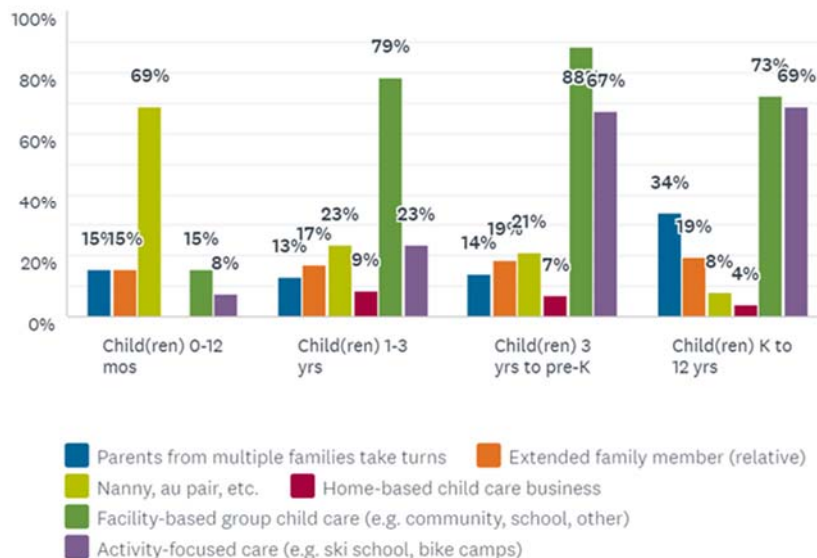
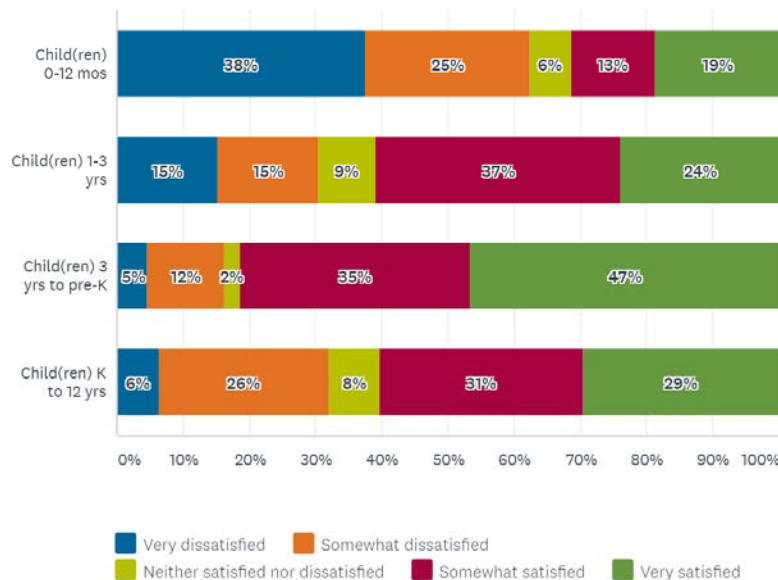


Figure12 Satisfaction with school year arrangement

How satisfied are you with the above arrangement?

Answered: 129 Skipped: 112

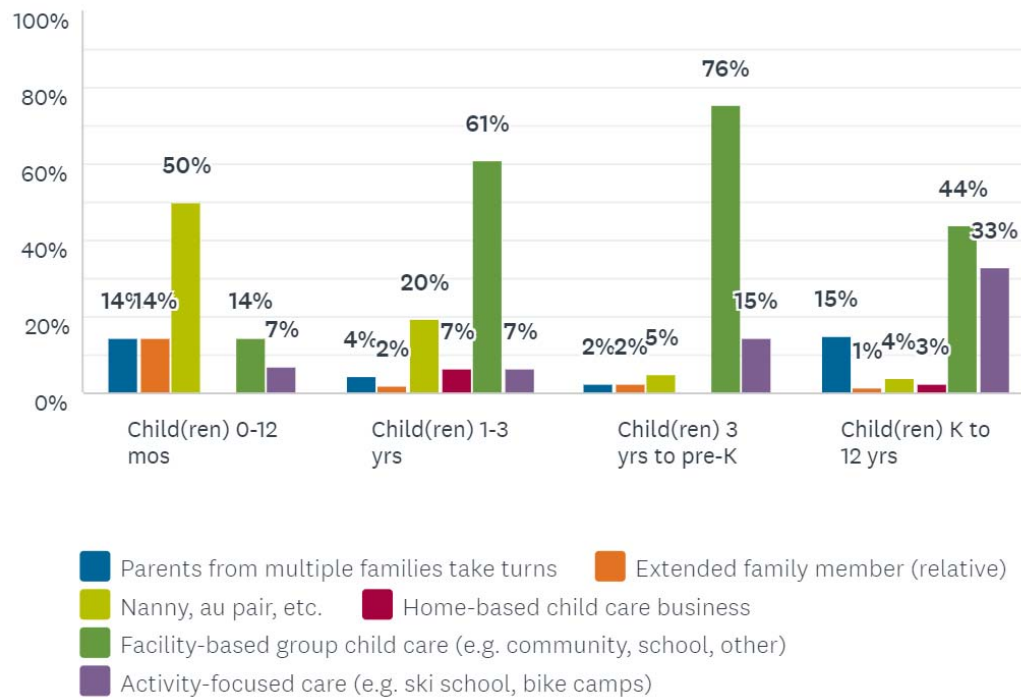


When asked what they find most challenging about their current child care arrangement, the key challenges cited by respondents included: affordability (25); space availability and the length of the wait to gain access (36); scheduling and employment challenges due to the inflexibility of child care programs (40); the Kids on the Go registration process (12); transportation (10); and then a number of other challenges were also listed (e.g., food, quality, nanny reliability and turnover).

The chart below shows the primary provider respondents identified for their child(ren) in each age category. When asked whether their current primary provider was their *preferred* primary provider, 62 per cent said no for their child(ren) in the 0-12 month category compared to around 30 per cent for the 1-3 year and K-12 year categories, and only 14 per cent said no for the 3 years to pre-K category.

Of those who reported that their primary provider is not their preferred primary provider, the majority (between 70-100 per cent) in each category said that they would prefer that their primary provider be a facility-based group child care provider rather than the other types.

Figure 13 Current primary provider by type



Summer Child Care Needs and Use

For half of respondents, their needs don't change much in the summer; for one-third, care needs increase when school lets out (Figure 14) and the need for full-day care for the Kindergarten to age 12 increases (Figure 15). Care days needed during the week are pretty consistent into the summer, with the majority still needing care Monday to Friday (Figure 16).

Figure 14 Changes to summer care needs

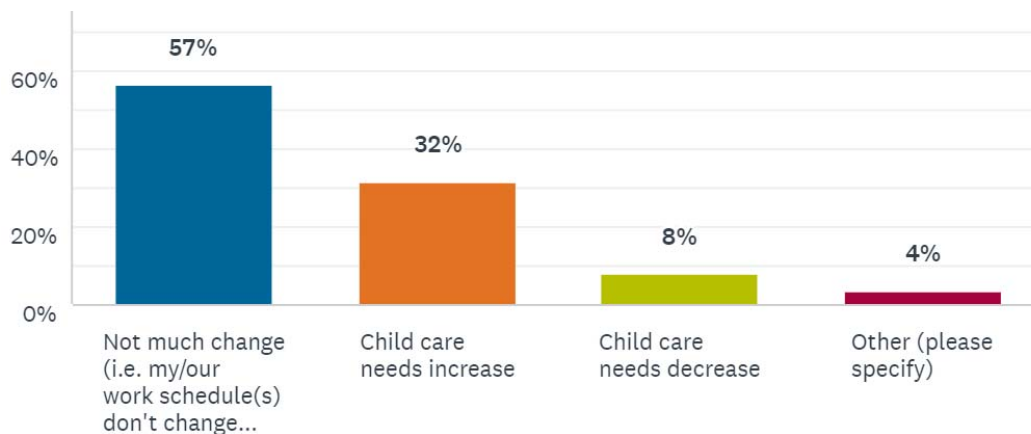


Figure 15 Summer care needs (if different than school year)

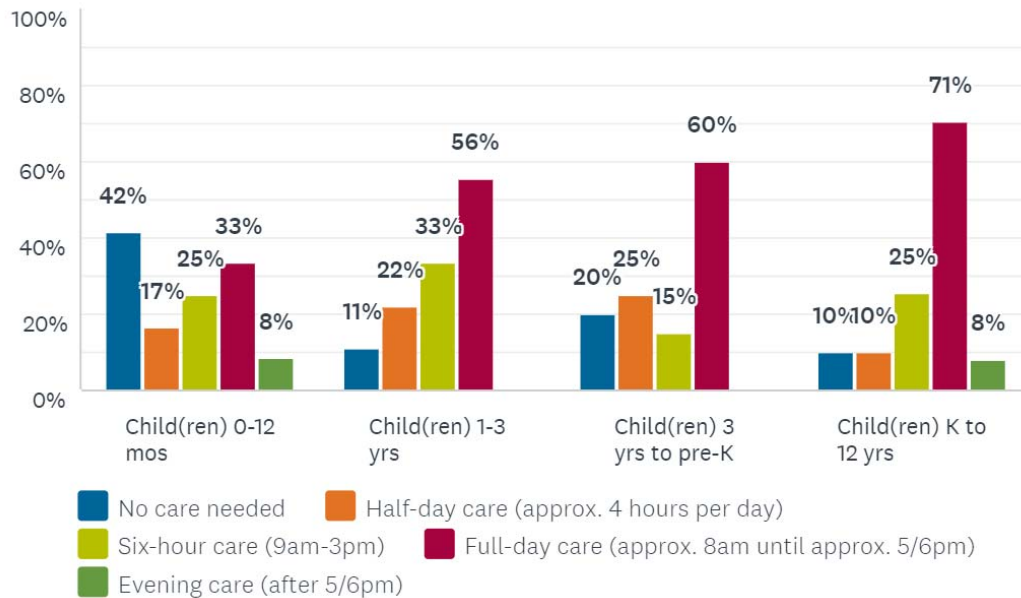
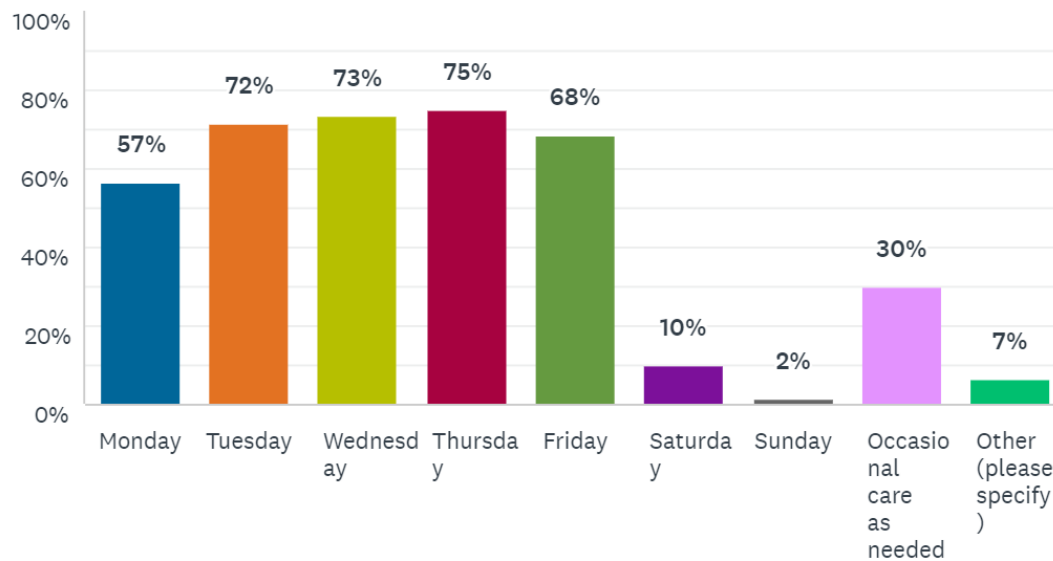


Figure 16 Summer care needs by day of the week



Securing the care needed for the two older age groups in the summer was easier than for the younger groups, likely as a result of the activity-focused care offerings (purple bar in Figure 18) available such as bike, multi-sport and nature camps offered in Whistler.

Figure 17 Summer care secured (amount)

This past summer (2019), how much child care were you able to secure?

Answered: 124 Skipped: 117

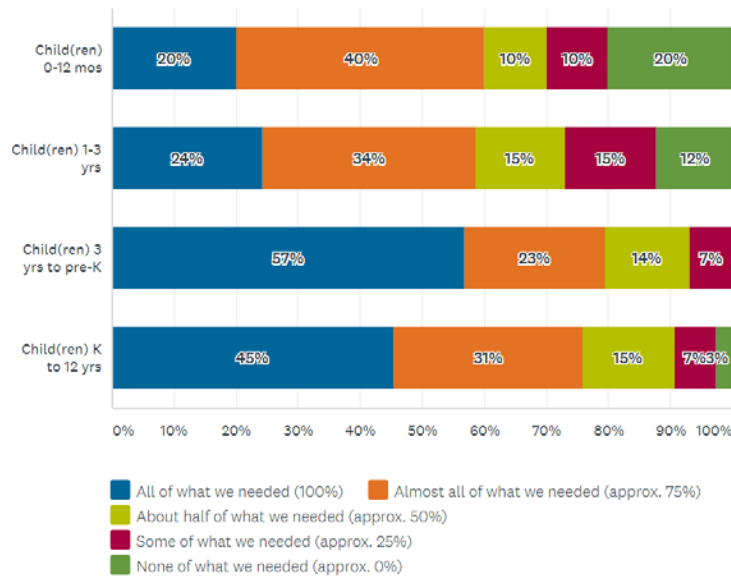
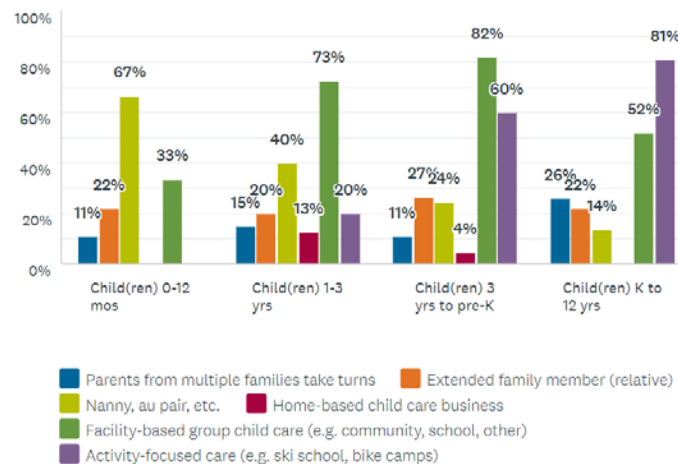


Figure 18 Summer care use by type

This past summer, which types of care did you use? (select all that apply for each age group)

Answered: 122 Skipped: 119



When asked about primary providers during the summer, parents with children 0-12 months again reported nannies and au pairs, and half reported that this arrangement is generally not preferred; their preferred primary provider would be facility-based group child care. The use of activity-focused providers as the primary summer provider increases with age, as does satisfaction with the summer arrangement.

Figure 19 Summer care primary provider (current type)

This past summer, which was your PRIMARY provider type, i.e. which type did you use most of the time? (select one for each age group)

Answered: 121 Skipped: 120

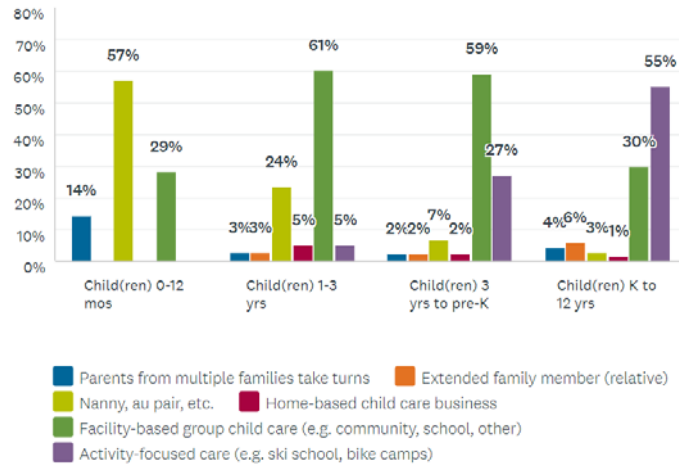


Figure 20 Summer care primary provider (preference for current)

Is the primary child care provider above your preferred provider?

Answered: 121 Skipped: 120

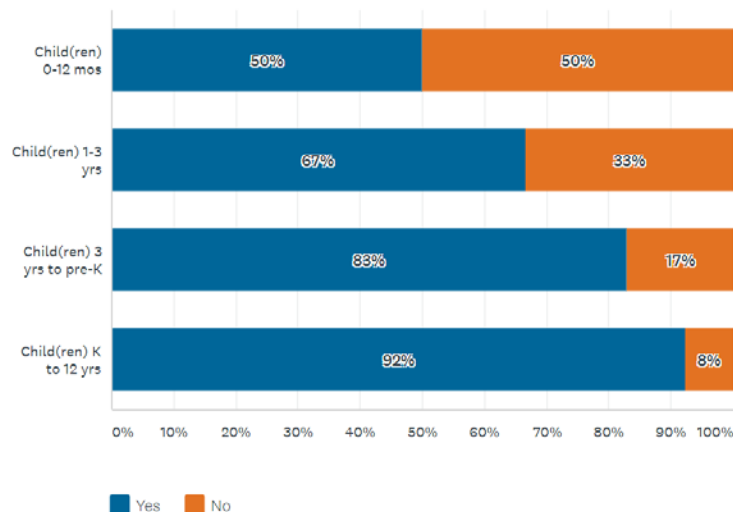
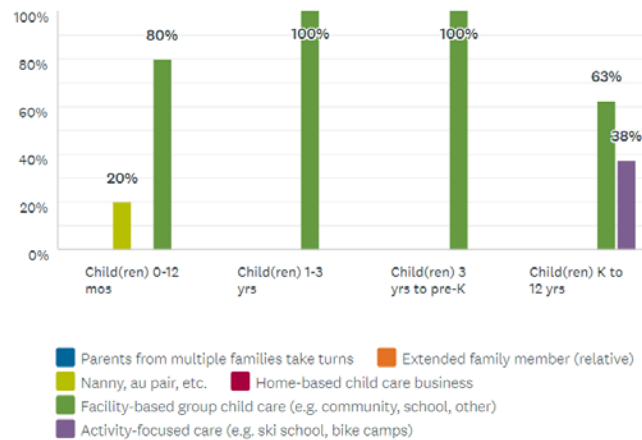


Figure 21 Summer care primary provider (preferred alternative type)

If you answered "no" to any of the above, which would have been your preferred primary provider type this past summer, i.e. the type you would have preferred to use most of the time?

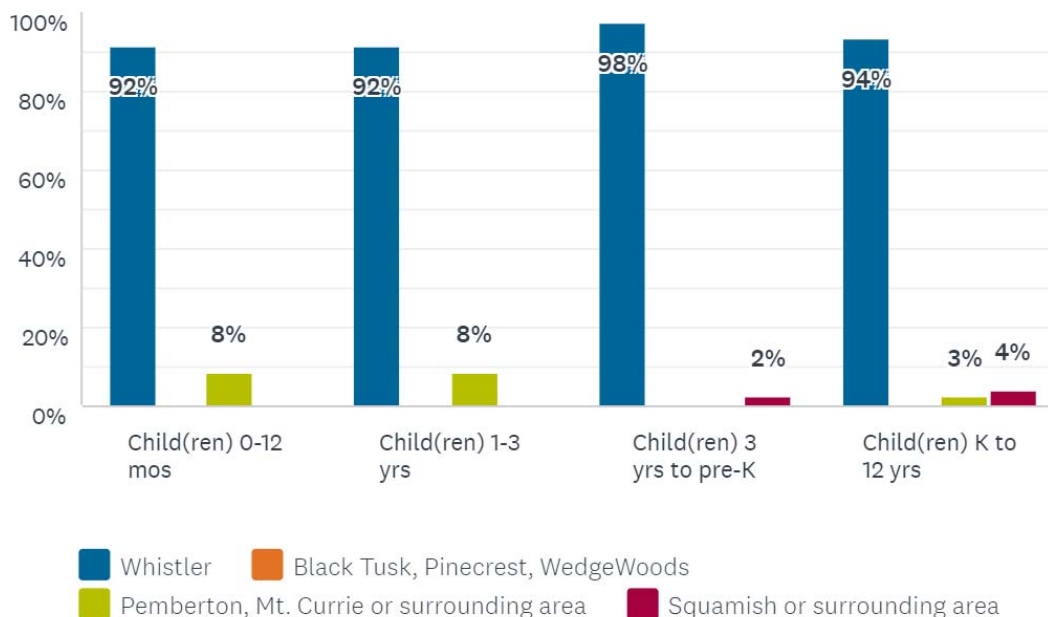
Answered: 28 Skipped: 213



Locations for Child Care

Close to 100 per cent of respondents responding about their primary child care provider reported that these primary providers are located in Whistler; primary providers located outside Whistler belong to non-residents. For Whistler respondents who currently have child care, 100 per cent reported that their child care is located in Whistler. When respondents were asked about the preferred location of child care *within* Whistler, 'close to home' ranked the highest, followed by 'close to elementary schools' and then 'close to work.'

Figure 22 Location of current primary provider



Quality of Child Care

When asked about the overall quality of care offered by their primary provider for each age group, the highest level of satisfaction was reported by parents of children 3 years to pre-Kindergarten, followed by Kindergarten to 12 years, and then the 1-3 year old group. Lowest satisfaction was reported by parents with children in the 0-12 month group.

Figure 23 Satisfaction with quality of child care

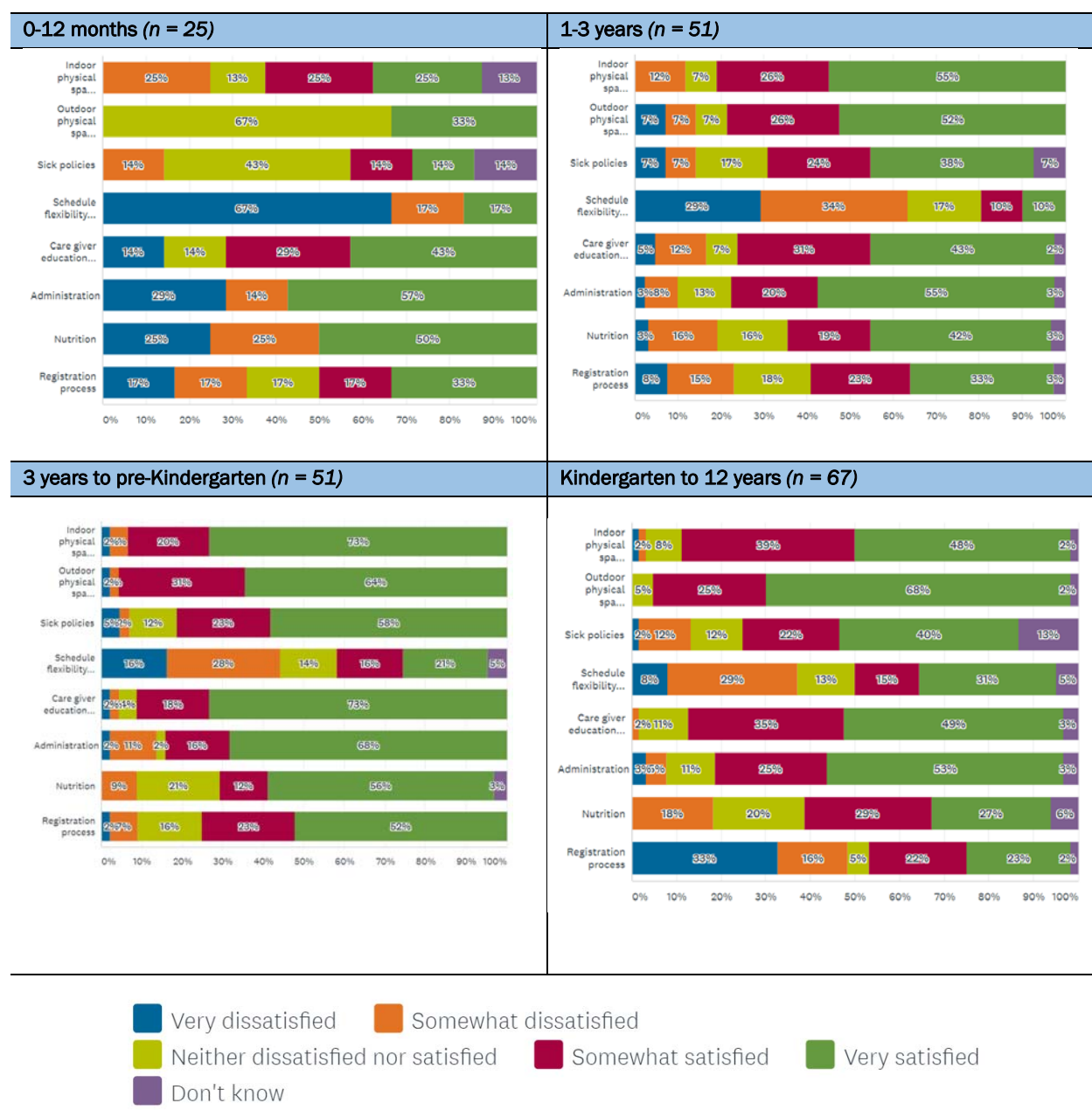
Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of child care provided by your current or past primary provider during the school year?

Answered: 117 Skipped: 124



When asked about quality of care related to a number of specific attributes, schedule flexibility was rated lowest satisfaction for all age groups, other than for the K-12 year group where registration process received the lowest satisfaction rating.

Figure 24 Satisfaction with child care attributes

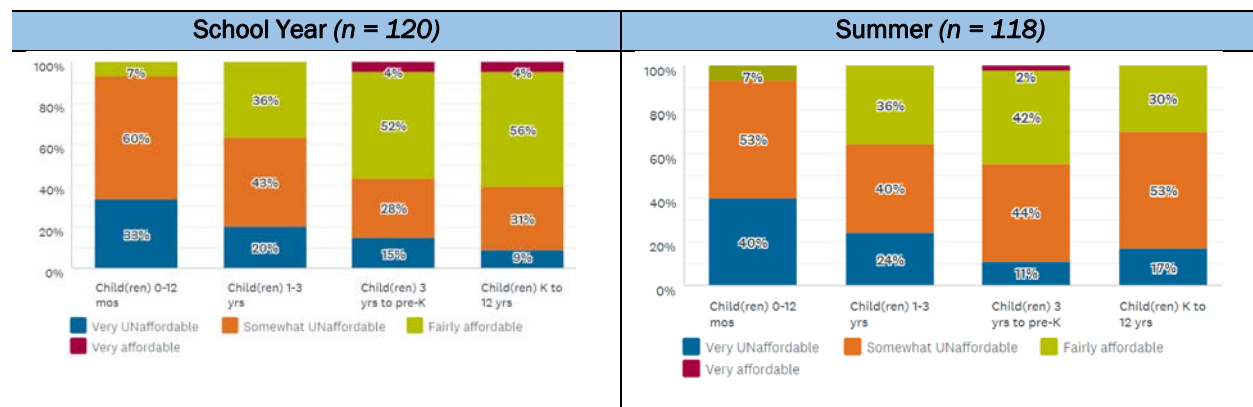


When asked about areas of dissatisfaction in an open ended question, 47 respondents provided input, with many citing Kids on the Go registration (20), affordability (8) and schedule flexibility (15) as the areas they are least satisfied with.

Affordability of Child Care

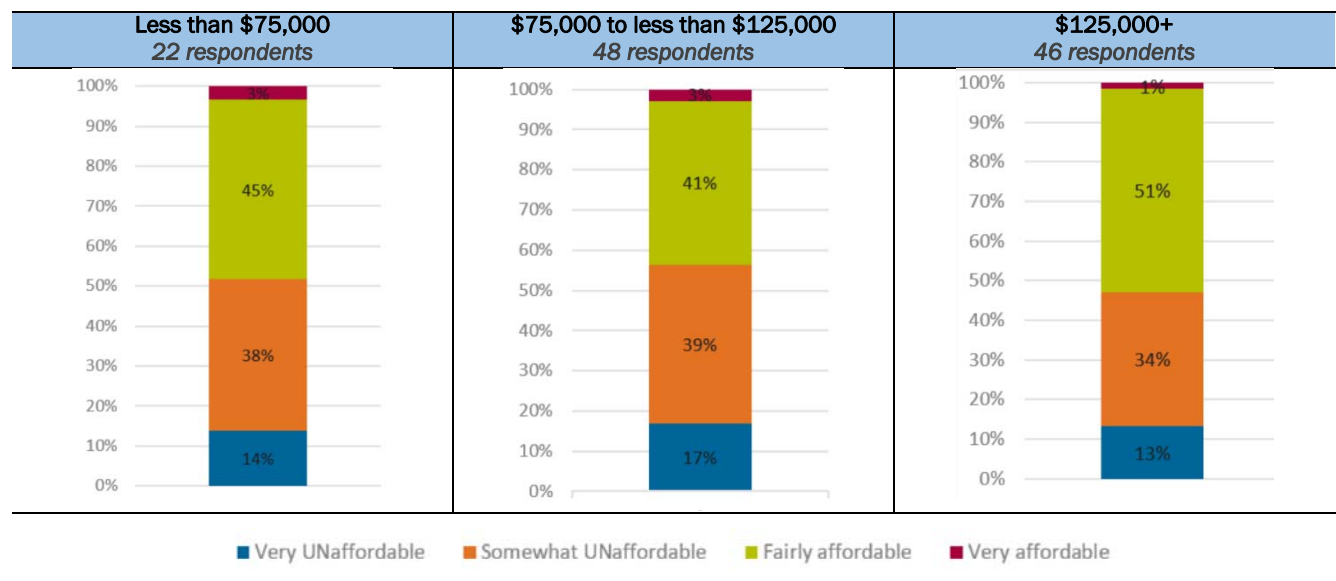
When asked whether they felt their monthly cost of child care per child in each category was affordable or unaffordable, the results indicate that affordability generally improves with age in both the school year and the summer. This is consistent with child care pricing where the higher caregiver to child ratio and more hours needed each day for the younger age group means the price is much higher for families. For the 20 respondents from other cultural and language groups, the results related to the affordability of care are similar to the results below for all respondents. Only six respondents with children identified or diagnosed with special needs responded to this question, therefore similarities and differences can't be drawn.

Figure 25 Affordability ratings for school year and summer care



The results for the school year are shown below for three income groupings, showing similar perceptions of affordability.

Figure 26 Affordability ratings by income group



Use of the provincial Affordable Child Care Benefit is presented below for all respondents, and below that it is presented for each of the three gross income groupings.

Figure 27 Proportion using the Affordable Childcare Benefit

Please indicate your use of the Affordable Childcare Benefit, which is provincial funding that helps families with the cost of child care, depending on factors like family size, type of care and household income.

Answered: 116 Skipped: 125

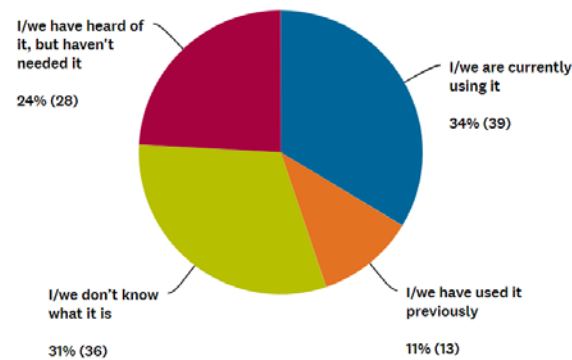
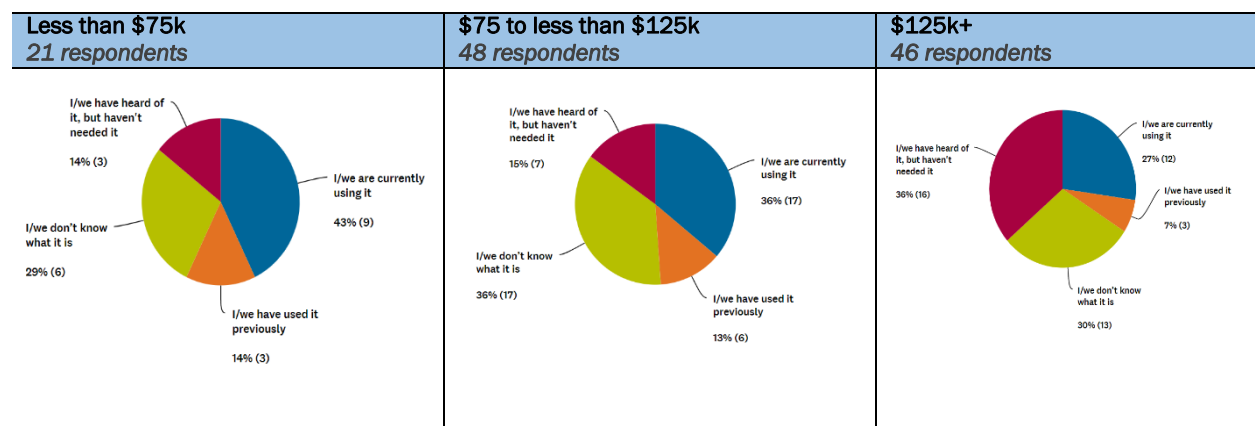
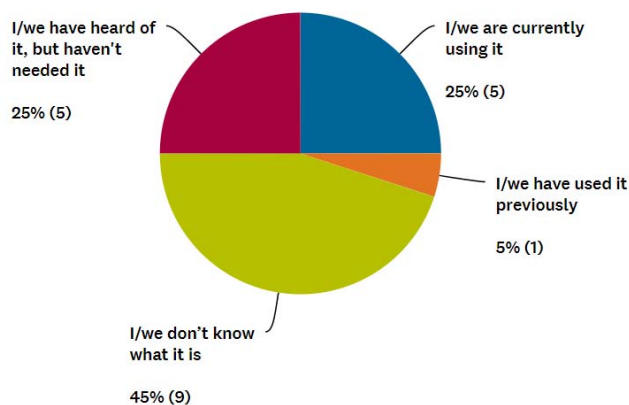


Figure 28 Proportion using the Affordable Childcare Benefit by income group



For the 20 respondents belonging to other cultural or language groups (shown below), 45 per cent didn't know about the child care benefit.

Figure 29 Proportion using the Affordable Childcare Benefit by cultural or language group

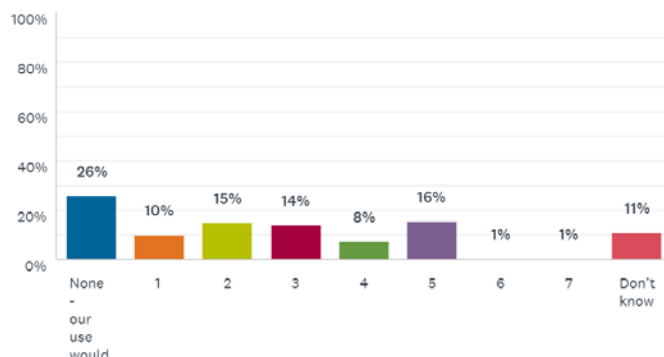


If the Province introduces low-cost child care across the province, just over 60 per cent of respondents indicated that they would increase their use of child care for their children as a result of the improved affordability.

Figure 30 Potential uptake of the proposed \$10-\$25/day child care program

If province-wide \$10-\$25 per day child care is introduced in the future (and if space/availability is not a limiting factor), how many ADDITIONAL DAYS of care per week might you add to your current care schedule?

Answered: 200 Skipped: 41



Waitlisted Only Child/Children

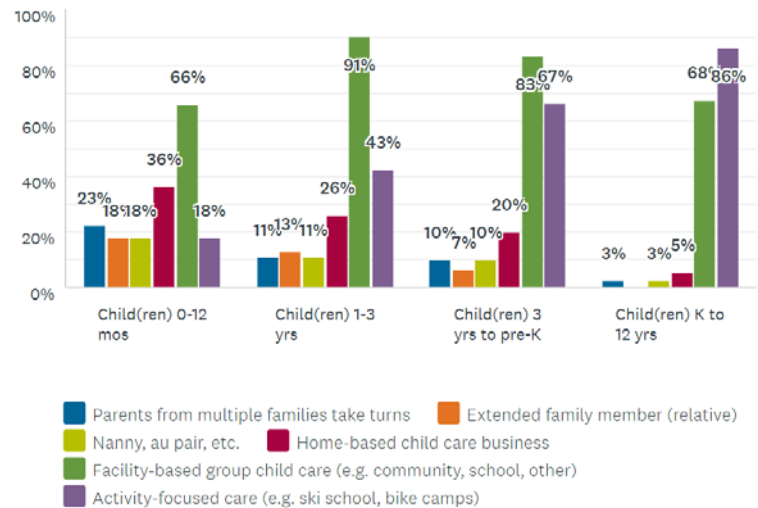
This set of questions focused on children who are waitlisted only (i.e., they are not in any form of child care). Of the 78 who responded to this set of questions, 59 were parents who *only have* 'waitlisted only children' (i.e., they didn't respond to the set of questions for children in some form of care), whereas 19 respondents also responded to the questions about their other children in some form of care.

The majority of the 78 respondents who answered this set of questions for child(ren) who are only waitlisted (are not in any form of care) identified facility-based group care as their preferred type of care, and parents with children in the two older age groups also identified activity-focused care as preferred types they are seeking.

Figure 31 Types of care being sought for waitlisted child(ren)

What preferred type(s) of care are you seeking for your child(ren)?
(select top 2 types)

Answered: 78 Skipped: 163



Most parents with ‘waitlisted only’ children chose Whistler as their preferred location for their primary child care, and all parents living in Whistler (except one) chose Whistler. Within Whistler, the parents of ‘waitlisted only’ children ranked ‘close to home’ first as their preferred location, followed by ‘close to work’ and then ‘close to elementary schools’.

Figure 32 Preferred child care location for waitlisted only child(ren)

What is your preferred location for your PRIMARY child care provider?
Note: Primary means the one you will use or hope to use most of the time.

Answered: 78 Skipped: 163

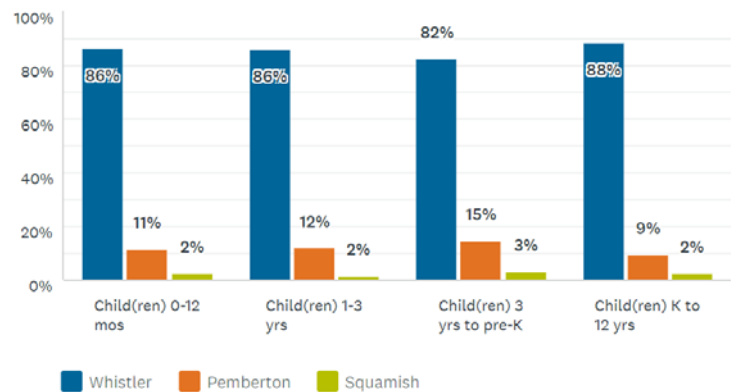
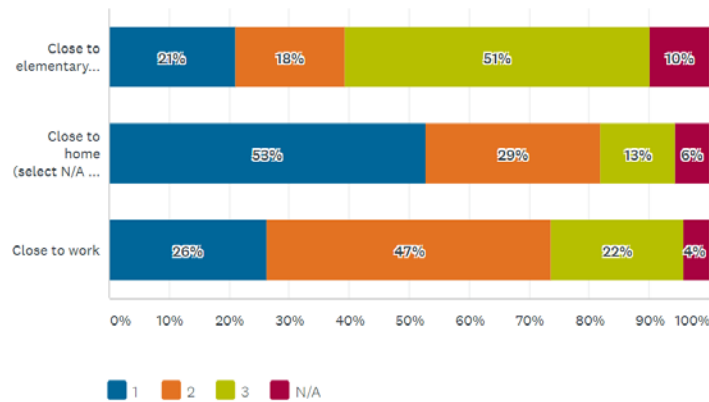


Figure 33 Preferred Whistler location for waitlisted only child(ren)

If you chose Whistler as your preferred location in the question above, please rank the locations within Whistler from most (1st) to least (3rd) preferred.

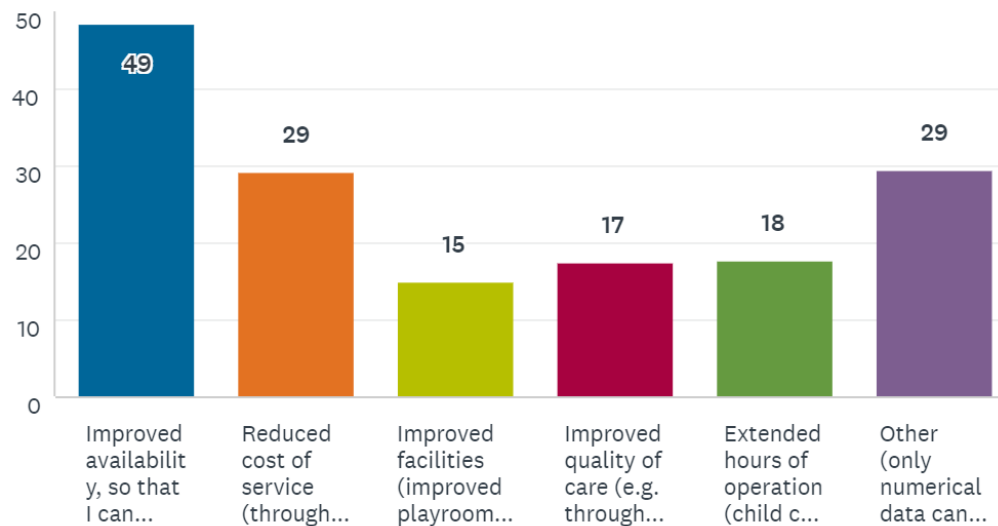
Answered: 73 Skipped: 168



Improving Child Care

Respondents were given 100 points and asked to allocate them across six categories based on where they would like to see local child care providers spend additional resources if they had them. Respondents allocated close to 50 points on average to improved child care availability (more spaces), and nearly 30 points on average were allocated to the category of reduced child care costs and 'other,' which predominantly focused on providing affordable employee housing for child care staff and paying them higher wages.

Figure 34 Improvements to child care



When asked to suggest ways to increase access to child care, the most noted ways were identified as follows:

- School schedule changes, including longer school days, longer school year and better coordinated or fewer non-instructional and early dismissal days
- New facility—enabled by government funding and/or subsidized/free land
- Increase ECE staff—streamline certification for international ECE workers, lower standards, pay living wages, and offer/improve benefits and incentives
- Increase staff trained to do after-school and summer care
- Enable more home-based care—lower taxes, and reduce or streamline regulations
- Engage businesses in identifying and delivering solutions
- Dedicate some WHA housing for ECE staff

When asked what else they would like to share about their current or upcoming child care situation, respondents listed affordability, availability and employment challenges most frequently.

APPENDIX B: PROVIDER SURVEY RESULTS

Introduction

An online voluntary survey of child care providers was promoted between September 25 and October 20, 2019. It was aimed at current child care providers or those considering offering child care. The intent was to better understand the types of child care offered (or being considered), child care capacity, staffing and facility type considerations as well as operational dates and times.

In total, 31 participants responded to the survey, however some represented the same organization multiple times and others were incomplete after the first question (likely due to starting then stopping, etc.). Once the list was filtered, a total of 17 mostly complete surveys remained. Survey participants included those providers currently offering child care (14 respondents) and those considering providing child care (three respondents).

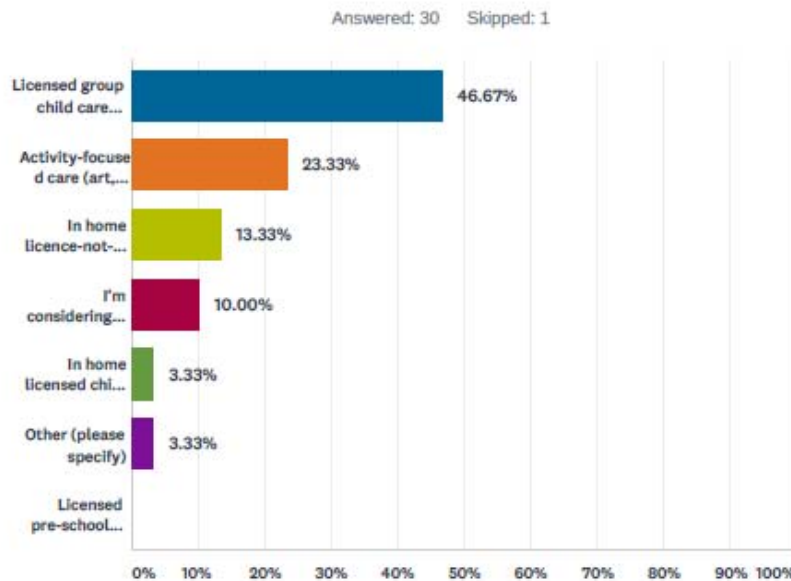
Of the 14 providing child care, eight were activity-based child care providers, six were licensed child care providers and one was a licence-not-required child care provider. All except one of the major licensed child care providers took part in the survey. This missing provider was contacted individually and directly provided feedback pertinent to the inventory and child care offering types. All but two of the known child care activity providers participated in the survey. These organizations were contacted individually to provide feedback pertinent to the inventory and child care offering types.

This appendix summarizes the results of the provider survey.

Types of Child Care

The introductory question sought to understand the types of child care being offered by the provider survey respondents. When asked to select the category that best represents the child care operation type in Whistler that they are completing the survey for, 47 per cent of respondents indicated licensed group child care operation (children 0-12 months, 1-3 years, 3 years to pre-K, or K-12 years of age), 23 per cent selected activity-focused care (art, recreation, nature camp, etc.) for local children (no licensing required) and 13 per cent chose in-home licence-not-required child care operation. Ten per cent of respondents indicated they are considering offering child care services in Whistler. In home licensed child care operations (family or multi-age) and other types of providers were also represented among the survey respondents (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Categories of child care operation types

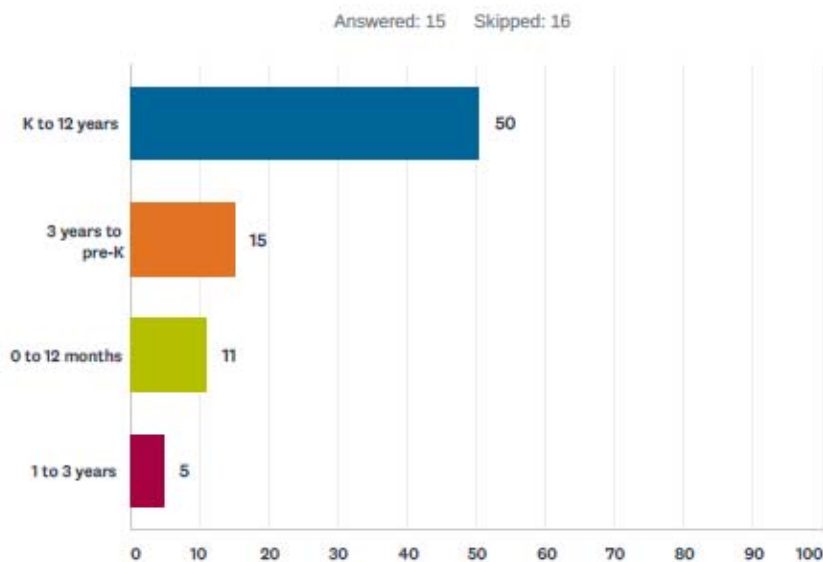


Child Care Users

Child Care Spaces by Age Groups

Providers were asked to specify the maximum number of child care spaces they currently offer for specified age groups. The average numbers per age category were 50 spaces for children in Kindergarten to 12 years of age, 15 spaces for children 3 years to pre-Kindergarten, 11 spaces for children aged 0 to 12 months and five spaces for children aged 1 to 3 years.

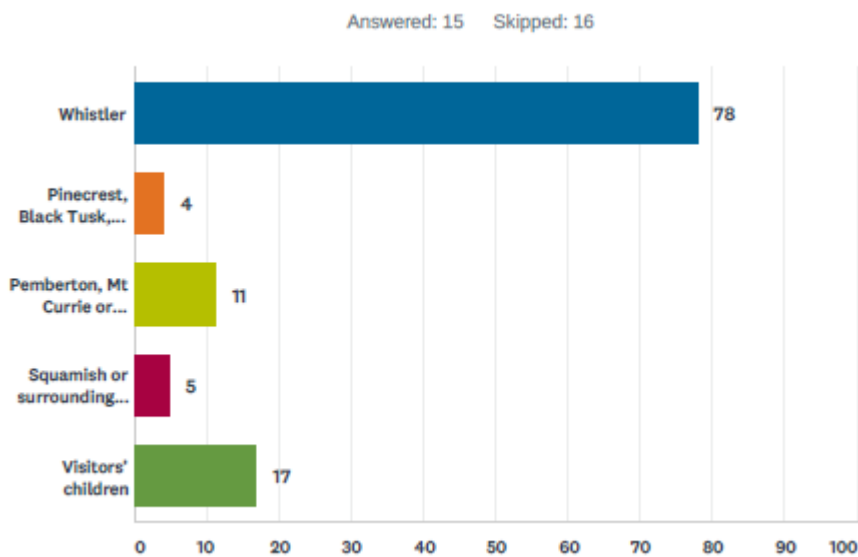
Figure 2 Average number of maximum child care spaces by age category



Use of Care Spaces by Children from Whistler and Other Communities

Providers were asked to indicate approximately what per cent of children under their care are from Whistler and other listed communities. The responses needed to add up to 100 per cent. The response options were: Whistler; Pemberton, Mt Currie or the surrounding area; Pinecrest/Black Tusk/WedgeWoods; Squamish or the surrounding area; and visitors' children. The results of this question are presented below in Figure 3.

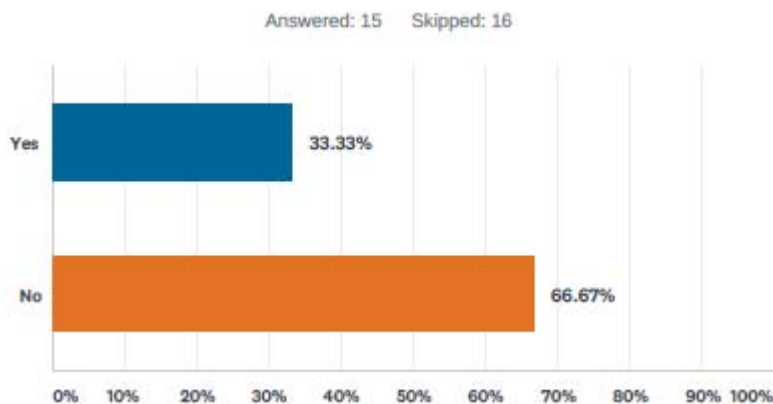
Figure 3 Children from Whistler and Other Communities (Per Cent)



Preferred Enrollment to Whistler Children

When asked if they provide preferred enrollment to children who reside in Whistler, the majority of respondents indicated they do not provide preferred enrollment.

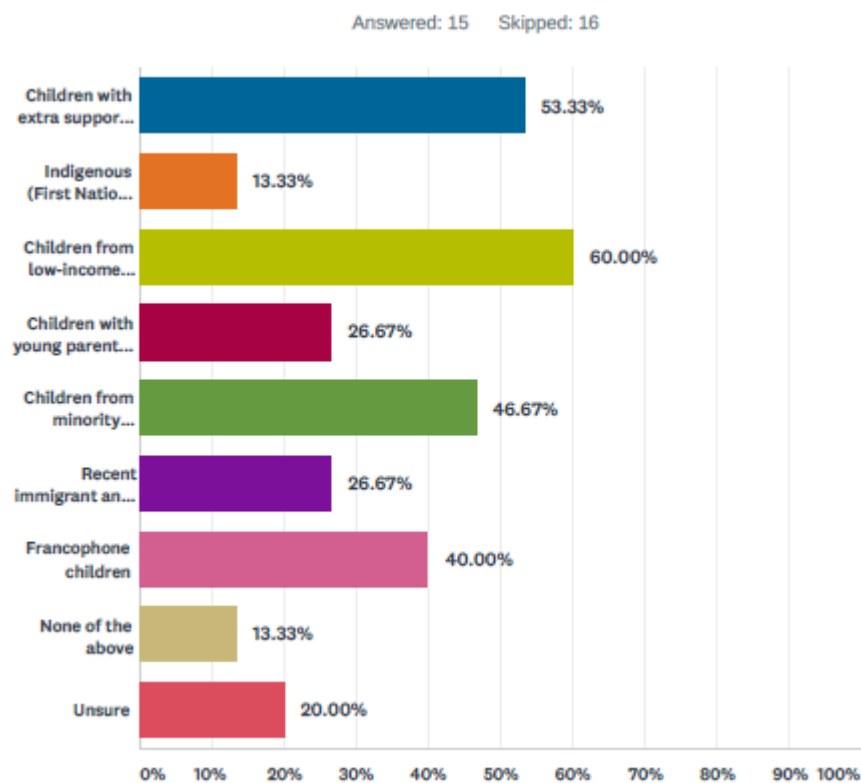
Figure 4 Preferred Enrollment



User Groups Attending Programs

Providers were asked to indicate which groups attend their programs. The intent of the question was to better understand the child care challenges that might be faced by different groups in the community. Children from low-income families (utilizing unique benefits or fee reductions) was indicated most frequently (60 per cent), followed by children with extra support needs (53 per cent), children from minority cultures and language groups (47 per cent) and Francophone children (40 per cent). Survey respondents also indicated children with young parents under the age of 25 and recent immigrant and refugee children (both 27 per cent), and Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit) children (13 per cent). Some respondents were unsure and some indicated none of the user groups attended their programs.

Figure 5 User group program attendance

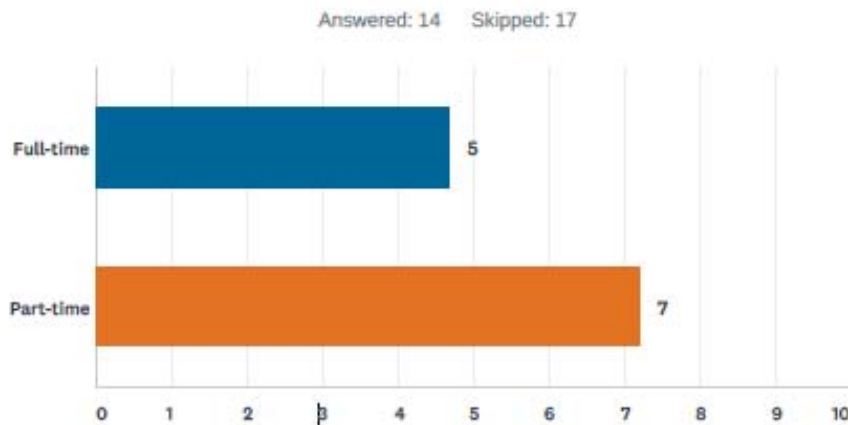


Staffing

Full-time/Part-time Staff, Working Hours, Seasonal Staff and Retention

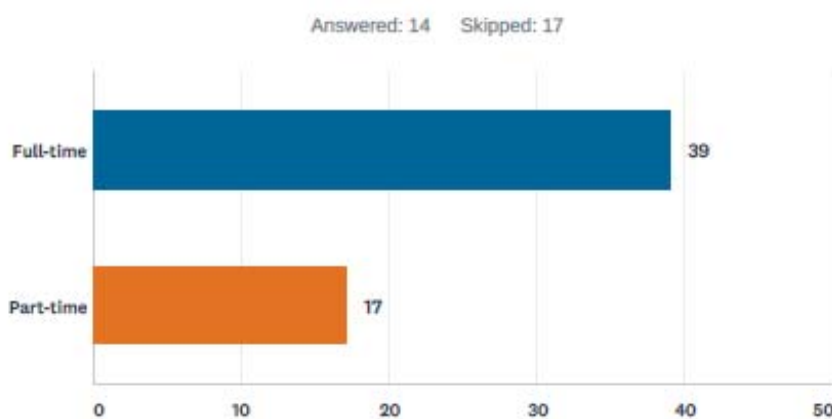
Providers were asked how many total employees, including management/administration, their operations have right now. On average, child care providers have 4.7 full-time staff and 7.2 part-time staff (Figure 6).

Figure 6 Full-time and part-time staff



Respondents were also asked how many hours per week on average each of their employees work. The providers indicated that on average full-time employees worked 39 hours per week, while part-time employees worked 17 hours per week.

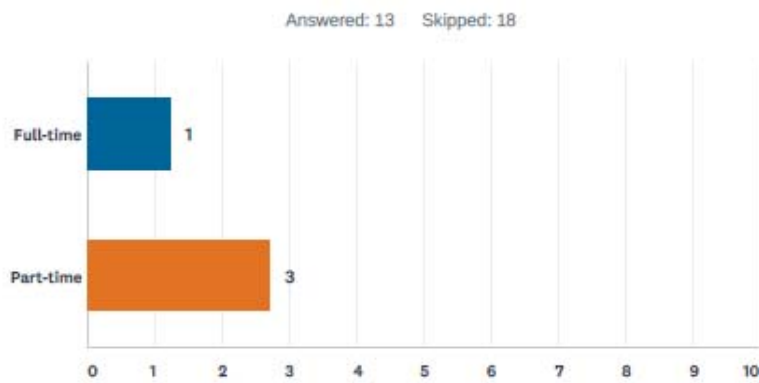
Figure 7 Working hours per week



Child care providers were asked on average, how many years do staff stay on with them. Responses ranged from zero to nine years.

Providers were asked how many of their employees they think are seasonal. Seasonal was defined as short-term employees working in Whistler for about six months or less of the year. On average, providers had one full-time seasonal employee and three part-time seasonal employees.

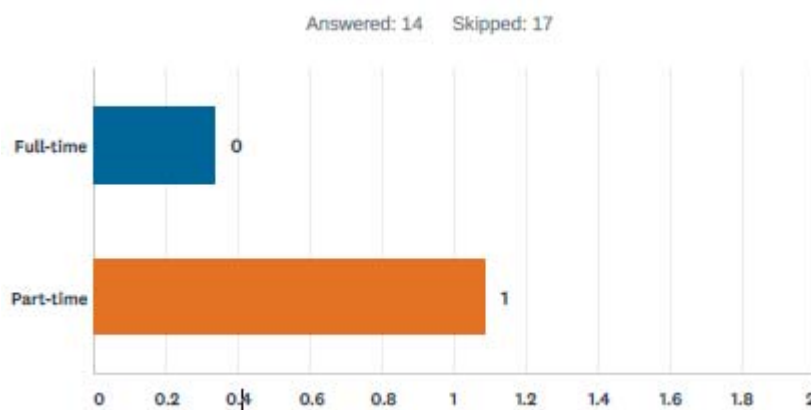
Figure 8 Seasonal employees



Staff Shortages

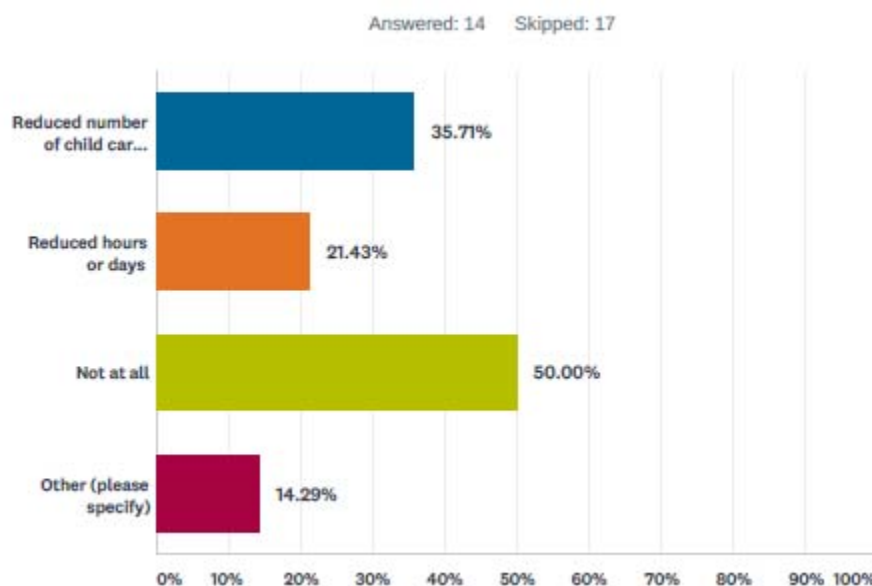
A series of questions were asked about staff shortages. When asked how many staff they are short given their capacity and current demand for child care at their operation, on average providers were not short full-time employees, but were short one part-time employee. However, seven of 13 providers indicated a combined shortfall of four full-time and 13 part-time staff (10.5 full-time equivalents (FTEs)). Also, a greater percentage of activity-based providers cited a shortage of staff compared to the facility-based or in-home group care operations.

Figure 9 Full-time and part-time staff shortages



When asked how this staffing shortfall affects their offering, 36 per cent of respondents indicated reduced number of child care spaces and 21 per cent indicated reduced hours or days. Fifty per cent indicated the staffing shortfall did not have an effect. Other specified effects were impacts on program design and the need for office staff to work with the children in the program.

Figure 10 Effects of staffing shortfall



Providers were asked to indicate the degree to which the shortfall impacts their capacity, if at all. Among the seven providers who answered this question, 57 per cent identified reduced number of child care spaces and 57 per cent also indicated reduced hours or days as impacts. When specifying other impacts, providers indicated the staffing shortfall results in long wait lists, the inability to have coverage for more kids, the need to close a program on one day of the week, and staff stress and turnover.

Wages

The survey posed two questions about wages. The results indicate that the non-Early Childhood Educator (ECE) average wages on the higher end of the scale are \$21/hour and for ECE staff the high end of the scale average is \$25/hour.

Child care providers were asked to describe any additional benefits they provide to their staff. A range of responses were provided, including the following:

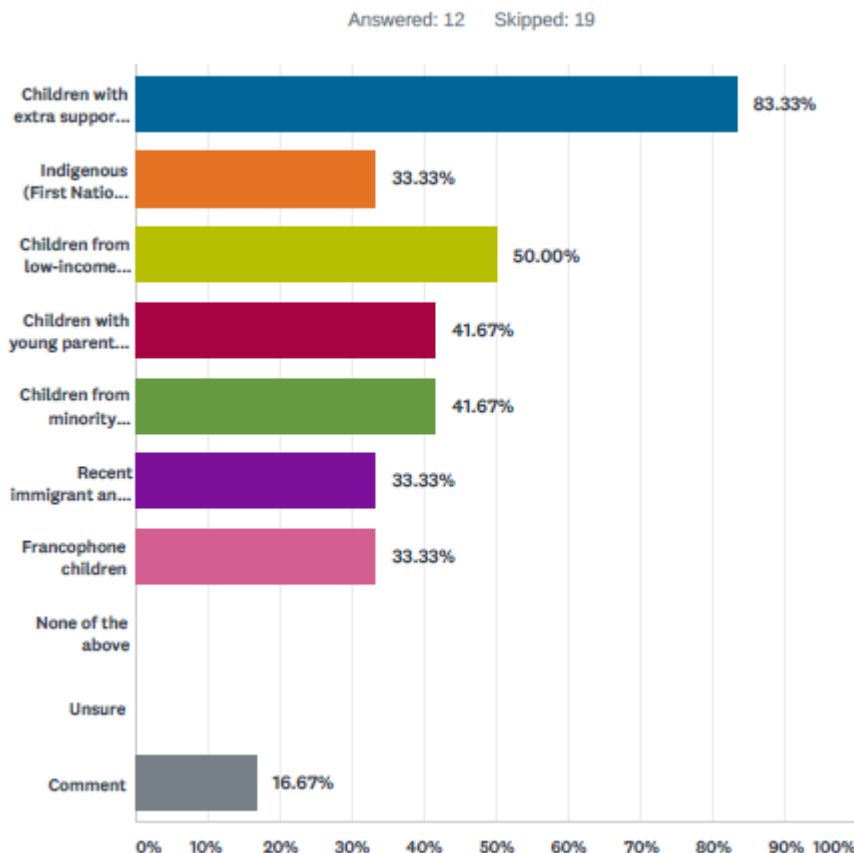
- bonuses and increased wages for returning seasonal staff;
- extended health care and dental benefits or pay in lieu of benefits;
- recreation allowances, seasons passes (sometimes subsidized) and access to facilities and equipment;
- tuition benefits, first aid training, coaching qualifications and development, and other training (may be paid, unpaid or subsidized); and
- staff celebrations and recognition events.

Unique Needs of Specified Groups of Children

Providers were asked about specific groups' unique needs that are considered during staff hiring/training or programming decisions. Eighty-three per cent of providers indicated children with extra support needs and 50 per cent indicated children from low-income families (utilizing unique benefits or fee reductions). Forty-two per cent indicated both children with young parents

under the age of 25 and children from minority cultures and language groups. Thirty-three per cent indicated the remaining groups. Children with undiagnosed special needs were also identified as another group in the comments.

Figure 11 Groups' unique needs and staff hiring/training or programming decisions



Overall Comments

Child care providers were asked to provide additional thoughts on what is working well with their child care staffing situation, what needs to be done to improve it, and any barriers or opportunities to do so.

Regarding challenges, respondents offered the following comments:

- vulnerabilities with the ups and downs in registration numbers from day-to-day, which leads to challenges with balancing staffing levels and retaining staff;
- staffing and ability to recruit candidates with experience;
- staff trying to juggle multiple jobs, which is related to needing to increase wages so staff do not need second jobs;
- current B.C. licensing qualifications process for staff with out-of-province or out-of-country ECE qualifications, which limits the available pool of new staff;
- the housing situation in Whistler is difficult for newcomers; and
- the cost of space in Whistler.

Regarding opportunities, respondents offered the following comments:

- increased hours of gym rental space at the community schools;
- reduced rent to keep programs affordable;
- offering mentorship programs for youth that can lead to jobs once they are of legal age;
- transportation options to get children to programs; and
- commitment to training and mentoring creates a sense of learning and support.

Regarding what needs to be done to improve the staffing situation, respondents offered the following comments:

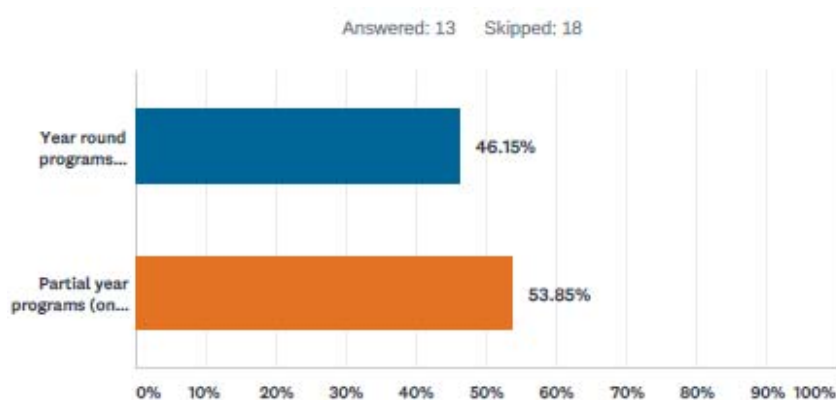
- gain a better understanding of ECE regulations for after-school programs;
- work to increase wages; and
- foster flexibility so staff can work the days they choose to work.

Operation Times, Utilization, Demand

Typical Operation Days and Times

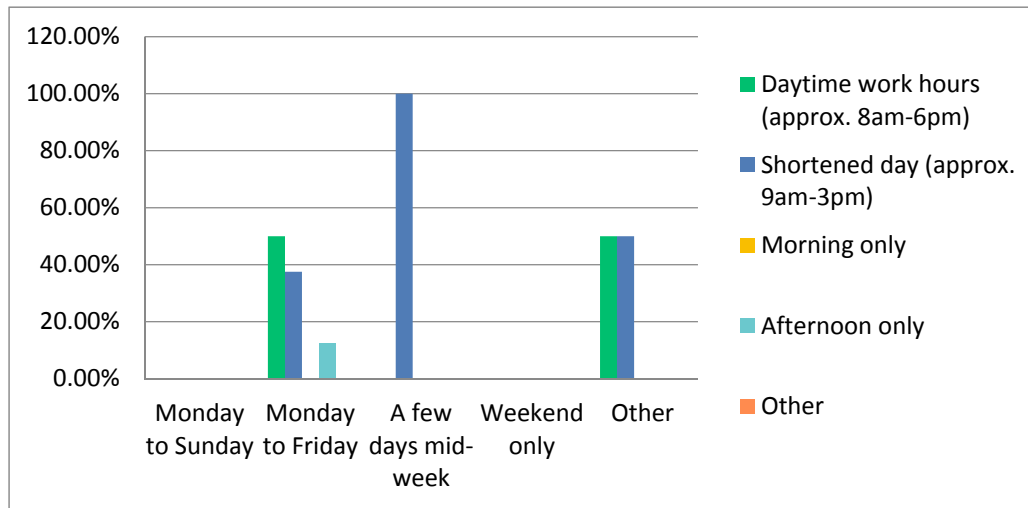
Providers were asked to select the operational calendar that best describes their child care services. About 54 per cent indicated partial year programs (only school months, only school holiday breaks, only winter and/or summer, only professional development days, etc.), while about 46 per cent indicated year-round programs (Jan-Dec, every month and week) (Figure 12).

Figure 12 Operational calendar



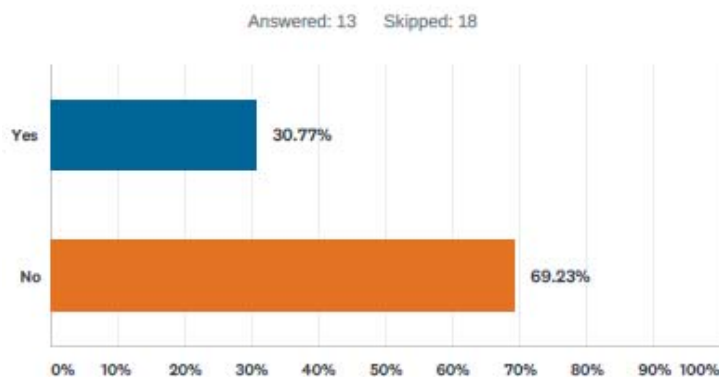
Respondents were then asked to select the operation days and hours that generally describe their primary child care services. Respondents were asked to only select one combination of days and hours. The results are presented in Figure 13. Among those who selected ‘other’ along with daytime work hours or shortened day, the comments specified different operating hours and “special days”. One respondent also indicated they offer care on Saturdays.

Figure 13 Operation days and hours



Afterwards, child care providers were asked if they also offer half days. The majority (69 per cent) responded no.

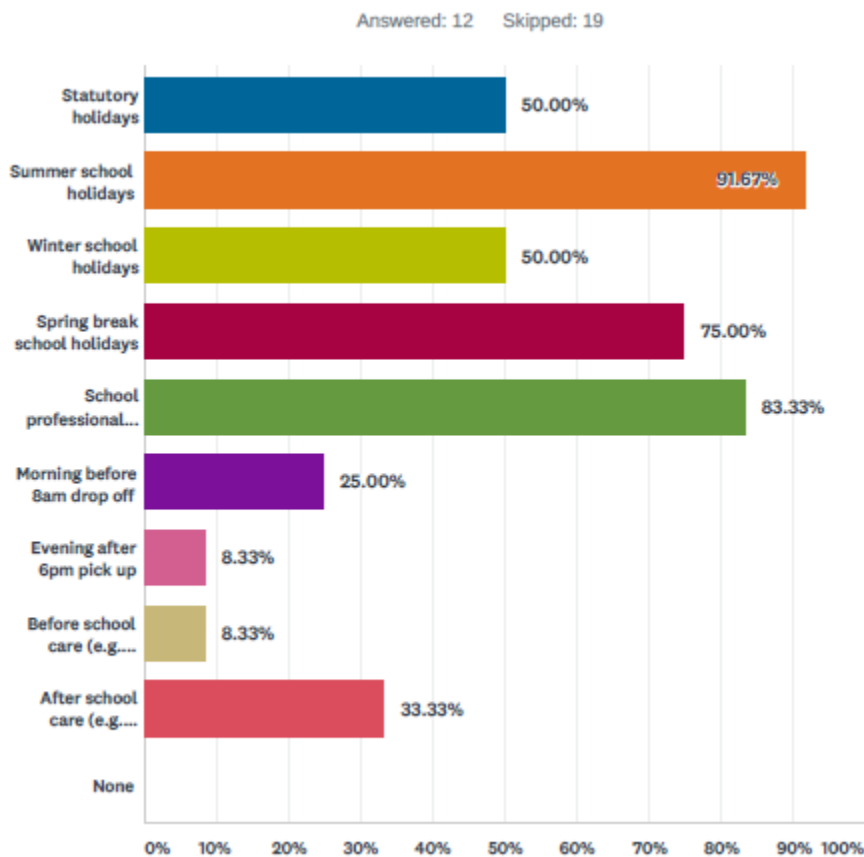
Figure 14 Half days



Special Days and Times

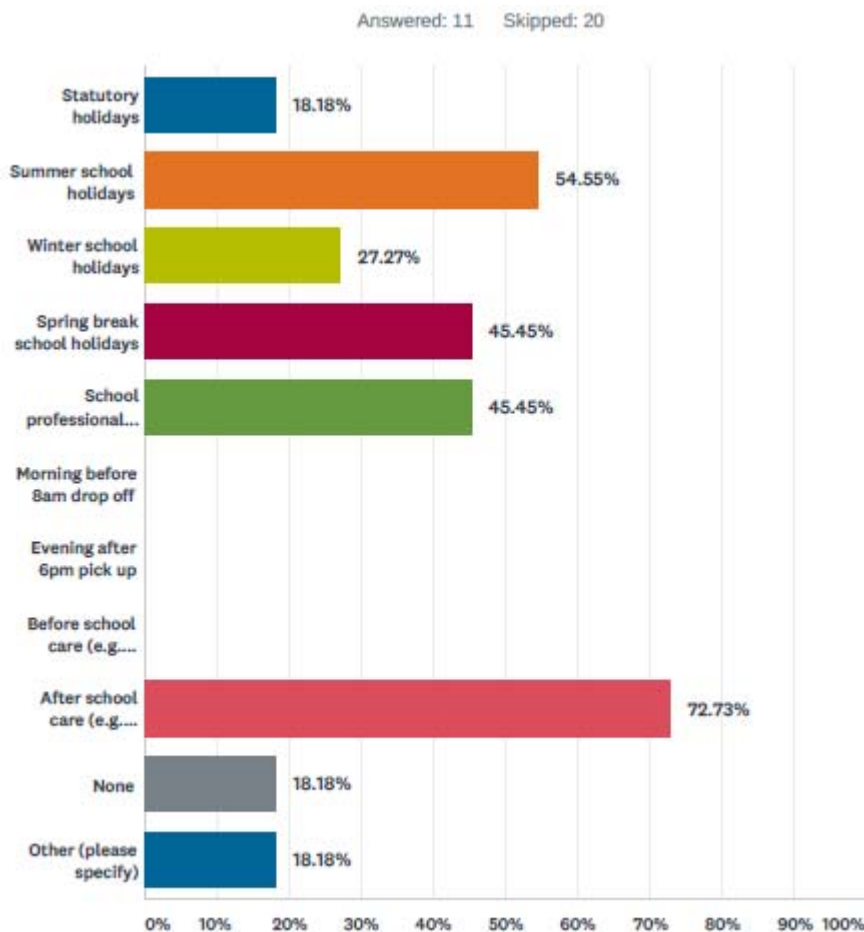
Providers were asked to indicate which “special” days and times they provide child care. Nearly 92 per cent selected summer school holidays, about 83 per cent indicated school professional development days and 75 per cent selected spring break school holidays. The options that received the lowest responses (both 8 per cent) were before school care (e.g., 7 a.m. to 8 a.m.), K-12 years old and after-school care (e.g., 2:45 to 5/6 p.m.), K-12 years old. The complete option list and associated responses is presented below (Figure 15)

Figure 15 Special days and times



Providers were then asked to indicate the “special” days and times requested by their users to provide. Respondents selected after-school care (e.g., 2:45 to 5/6 p.m.), K-12 years old most frequently (72 per cent), followed by summer school holidays (nearly 55 per cent), and spring break school holidays and school professional development days (both 45 per cent). The complete option list and associated responses is presented below (Figure 16). In the comments when selecting ‘other’, respondents indicated weekends as well as difficulties in staffing school aged aftercare.

Figure 16 Requested special days and times



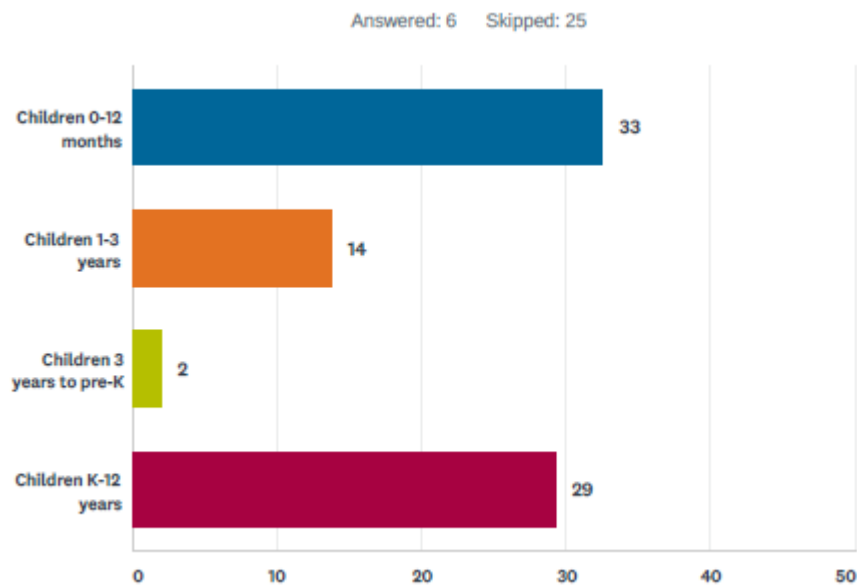
Providers were also asked what would help them to provide child care during more “special” days and times. They were asked to include any factors beyond staffing. The following key comments were offered by respondents:

- it is important to offer programming during times when children have the capacity to participate and learn (it is difficult for children to stay focused on structured learning after a full day at school);
- it would be ideal to partner with other providers out of the same location or very close so children could move from one program to another;
- more secure lease situations, better rental rates and more rental time at community school gyms; and
- commitment of more than a few children.

Waitlists

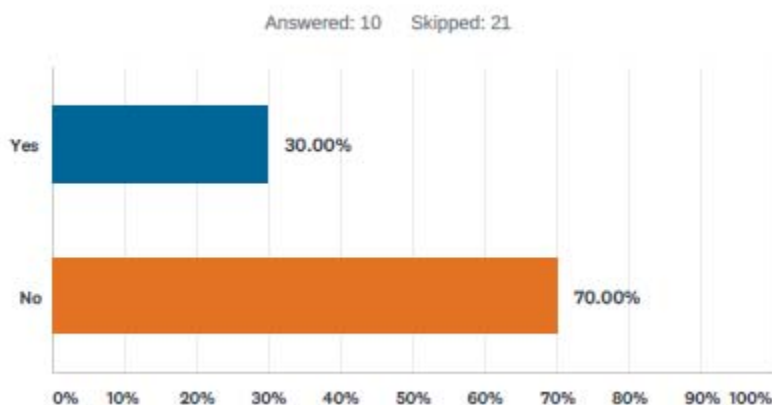
Providers were asked a series of questions about waitlists. First, if they have children who are waitlisted for care, they were asked to indicate the number of children on the waitlists in various age categories. On average, providers had 33 children aged 0-12 months, 29 children aged K-12, 14 children aged 1-3 and two children aged 3 years to pre-K on their waitlists (Figure 17).

Figure 17 Waitlists by age category



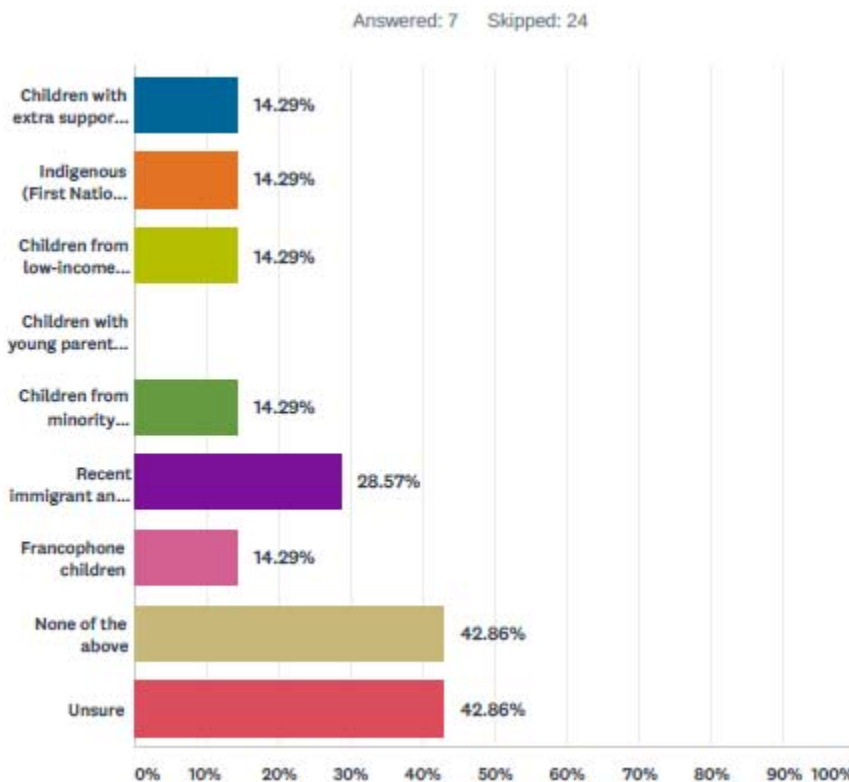
Second, respondents were asked if their waitlist policy places a preference on waitlisted children who have siblings in their care. Seventy per cent of respondents answered no to this question.

Figure 18 Waitlist policy preferences for siblings



Third, providers were asked to indicate specified groups on their waitlists. Many respondents were unsure or did not have the specified groups on their waitlists (42 per cent). Respondents also indicated recent immigrant and refugee children (28 per cent), followed by children with extra support needs, Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit) children, children from low-income families (utilizing unique benefits or fee reductions), children from minority cultures and language groups, and Francophone children (all 14 per cent) (Figure 19).

Figure 19 Specified groups of children on waitlists



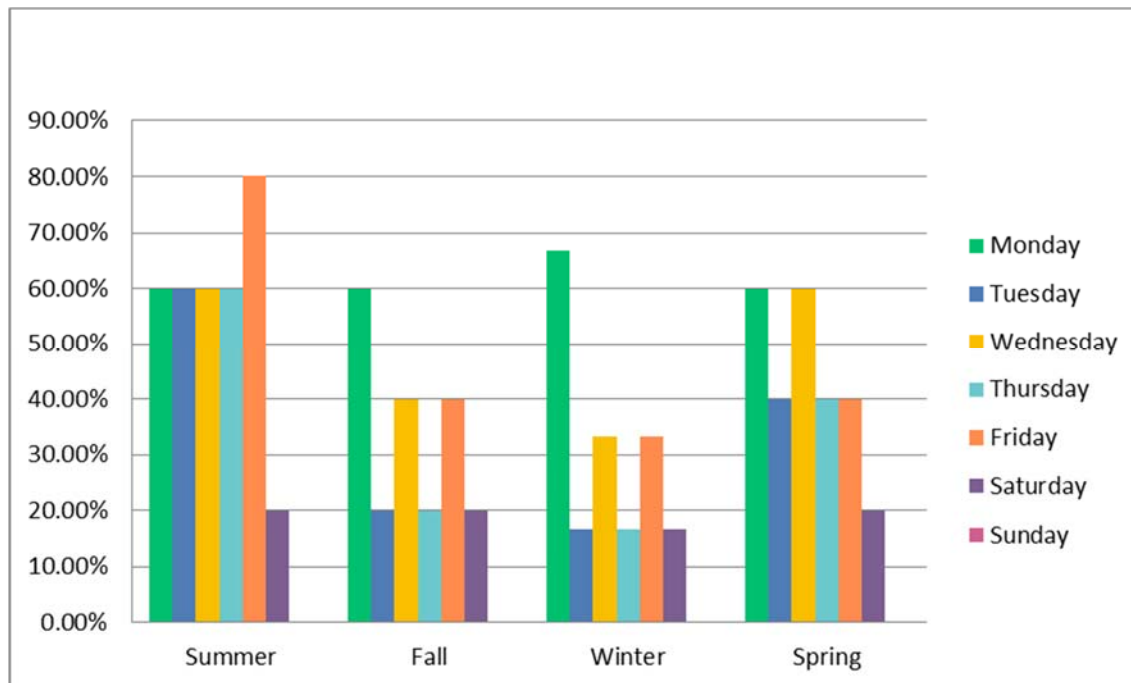
Fourth, when asked to describe any barriers they face to providing enhanced waitlist access to the above groups, the following key comments were offered by respondents:

- **Children with extra support needs:** qualified support staff along with funding for support staff; ratios respecting leaders to children with special needs; and training to address special needs
- **Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit) children:** transportation to bring children to programs running in Whistler; and more staffing
- **Children from low-income families (utilizing unique benefits or fee reductions):** communication to raise awareness of the benefits and fee reductions among families
- **Children with young parents under the age of 25:** more well-trained staff as longer hours of care are often needed because of parents' work hours
- **Children from minority cultures and language groups:** communication to raise awareness of available programs among families; and resources that allow for communication to be effective
- **Recent immigrant and refugee children:** language and financial barriers
- **Francophone children:** language barriers that can be overcome with learning resources
- **General comments:** lack of space available; not being structured for one-on-one care with regard to children with special needs; and a preference in Whistler for nanny services over daycare providers

Child Care Capacity

Providers were asked to specify the seasons and days (if any) they typically have excess space/capacity in their programs. The results to this question are presented in Figure 20.

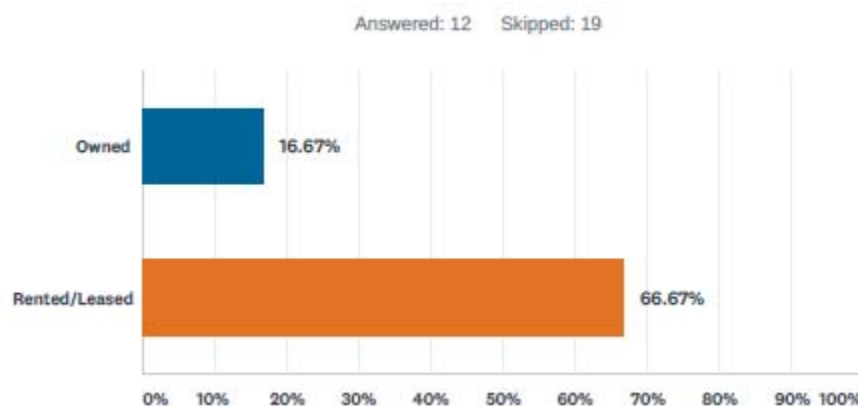
Figure 20 Excess space/capacity by seasons and days



Facilities

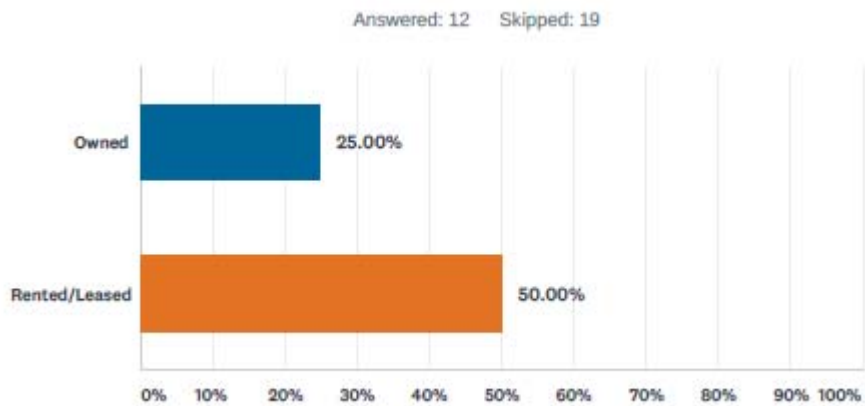
Providers were asked three questions about their facilities. First, they were asked to indicate the ownership tenure of their facility buildings. Sixteen per cent indicated their facility buildings are owned and 66 per cent indicated their facility buildings are rented/leased. The remaining respondents indicated 'other', which included a shorter-term lease and a partnership arrangement.

Figure 21 Ownership tenure of facility buildings



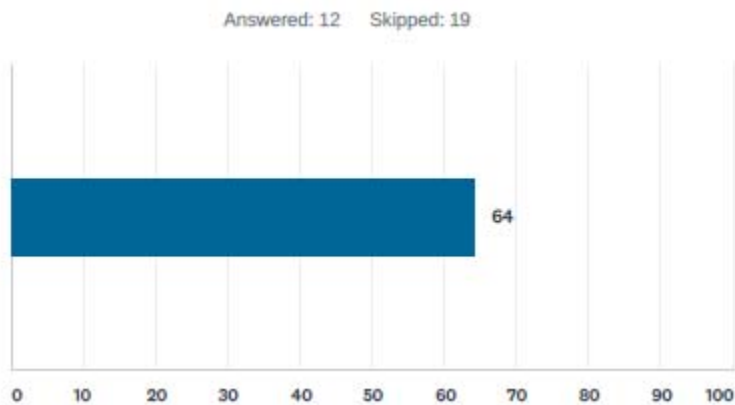
Second, they were asked to indicate the ownership tenure of their facility land. Twenty-five per cent indicated their facility land is owned and 50 per cent indicated it is rented/leased. The respondents who selected ‘other’ cited arrangements with the RMOW and access to public outdoor spaces.

Figure 22 Ownership tenure of facility land



Third, providers were asked to indicate how stable the use of their buildings and land are for child care purposes during the next five to 10 years on a scale of very unstable (zero) to very stable (100). Responses varied across the scale, with the average being 64.

Figure 23 Stability of the use of buildings and land for child care



Future Demand

Changing Demand for Age Categories and Various Groups

Based on their experience, providers were asked to describe how and why they think demand for child care might change (grow, shrink, shift, etc.). First, they were asked this question for different age groups over the next five to 10 years in Whistler. A summary of the comments from the eight responses to this question is organized by age category below:

- **Children 0-12 months:** Most respondents thought this age category would grow, although some thought this age group would shrink. The comments indicated that this will be the

biggest need group, but also pointed to preferences for nannies, high staff to child ratios and the specific equipment and care needed for this age group.

- **Children 1-3 years:** Most respondents felt this age category would grow, but some also indicated it would remain the same or shrink. Respondents pointed to care for this group being high in demand and how there are not enough spaces in Whistler. Comments also identified the need for staff, lots of space and car seats for this age group.
- **Children 3 years to pre-K:** Responses for this age category ranged from grow, remain stable to shrink. Comments noted this is a very educational phase where there can be more structured areas for different activities. Comments also noted there are lower facility costs and staff ratios for this age group. Observations were made that there are less preschoolers in Whistler and more options for this age group.
- **Children K-12 years before school:** Responses for this age category ranged from grow to unsure. Comments indicated it would increase because living in Whistler requires both parents to work full-time good paying jobs. Comments also stressed the importance of having a place where children can be picked-up and dropped-off in safe hands.
- **Children K-12 years after school:** Responses ranged from grow to shrink. Comments observed that there are more children in this age range than in the past and that local parents need care for children that matches their work schedules. Similar to the age group above, comments noted that living in Whistler requires both parents to work full-time good paying jobs.

Second, providers were asked this question for various groups over the next five to 10 years in Whistler. A summary of the comments from the nine responses to this question is organized by category below:

- **Children with extra support needs:** Responses ranged from grow to remain the same. Comments noted that more kids are being diagnosed on the autism spectrum and anxiety and depression are on the rise. Comments also identified the higher staff to child ratios for this group and the difficulty finding qualified, experienced staff.
- **Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit) children:** Responses ranged from unsure to stay the same to grow.
- **Children from low-income families:** Responses varied from grow to shrink. Respondents pointed to the high cost of living and housing in Whistler. Comments observed that as families are struggling to make ends meet, more children will not be participating in afterschool programs if there are costs associated with the programs. Comments also observed that people will move away due to Whistler's high costs.
- **Children from minority cultures and language groups:** Responses varied from grow to shrink. Comments noted that this grows yearly because there are people in Whistler from all over the world. Comments also observed that this group would stay the same or shrink due to high cost of living in Whistler.
- **Recent immigrant and refugee children:** Most respondents were unsure how to comment on this category. Comments offered that communication and financial support play big roles in supporting this group.
- **Francophone children:** Most respondents felt this group would remain the same. Comments expressed that as Whistler is very popular for people from everywhere, all languages and cultures will grow.

- **General comments:** Some respondents were unsure how to comment. Comments observed that there is a growing demand for nature-based experiential learning across all ages and groups. Comments also noted that Whistler needs affordable options for families, while paying leaders enough to enable them to work in child care in Whistler.

Trends

Providers were asked to describe any new child care programming trends, policies or market demands that may require different or larger facilities and locations. This question was answered by seven providers. Many comments focused on existing issues and respondents offered the following information:

- would like to stay in facilities and not move;
- do not need larger facilities if do not have the staff to fill up the facility space or decrease the waitlists;
- need to ensure employees can make ends meet, while making programs accessible for families;
- while parents need child care from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., cannot make a successful program without grant money; and
- to accommodate a fairly large waitlist, would need more staff and a new licence.

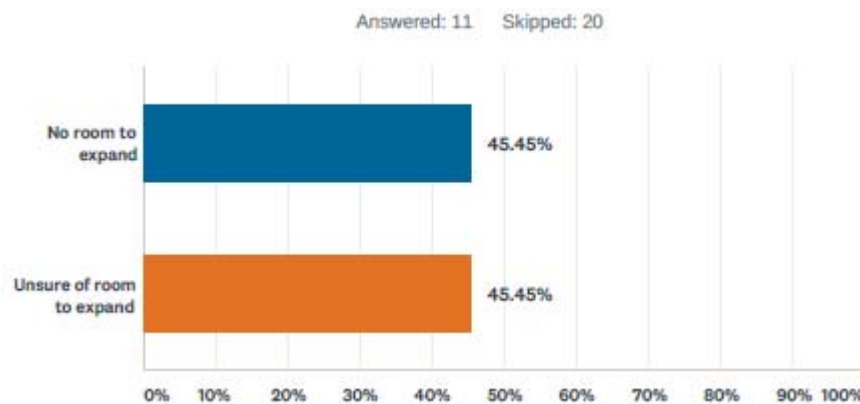
Respondents who spoke of trends and market demands offered the following comments:

- would like to accommodate children older than 10 and younger than six as well as young adults, which would require a different location/space strategy;
- Whistler needs more infant centres, not 3-5 year programs;
- forest schools seem to be a trend emerging for children over five years of age, so it would be good to have a covered 'outdoor classroom' space; and
- although Whistler focuses on outdoors, many parents and guardians are looking for indoor playgrounds and entertainment.

Expansion Plans

Providers were asked three questions about possible expansion plans. First, respondents were asked if there is physical room to expand their current facilities or can they access new facilities, and if so, approximately how many more child care spaces could be added (assuming they could achieve full staffing). Forty-five percent indicated they have no room to expand, while 45 per cent indicated they are unsure of room to expand. The additional child care spaces that could be created given the space available for those who could expand ranged from 15 to 24 spaces.

Figure 24 Expansion room and additional child care spaces



Second, providers were asked what number of child care spaces they are planning to add for various age categories if they have plans to expand their facilities/programs in the next zero to 10 years. The following information was obtained from the six respondents who answered this question:

- **Children 0-12 months:** The responses ranged from no spaces at the low end to 12 spaces at the high end.
- **Children 1-3 years:** The responses ranged from no spaces at the low end to 16 spaces at the high end. One respondent noted that program numbers can grow without expansion.
- **Children 3 years to pre-K:** The responses ranged from no spaces at the low end to 10 spaces at the high end.
- **Children K-12:** The responses ranged from no spaces at the low end to 20 spaces at the high end. One respondent noted that program numbers can grow without expansion.

Third, providers were asked that if they are not expanding to explain why not. They were asked to include any factors in addition to facility size or staffing. The key comments from the seven responses to this question are as follows:

- no affordable space that aligns with programming feel;
- no affordable homes that have decent yard sizes for getting the licensing;
- the rent is very high in Whistler and the fees charged would have to increase and that does not help families;
- renting space is too risky;
- no one is going into the ECE field anymore as the wage is too low;
- have enough space now and feel that upcoming enrollment is the right number to be safe, keep to ratios and run activities;
- no need to expand programs beyond client needs; and
- additional management is required for additional children.

Fees

Providers were asked to list the average program rate per session/day for the offerings they provide. The following price ranges were obtained from the nine providers who answered this question:

- **Children 0-12 months:** \$75 to \$120
- **Children 1-3 years:** \$55 to \$100, with one respondent indicating \$11 an hour
- **Children 3 years to pre-K:** \$55 to \$80
- **Children K-12 years before school:** \$49 to \$80
- **Children K-12 years after school:** \$14 to \$80

Providers were asked to describe any special considerations they provide with respect to fees (e.g., monthly discounts, multi-day savings, subsidies). This question received nine responses. The following are the key comments received in response to this question:

- early booking offer;
- multi-week programs are cheaper on a per day basis and priced with locals in mind;
- locals discounts, including cheaper drop in rates;
- discount if annual tuition paid up front;
- subsidy, child care reduction program;
- long-term contract signing gets special consideration; and
- unable to offer discounts.

Under-served Groups

Providers were asked that when thinking about funding, staffing, training, facilities, etc., are there any other barriers or improvements that could be made to provide child care to specified underserved groups. Eight providers answered this question. At times, some respondents expressed that there were no barriers related to the specified groups participating in their programs. The following are the key comments organized by the identified groups:

- **Children with extra support needs:** Barriers include the need for support workers and the lack of trained staff. Improvements would include designing facilities to support physical needs and having extra funding and training for support staff.
- **Indigenous (First Nations, Métis, or Inuit) children:** Barriers include program costs. Improvements would include transportation, inclusion of First People's principles of learning in programming and consultation with Indigenous caregivers.
- **Children from low-income families (utilizing unique benefits or fee reductions):** Barriers include program costs. Improvements would include more promotion around existing funding programs, additional financing and support, sponsored spaces, hot lunch programs and clothing /outerwear swaps.
- **Children with young parents under the age of 25:** Improvements would include parenting evenings, discussions and seminars as well as support and staffing for extra hours.

- **Children from minority cultures and language groups:** Improvements would include staff training, access to materials in different languages, celebration of culture with food and festivals, and inclusion in the social life of the centres.
- **Recent immigrant and refugee children:** Improvements would include additional financial support.
- **Francophone children:** Improvements would include staffing and training.

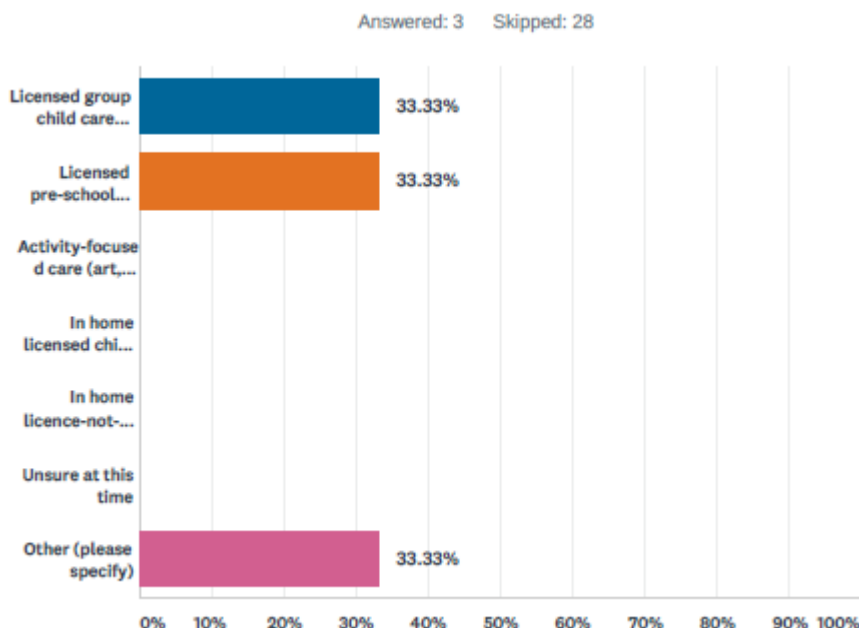
Considering Child Care

A series of questions were directed at respondents considering offering child care. These respondents are referred to as potential providers in the summary below. As part of the process, an effort was made to determine the extent of potential providers and reach them to take the provider survey. This portion of the survey had a limited response of three potential providers, one of whom is intending to provide in home care to their grandchildren. For completeness, these results have been included in this summary appendix.

Category of Potential Operations

Potential providers were asked to select the category that best represents the child care operation type in Whistler that they are thinking of opening. Three respondents answered this question. One respondent indicated: licensed group child care operation (children 0-12 months, 1-3 years, 3 years to pre-K, children K-12 years). One respondent indicated: licensed preschool child care operation. One respondent selected 'other', which was identified in the comments as caring for their grandchildren.

Figure 25 Potential providers and categories of child care operations



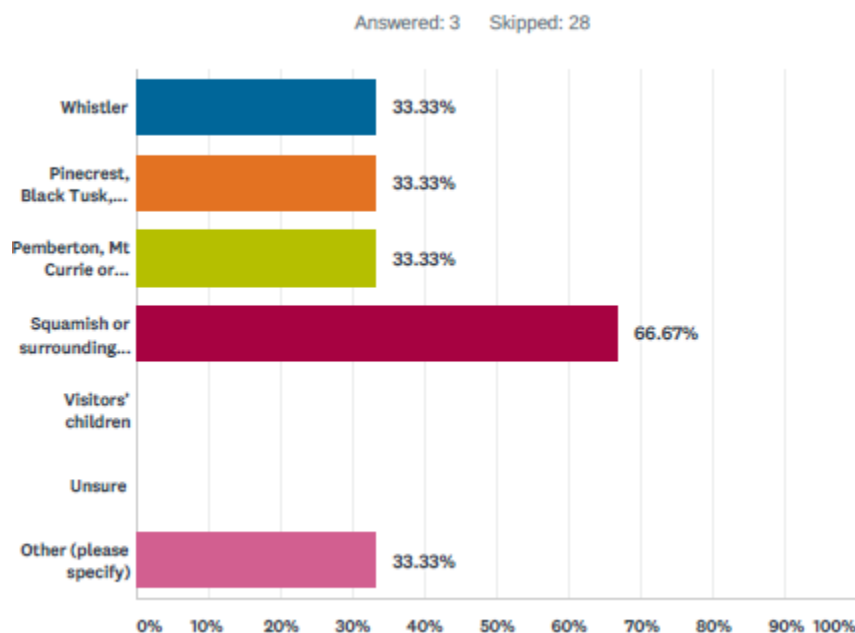
Child Care Users

Potential providers were asked to indicate the number of child care spaces they are considering offering for specific age groups. One respondent was unsure and the others indicated the following totals:

- **Children 0-12 months:** two spaces
- **Children 1-3 years:** 12 spaces
- **Children 3 years to pre-K:** 24 spaces
- **Children K-12 years of age:** zero spaces

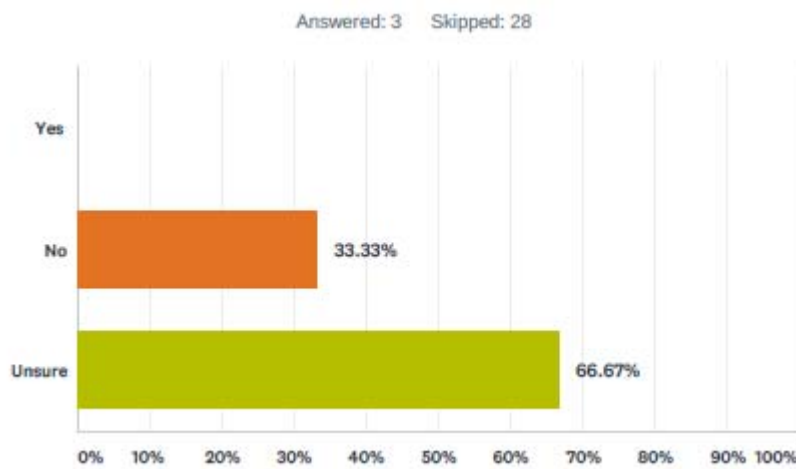
Potential providers were asked which communities they will accept children from. The options were: Whistler; Pinecrest, Black Tusk, WedgeWoods; Pemberton, Mt Currie or surrounding area; Squamish or surrounding area; visitors' children; unsure; and other. The following results were obtained:

Figure 26 Potential providers and communities they will accept children from



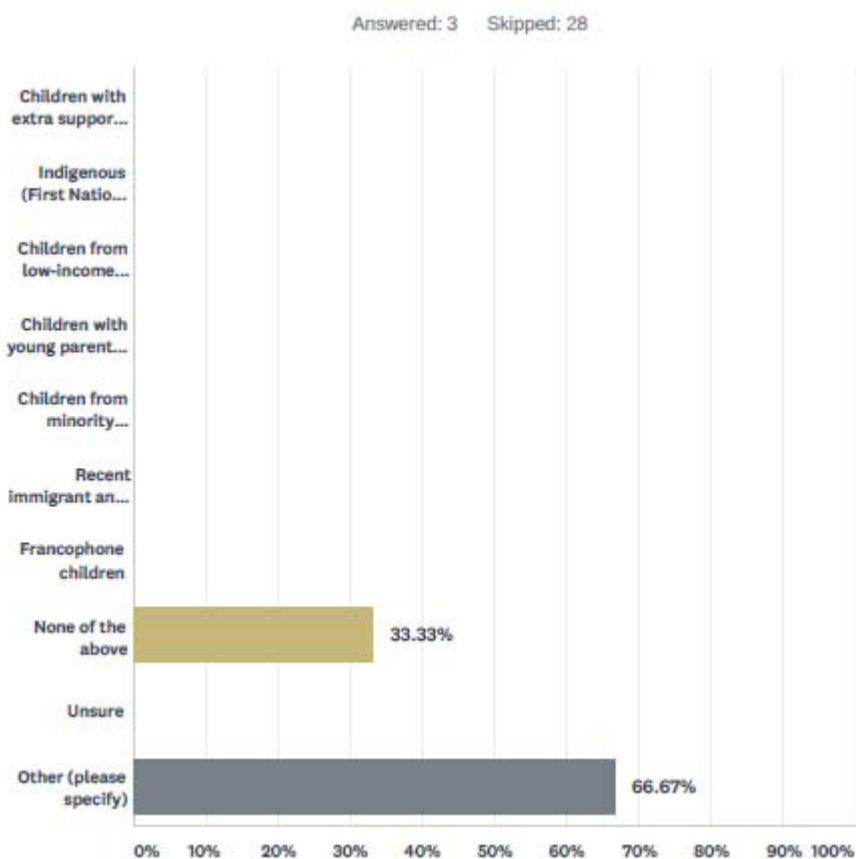
Potential providers were then asked if they plan on providing preferred enrollment to children who reside in Whistler. The majority were unsure.

Figure 27 Potential providers and providing preferred enrollment to Whistler children



Potential providers were asked to select any groups they plan to direct their services to. A note was provided that the intent of this question is to better understand the child care challenges that might be faced by different groups in the community. One respondent selected none of the above and two respondents indicated 'other'. The comments for those who selected 'other' specified that all children would be welcome.

Figure 28 Potential providers and specified groups

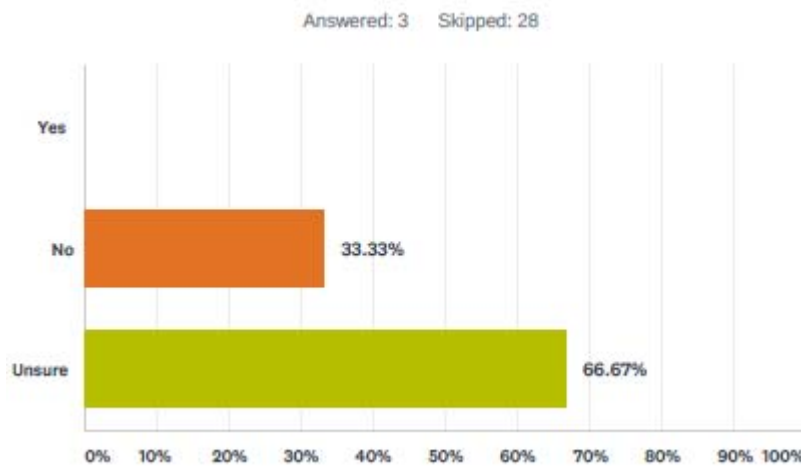


Staffing

Potential providers were asked how many total employees, including management/administration, they expect to have. Three potential providers responded to this question and in total they indicated five full-time employees and two full-time employees.

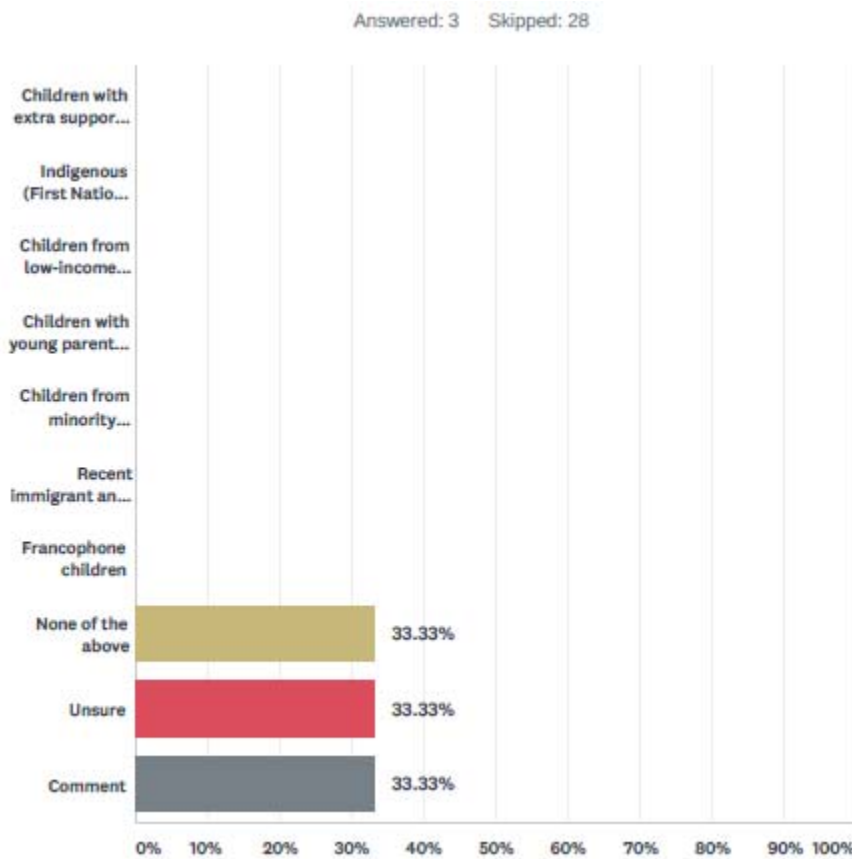
Potential providers were then asked if they are short staffed given their facilities' expected capacity for children, with the following results:

Figure 29 Potential providers and anticipated staff shortages



Potential providers were asked which groups' unique needs they are planning on considering during staff hiring/training or programming decisions. The results are as follows, with one respondent noting that this would be considered as needed.

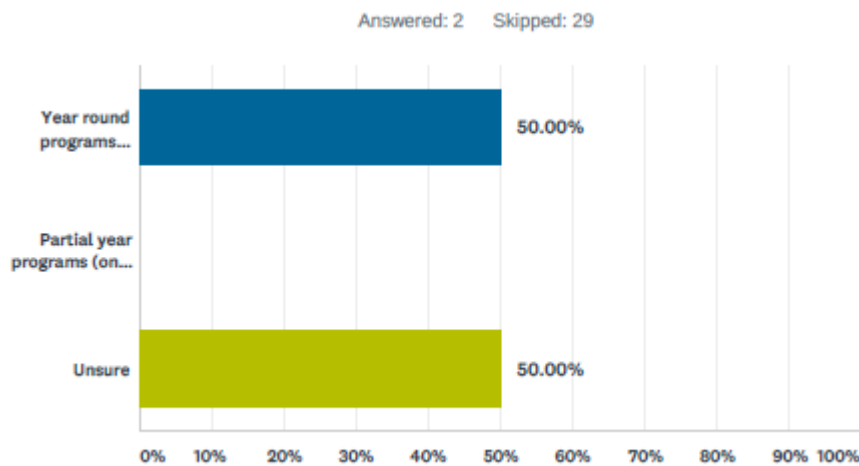
Figure 30 Potential providers and staffing considerations regarding specified groups



Operation Times, Utilization, Demand

Potential providers were asked to select the operational calendar that best describes their proposed child care services. One respondent selected: year-round programs (Jan-Dec, every month and week). One respondent indicated they were unsure. No respondents selected: partial year programs (only school months, only school holiday breaks, only winter or summer, only professional development days, etc.).

Figure 31 Potential providers and operational calendar



Potential providers were asked if they will also offer half days. Both respondents answered yes to this question.

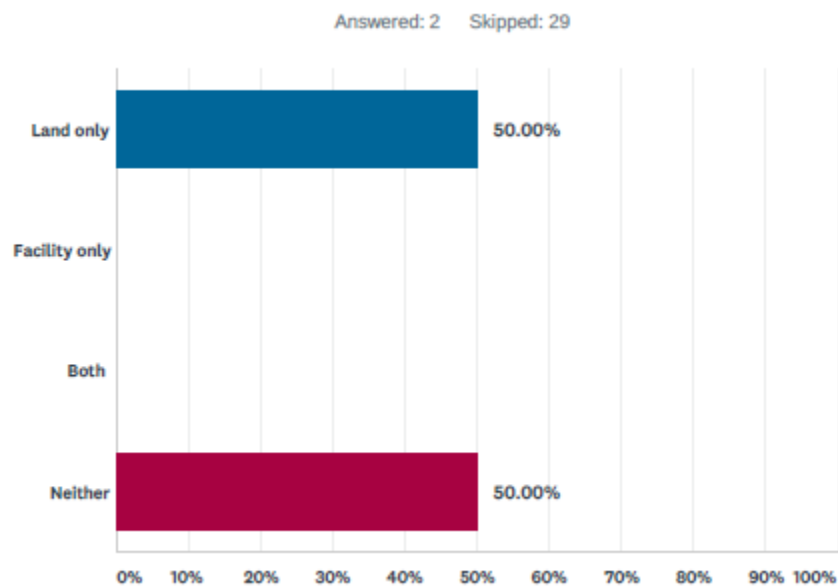
When asked to indicated which “special” days and times they are planning on providing child care, both respondents indicated they are unsure. The answer choices for this question were: statutory holidays; summer school holidays; winter school holidays; spring break school holidays; school professional development days; morning before 8 a.m. drop off; evening after 6 p.m. pick up; before school care (e.g., 7 a.m. to 8 a.m.), K-12 years old; after-school care (e.g., 2:45 to 5/6 p.m.), K-12 years old; none; and unsure.

Potential providers were asked what would help them to provide child care during more “special” days and times. They were asked to include any factors beyond staffing. The comments indicated budget.

Facilities

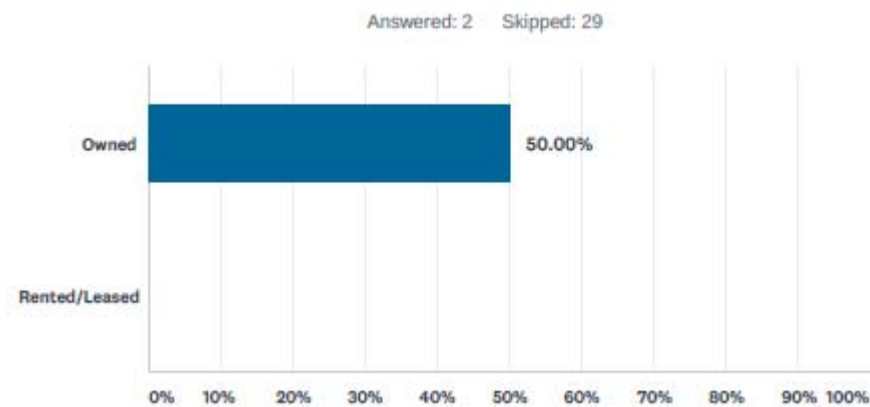
Potential providers were asked if they have secured land or a facility for their operation, with the following results:

Figure 32 Potential providers and securing space



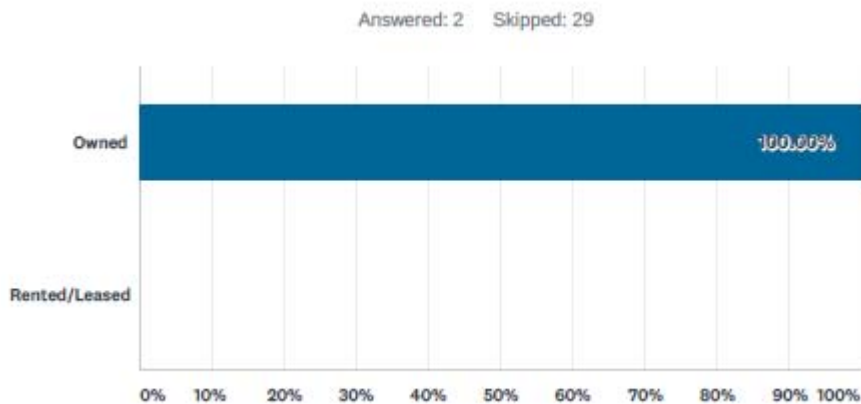
Potential providers were asked what type of building tenure they are looking for or have secured. One indicated this is to be determined and one indicated owned.

Figure 33 Potential providers and building tenure



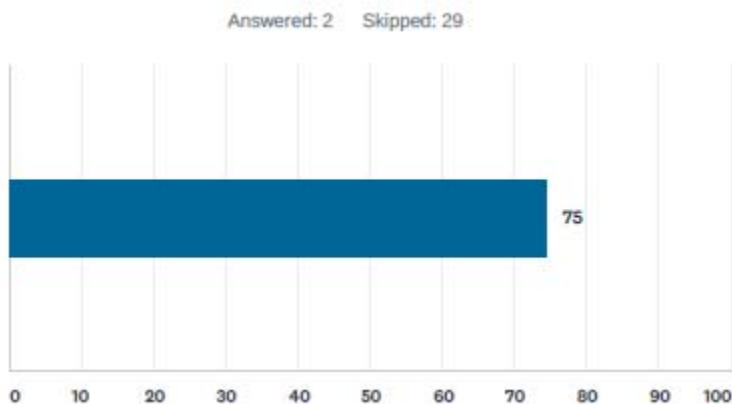
Potential providers were asked what type of land tenure they are looking for or have secured. Both respondents indicated owned.

Figure 34 Potential providers and land tenure



If they have secured a facility, potential providers were asked to indicate how stable the use of their building and land are for child care purposes during the next five to 10 years on a scale of very unstable (zero) to very stable (100). The average of the two responses was 75.

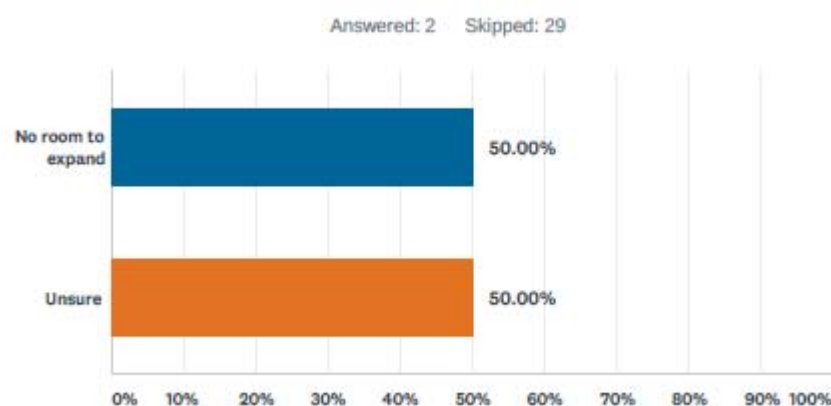
Figure 35 Potential providers and stability of use of buildings and land



Facility Expansion

Potential providers were asked if there is physical room to expand their expected facilities and if so, approximately how many more child care spaces could be added (assuming they could achieve full staffing), with the following results in Figure 36. No comments were made on the expected number of spaces that could be added.

Figure 36 Potential providers and expected expansion



Other Comments

A concluding question was asked of all survey respondents: Is there anything else you want to share about the current or future child care demand or other child care issues in Whistler? Many of the eight respondents provided specific information about their programs and future needs. The following are the key general comments offered by the respondents:

- some programs are experiencing vacancies and they need alternative and cost-effective ways to promote their offerings;
- some programs could possibly take on more attendees and a larger age range, yet are also capped by facility and space constraints;
- some programs need to rent municipal facilities at an affordable price and for longer hours;
- some programs are priced to break even to pay for staff, rent and equipment;
- providers would like to continue to provide quality programming that teach skills;
- Cheakamus Crossing is expanding and the waitlist is building;
- there is a need for more accessible transportation in all areas with better timing;
- large businesses could benefit by providing childcare in the same building;
- there seem to be discrepancies in Whistler with licensed/unlicensed care providers and confusion as to when a licence is needed and when it is not;
- for licensed care providers, it is hard to keep centres open and sustained in line with regulations when unlicensed programs are operating on different terms (this can also have the effect of siphoning off qualified staff);
- the future and current demand is for children under 3 years of age (this has been an ongoing issue for many reasons: staffing, housing, licensed space to provide care and funding);
- child care options at the gym would be a great start; and
- child care is too expensive for most young families, therefore grandparents are stepping up too often.

APPENDIX C: TYPES OF CHILD CARE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

There are four different categories of child care in British Columbia (B.C.) and the licensed category has a number of specific types within it. The information below is largely derived from a provincial government website¹⁵

Licensed Child Care

Licensed child care facilities are monitored and regularly inspected by regional health authorities. They must meet specific requirements for health and safety, staffing qualifications, record keeping, space and equipment, child-to-staff ratios, and programming. Licensed care includes the following types:

- **Group child care—under 3 years old:** Can include children from birth to 36 months of age and have a maximum group size of 12 children. The child-to-staff ratios are: one to four children with one Infant Toddler Educator; five to eight children with one Infant Toddler Educator and one Early Childhood Educator (ECE); nine to 12 children with one Infant Toddler Educator, one ECE and one ECE Assistant. Staff qualifications: Infant Toddler Educator Certificate (approximately 1300 hours of training); ECE Certificate (approximately 900 hours of training); ECE Assistant Certificate (completed one early childhood education course). Setting: A community-based facility or centre.
- **Group child care—2.5 years old to school-age:** Can include children from 30 months to school-age (Kindergarten) and have a maximum group size of 25 children. The child-to-staff ratios are: one to eight children with one ECE; nine to 16 children with one ECE and one ECE Assistant; and 17 to 25 children with one ECE and two ECE Assistants. Staff qualifications: ECE Certificate (approximately 900 hours of training); ECE Assistant Certificate (completed one early childhood education course). Setting: A community-based facility or centre.
- **Group child care—school-age (before-and-after school care):** Can include school-age children (Kindergarten and up) and have a maximum group size of 24 children from Kindergarten and Grade 1 OR 30 children from Grade 2 and older with no Kindergarten or Grade 1 children present. The staff-to-child ratio is one responsible adult for each 12 children from Kindergarten and Grade 1 and one responsible adult for each 15 children from Grade 2 and older. Staff qualifications: Responsible adults must be 19 years of age or older and able to provide care and mature guidance to children; must also have 20 hours of child care-related training, relevant work experience, a valid first aid certificate and a clear criminal record check. Setting: A community-based facility or centre.
- **Multi-age child care:** Can include children from birth to 12 years old and have a maximum group size of eight children. The staff-to-child ratio is one ECE for eight children. Staff qualifications: ECE Certificate (approximately 900 hours of training). Setting: A community-based facility or centre.
- **In-home multi-age child care:** Can include children from birth to 12 years old and have a maximum group size of eight children. The staff-to-child ratio is one ECE (who is also the

¹⁵ More information can be found at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/how-to-access-child-care/licensed-unlicensed-child-care>.

licensee) for eight children. Staff qualifications: ECE Certificate (approximately 900 hours of training). Setting: In the child care provider's own home.

- **Family child care:** Can include children from birth to 12 years old and consist of a maximum group size of seven children. The staff-to-child ratio is one responsible adult (who is also the licensee) for seven children.
- **Preschool—2.5 years old to school age:** Preschools typically operate on the school year (September to June). Most preschool programs run from one to four hours a day (some programs can run longer).
- **Occasional child care:** This is drop-in child care that can be for a maximum of eight hours a day and no more than 40 hours per calendar month.

Registered Licence-Not-Required Child Care

These are unlicensed care providers and they can only have two children or a sibling group who are not related to them under their care. They must have registered with a Child Care Resource and Referral Centre.

Licence-Not-Required Child Care

These child care providers can operate legally in B.C. They are not registered or licensed and are not monitored or inspected. Unlicensed child care providers do not have to meet health or safety standards. Legally, the child care providers can care for up to two children (or a sibling group) who are not related to them. They may be operating illegally if they have more than two children in their care. Parents and guardians are responsible for overseeing the care and safety of their children in these care arrangements.

In-Child's-Own-Home Care

This unlicensed care is when parents arrange for child care at home—like a nanny or a baby-sitter. Children from other families cannot be included in this care. The care provider cannot be a relative who lives in the home.