

## MEMORANDUM

June 7, 2022

TO: Mayor & Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager  
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager  
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office  
Maria Pontikis, Director, Civic Engagement and Communications  
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk  
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office  
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office

FROM: Sandra Singh, General Manager, Arts, Culture and Community Services

SUBJECT: Update on Child Care Motions and the upcoming Childcare Strategy

RTS #s: 12937 & 14365

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### PURPOSE

This memo provides an update on the following Council Motions:

- Childcare that Works: Extended Hour and Around-the-Clock Childcare for Working Families in Vancouver ([February 9, 2021](#)) (RTS #014365)
- Building a Family-Friendly Vancouver: Affordable Child Care ([December 5, 2018](#)) (RTS 012937)

Additionally, this memo briefly describes how the forthcoming draft Childcare Strategy (subject to Council approval on June 8 2022) will respond to key aspects of the above Council Motions and position the City to support a senior government-led universal childcare system going forward.

### BACKGROUND

On February 10th, 2021 a Motion on Notice ("Childcare that Works: Extended Hour and Around-the-Clock Childcare for Working Families in Vancouver") was passed by Council, resolving:

- A. THAT Council direct staff to consider policy to encourage and incentivize the development and operation of 24-hour and/or extended hour childcare centres in Vancouver.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to add a question to applications related to development or licensing of childcare, to survey and measure the interest these stakeholders may have in future applications to provide 24-hour childcare models, if specific policy was implemented.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to explore the possibility of supplementing current requirements for licensed childcare centres to include specific considerations and requirements for childcare offering 24-hour or extended care models, including overnight and weekend childcare.
- D. THAT Council direct staff to explore the possibility of Provincial funding specific to 24-hour or extended hour Childcare in the City of Vancouver.
- E. THAT Council direct staff to include this work in the workplan, report back and recommendations to Council on the actions passed in the motion “Building a Family Friendly Vancouver: Affordable Child Care” or earlier, if possible, and
- F. THAT Council direct the Mayor to send a letter to the Premier as well as the Minister of Education and the Minister of State for Childcare expressing Council’s support for the widely endorsed Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning (supported now by 65 local BC governments and 34 school districts including the VSB) - known as \$10 a day Plan which, based on evidence and research, calls for a public system of high quality affordable child care where educators are fairly compensated.

On December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018 a Motion on Notice (“Building a Family-Friendly Vancouver: Affordable Child Care”) was passed by Council, resolving:

- A. THAT staff be directed to formally contact the appropriate Ministry of Children and Family Development staff to discuss opportunities for the City of Vancouver to secure funding for future projects from the Community Child Care Space Creation Program and report back to Council within the potential for provincial funding.
- B. THAT staff be directed to explore ways the City of Vancouver can work with organizations and agencies including Vancouver Coastal Health and the B.C. government to streamline and expedite the processes associated with permits and licensing for child care facilities in Vancouver.
- C. THAT staff be directed to explore a program to create incentives for applicants to include child care in future developments and report back to Council in spring of 2019; however, if funding from senior levels of government becomes available sooner, that staff prioritize and expedite a report and any recommendations to Council
- D. THAT staff be directed to consider purpose-built child care, including temporary structures similar to modular housing when appropriate. FURTHER THAT staff consider requirements for child care facilities to be included; when appropriate, on any development of City Owned Land.

## **DISCUSSION**

A detailed response and to each of the Resolutions in these Childcare Motions (RTS 014365 & RTS 012937) was provided in a Memo to Mayor & Council dated May 10, 2021. Since that time, staff have continued efforts to advance progress on the Motions and to integrate this work in the forthcoming Childcare Strategy.

What follows is a brief summary of the response to each Resolution within the “Childcare that Works” Motion (which includes a report back on the “Building a Family-Friendly Vancouver” Motion).

**Motion: Childcare that Works: Extended Hour and Around-the-Clock Childcare for Working Families in Vancouver (February 10, 2021)**

- A. *THAT Council direct staff to consider policy to encourage and incentivize the development and operation of 24-hour and/or extended hour childcare centres in Vancouver.*

The Resolution is addressed in a research report set out in Appendix A.

Staff have engaged key stakeholders internal and external to the City in order to respond to Resolutions in both Motions (RTS 014365 & RTS 012937). If approved by Council, an updated Childcare Strategy will help provide a policy springboard for mobilizing cross-departmental resources necessary to develop and implement effective policies, incentives and tools, as requested in the Motions. The proposed Childcare Strategy provides a policy framework that will guide future work and includes “Early Actions” that respond directly to “Building a Family Friendly Vancouver: Affordable Child Care” Motion (RTS 012937), for example:

- Launch a capital grant program to invest in, and secure community-led, non-City owned childcare;
- Explore, test, and monitor potential tools, requirements, and opportunities for securing childcare delivery in focused contexts (such as Station Area plans) with early policy alignments; and
- Identify and adopt approaches to optimizing, streamlining, and aligning development approval processes for childcare through engagement with other City departments and Provincial licensing and other partners.

Much of the work identified in the Early Actions has been initiated, requiring significant cross-departmental coordination, but not additional resources. Approval of the updated Childcare Strategy will help provide staff from across departments with a common reference from which to advance these new childcare priorities, and integrate them into existing and future City plans, priorities and workplans.

The forthcoming Childcare Strategy and Early Actions also considers “Childcare that Works: Extended Hour and Around-the-Clock Childcare for Working Families in Vancouver” Motion (RTS 014365), and incorporates learnings from the research report (Appendix A). Early Actions that address this Motion include the following:

- Research, engage and explore opportunities for the City to support flexible, responsive childcare services.
- Advocate to senior levels of government to provide operational funding that can enable operators to deliver flexible and extended hour services within a universal system.

- B. *THAT Council direct staff to add a question to applications related to development or licensing of childcare, to survey and measure the interest these stakeholders may have in future applications to provide 24-hour childcare models, if specific policy was implemented.*

The Resolution is addressed through the research report set out in Appendix A.

Additionally, through work with development and permitting staff at the City and with senior licensing officers at Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), it was determined that the challenges to delivering non-standard hour care cannot be addressed by the City through its development and permitting processes. The challenges to 24 hour and extended hour care are largely operational, in particular funding. VCH has indicated that non-standard hour care intentions could potentially be included in the licensing application process.

- C. *THAT Council direct staff to explore the possibility of supplementing current requirements for licensed childcare centres to include specific considerations and requirements for childcare offering 24-hour or extended care models, including overnight and weekend childcare.*

The Resolution is addressed through the research report set out in Appendix A.

Current legislation and licensing is sufficient to guide the delivery of 24-hour and extended hour care. The physical design of facilities wishing to offer 24-hour or extended hour childcare require little different from already legislated Provincial requirements, with the exception of the provision of an adequately sized nap room/sleeping space. The City's *Childcare Design Guidelines* include direction to provide an adequately sized nap room and/or sleeping space, which can used to accommodate a program offering non-standard hours of care.

Additionally, the Province is in the midst of establishing design standards for childcare facilities within a new universal system, which are likely to include accommodations for non-standard hour care.

- D. *THAT Council direct staff to explore the possibility of Provincial funding specific to 24-hour or extended hour Childcare in the City of Vancouver.*

The Resolution is addressed through the research report set out in Appendix A.

The City does not directly operate childcare and has limited jurisdiction and influence over the operational practices of childcare. The City also has limited funding to support childcare operations. If Council is interested in supporting 24 hour or extended childcare operations, the City would need to consider potential new funding sources and/or advocate the Province to take up these costs.

Recent Provincially funded projects with a non-standard hour childcare component are being driven by employer-led and workplace-specific initiatives. These projects include: local needs assessments of parents (employees) and families; detailed costing of non-standard hour operations; and funding through existing provincial mechanisms to lower the cost of building and operating new childcare spaces (ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund, Child

Care Operating Funding). Other external funding sources have also enabled co-located uses (such as social housing).

City staff participate on the provincial Child Care Reference Group. Lead by the Ministry of Education and Child Care, this group is tasked with helping to steer the directions and implementation of a universal childcare system in BC. Models that could support greater access to more non-standard hour care have been an active consideration of this Reference Group.

- E. *THAT Council direct staff to include this work in the workplan, report back and recommendations to Council on the actions passed in the motion “Building a Family Friendly Vancouver: Affordable Child Care” or earlier, if possible.*

An auxiliary staff position was deployed to help respond to the Motion. The scope of work included:

- Detailed case studies and jurisdictional analysis of 24-hour and extended hour care practices and examples, locally, provincially, nationally and internationally;
- The design, administration and analysis of a survey of current childcare operators regarding their interests in, barriers to, and potential incentives for providing extended hour and 24-hour childcare services;
- Interviews with key informants from the childcare sector;
- Examination of the operational design, licensing considerations, and operational viability of offering extended hour and 24-hour childcare;

Staff developed a research report entitled *Childcare That Works: Extended Hour & 24 Hour Childcare in Vancouver* (Appendix A) that includes a literature review, jurisdictional analysis, results of the survey administered to local childcare operators, and interviews with key sectoral experts and professionals. Key findings, as well as next steps are outlined in the report.

- F. *THAT Council direct the Mayor to send a letter to the Premier as well as the Minister of Education and the Minister of State for Childcare expressing Council’s support for the widely endorsed Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning (supported now by 65 local BC governments and 34 school districts including the VSB) - known as \$10 a day Plan which, based on evidence and research, calls for a public system of high quality affordable child care where educators are fairly compensated.*

A letter dated April 15, 2021 was sent to all recipients identified in the Resolution as set out in Appendix B.

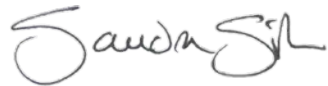
## **NEXT STEPS**

If approved, the forthcoming Childcare Strategy will help to mobilize the resources necessary to effectively advocate, develop and implement new policies, opportunities and tools as outlined in these Motions.

## FINAL REMARKS

Significant work continues within ACCS, and in partnership with other City Business Units, to consider and develop new models and approaches to delivering affordable childcare that is inclusive, flexible and culturally safe in Vancouver. Concurrently, staff are also continually seeking to encourage and develop new ways to support the childcare sector, and to help make childcare that works for all residents of Vancouver.

If Council requires further information, please feel free to contact me directly at [sandra.singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:sandra.singh@vancouver.ca) and we will provide response through the weekly Council Q&A.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sandra Singh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sandra" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Singh".

Sandra Singh, General Manager  
Arts, Culture, and Community Services

[sandra.singh@vancouver.ca](mailto:sandra.singh@vancouver.ca)

# Appendix A

## Childcare That Works: Extended Hour & 24 Hour Childcare in Vancouver

### Background

#### Vancouver City Council

In the motion “Childcare that Works: Extended Hour and Around-the-Clock Childcare for Working Families in Vancouver” passed in February 2021, Council directed staff to (1) explore policy to incentivize the development and operation of 24-hour and/or extended hour childcare centres in Vancouver; (2) identify the possibility of securing Provincial funding for 24 hour and/or extended hour childcare; and (3) survey stakeholders to determine level of interest in operating 24-hour and/or extended hour childcare.

Staff coordinated this study with work already underway to develop an updated Childcare Strategy, and to explore methods to continually gauge operators’ interest in non-standard hour care as part of development or licensing activities.

#### Scope of Report

This report provides a brief overview of the City of Vancouver’s role in childcare, and the current status related to the accessibility of childcare spaces, staffing issues in the sector, and a range of other factors that affect childcare service operations in Vancouver. It also addresses how City goals and policies are being impacted by the unavailability of childcare during non-standard hours.

The study included an in-depth literature review on non-standard hour employment (the primary driver of demand for non-standard hour care), as well as operational challenges of providing non-standard hour childcare services in Canada. Literature that identified who is likely to benefit most from the availability of non-standard hour licensed centre care was also reviewed.

A situation scan of proposals, policies and programs relating to non-standard hour childcare in Vancouver, Metro Vancouver and in other jurisdictions nationally and internationally was conducted, with the aim of identifying the needs and challenges of delivering non-standard hour childcare. Two examples in particular, one in Quebec and the other in Australia, are highlighted for their experiences delivering non-standard hour care in the context of a universal childcare system.

With these practices in mind, interviews were conducted and a survey was distributed to licensed group childcare providers in Vancouver. The analysis of key themes emerging from the primary and secondary research are summarized into findings and recommendations, including information on how childcare providers may access funding and other supports in order to pilot non-standard hour childcare.

A detailed assessment of employer and/ or family needs for non-standard hour childcare, as well as costing for a non-standard hour childcare services pilot or trial, were beyond the scope of this study.

## Summary of Findings

- Provincial funding programs that support the development of new childcare spaces (e.g. ChildCare BC New Spaces Fund) and childcare operations (e.g. BC Child Care Operating Funding) are resulting in greater stability for operators, and may enable some operators to consider offering non-standard hour care in cases where there is a demonstrated need.
- An ongoing province-wide Early Childhood Educator (ECE) staffing shortage in the childcare sector is making the delivery of standard hour operations a challenge; operators who participated in this study identified struggles retaining staff, maintaining child-staff ratios and managing ECE burn-out. These workforce issues, which were already present prior to March 2020, were reported to have been exacerbated since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- For childcare programs in civic (e.g., schools and Community Centres) and other multi-service facilities in Vancouver (e.g., Neighbourhood Houses), the desire to provide non-standard hour care was identified in some cases to be in competition with other priorities, including sharing multi-purpose childcare spaces with other types of public-service programming outside standard childcare hours. It was also communicated that some operators would need to negotiate changes to their leases in order to be able to provide non-standard hour childcare.
- The needs of parents and guardians for extended hour childcare was found to vary significantly based on their work or education schedules, family structure, and/or the specific needs of their child(ren). To date, there have been no population-based studies done that assesses the needs for non-standard hour childcare to help policy-makers and childcare operators effectively gauge the demand. This poses a challenge on many levels, particularly since the costs to operate in non-standard hours was found to require full or nearly full enrollment in order for operations to be financially viable. This information gap has been found to impede operators in testing the feasibility of non-standard hour childcare in practice.
- In response to the City's online survey, when asked about barriers to offering non-standard childcare, many childcare operators primarily identified operational, staffing and business concerns as the key impediments to offering non-standard hour childcare, and did not cite the Province's licensing requirements as barriers.
- The need for on-standard hour childcare was found to be connected to regional workforces, housing and travel trends. There are several anticipated advantages to ensuring non-standard hour childcare provision is coordinated regionally.

## The City's Role in Childcare

While responsibility for childcare falls under the purview of senior governments, the actual process of delivering and maintaining licensed childcare infrastructure services in Vancouver to date has involved a number of different stakeholders from the public, private and non-profit sectors.

An ongoing childcare shortage has been negatively affecting children, families and the economy in Vancouver for decades. In response, the City of Vancouver started playing an increasingly active role in supporting the development of childcare facilities, providing operational grants to non-profit providers, and advocating to senior governments in the 1970s. In more recent years, as senior governments have begun to increase their investments in childcare, the City has



played a stronger leadership role in its partnership with the Province of BC, including the establishment of a joint childcare target for the City of Vancouver and an associated capital funding agreement in 2018.

With the Province beginning to take steps towards transitioning to a universal system of affordable childcare, the City's main roles in working with the Province and its civic and non-profit partners will intensify in the short term, with a heavy reliance on municipal tools to help facilitate the creation of childcare spaces.

To date, the City's role in childcare has excluded direct operations. Rather, the City's focus has been on policy development, working with developers to build City-owned childcare facilities and leasing them at nominal rates to qualified non-profit operators, and providing start-up and annual operating grants to non-profits to facilitate program development and quality enhancements, particularly for operators supporting equity-deserving families. The City also applies its Childcare Design Guidelines (1993) to review development applications of all new group childcare facilities (both City-owned and non-City owned) to ensure they provide staff and children with a learning environment that supports healthy child development. To date, only one City-facilitated childcare centre continues to provide non-standard hour childcare, at Hastings Racetrack.

## Non-Standard Hour Childcare

The majority of the existing childcare services in Vancouver serve the needs of parents and caregivers who work Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm. For families with parents/guardians whose work schedule falls outside standard hours, there are limited options for childcare. This need is broadly referred to as “non-standard” or “non-traditional” hour childcare (Lero *et. al*, 2019). The Province of BC defines non-standard hour childcare as being **any childcare that operates outside 7am to 7pm hours on weekdays**.

Within this broader definition of non-standard hour childcare, there are several distinct types of that fall on a spectrum in relation to standard hour care (from extended weekday hours to 24 hour childcare):

- **Extended weekday hour childcare**, allows drop-off or pick-up to take place slightly earlier or slightly later than standard hour childcare on weekdays;
- **Weekend and/or statutory holiday childcare**, provides services when standard hour childcare centres are closed;
- **Overnight childcare**, provides childcare overnight during hours when children are expected to be sleeping.

Non-standard hour child care is often confused with (and can overlap with) occasional or backup care, or emergency childcare, which take place on an as-needed, on-demand or irregular basis. These types of childcare providers are required to meet a separate set of licensing requirements in order to provide licensed care in these categories. There is also a maximum number of hours that licensed providers can provide service to a family/child per month, and these operations typically have different staffing arrangements than standard-hour childcare services do.

## Provincial Funding and Policy in Non-Standard Hour Care

BC continues to lack both dedicated funding or specific policies that support the delivery of non-standard hour care. (A summary BC's policies comparing those in other jurisdictions in Canada is provided Sub-Appendix C.) As of 2022-23, operational supports for childcare operators offering non-standard hour childcare was only available to operators applying for operational funding through the Childcare Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI). As the CCFRI program's intent is to provide funding to operators to allow them to reduce parent fees, the program may support the delivery of non-standard hour childcare by allowing operators to receive funding for standard hour childcare while allowing fee increases for the non-standard hour portion of the service. This added revenue is intended to allow operators to offset the anticipated increased costs associated with providing extended hour childcare.

Specific childcare license types are explicitly disallowed from providing overnight care; namely, occasional care, child-minding and pre-school (30 months to School Age). BC currently regulates overnight childcare in the following ways:

- The presence of fire detection devices and number of facility exits proximal to sleeping spaces;
- The maximum number of hours a child can be in childcare (13 hours per day);
- Compliance with legislated health and safety and child development outcome requirements; and
- Registration with a medical health officer.

## Common Factors affecting Non-Standard Hour Care Supply

A comprehensive, nationwide evaluation of parents' needs for non-standard hour childcare for 0-5 year olds was completed most recently by the [Childcare Resource and Research Unit](#) in collaboration with the University of Guelph, and with the support of Employment and Social Development Canada (Lero *et al.*, 2019). This evaluation coincided with the Federal Government's inclusion of "flexibility" as a key principle of childcare development.

The findings of the Lero *et. al* study indicated that a common complication in delivering non-standard hour childcare is that the demand for non-standard hour childcare is generally less predictable than the demand for standard hours weekday childcare services. This is likely due to the variability of non-standard work hours and schedules for parents and guardians depending on their field of work. This results in increased administrative and overhead burdens, with implications for revenue and programming.

Significantly, unpredictable demand creates difficulties in determining non-standard hour operating hours and staffing needs.

Any non-standard hour model for childcare necessarily must account for both the access and costs of the program facilities (*i.e.* rent, facility maintenance, equipment and supplies) as well as those for staffing. With a sector-wide ECE staffing crisis, most childcare operators are challenged to recruit and retain staff maintain working conditions, and offer appropriate benefits and wages (so as to prevent burnout). With the demand for ECE's to work in standard-hour childcare centres being so high, many childcare operators are not in the position to be able to explore providing services to families needing it non- standard hour childcare.

## Effects of COVID-19 on childcare staffing

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, pre-existing childcare staffing challenges have only deepened. Demand for childcare during the pandemic shifted dramatically, as public health measures came into play to close schools, child care services and non-essential businesses, and as directives were enacted requiring social distancing and large-scale implementation of policies allowing for remote work and work from home. A recent analysis by Statistics Canada showed that across Canada, employment among childcare workers in February 2021 had decreased by 21% from February 2020 (compared to a 3% decrease in total employment across Canada over the same period; Uppal and Savage, 2021). While no Vancouver-specific analysis could be found, it is reasonable to assume that those working in childcare in Vancouver may have experienced a similar or even more pronounced shift in the sector.

## The Need for Non-Standard Hour Child Care

### Non-standard Hour Work and Education

In our current childcare system, the primary motive for exploring and delivering non-standard hour childcare is to support the full participation of parents and caregivers in employment or education pursuits that operate outside of standard childcare hours. However, there is great variation in employment, educational schedules and needs, depending on the sector or precise nature of the work – not all non-standard hour work is created equally, with differences potentially impacting what forms of childcare families need and/or prefer. These workplace or training-related variations include considerations such as:

- Whether the work is seasonal or year-round;
- Whether the work involves regular (recurring) evening and night shifts, weekends, or rotating shifts (with any one or a combination of possible shift types), or involves irregular on-call hours;
- Whether the work is temporary / contractual or permanent (or self-employment);
- Whether the parent has advance notice of hours of work (and thus is aware that they will require child care).

Lero *et al.* (2019)'s analysis of the 2016 census shows that about 8% of all parents do not use licensed care because service hours do not work with their work schedules. The non-standard hour workforce includes those in professional fields (such as health care and protective services) as well as those working in retail sales, manufacturing, primary industries, accommodation and food services, and transport industries.

Some employment may also fit the definition of “precarious,” a description often applied to employment that may be informal, insecure (casual or contract-based) or otherwise exempt from or lacking labour protections such as Employment Insurance. Parents who are precariously employed “are more likely to be women, parents, younger in age, racialized and recent immigrants, Indigenous, and to have less formal education and lower incomes than workers with standard employment” (ibid p. 144). Overall, it is also often the case that parents’ (especially mother’s) work may be arranged around the availability of care, forgoing opportunities otherwise available to parents and with economic, social and equity impacts to society as a whole.

For this reason, licensed out-of-home non-standard hour childcare offerings can potentially have a disproportionately positive impact, by addressing the non-standard hour childcare needs of parents who are particularly underserved, at risk for poorer health and education outcomes, or who have fewer resources or options for accessing other childcare supports and options.

### Other Reasons for Wanting Non-Standard Hour Care

Given the overrepresentation of equity-deserving groups in non-standard hour work, it is anticipated that expanded availability and provision of non-standard hour childcare would advance the City's economic, health, equity and Reconciliation policy goals, beyond those associated with expanding childcare provision generally.

Meeting parents and families' needs for non-standard hour care would potentially have implications for the Nighttime Economy Strategy, by enabling caregivers to participate in nighttime economic activity. This participation is enabled by access to safe mobility options between home, work and childcare, which may necessitate changes to ensure safe walking, cycling, rolling and transit during non-daylight hours, particularly if there are any safety or security concerns adjacent or on the grounds of childcare facilities.

### Non-Standard Hour Childcare Options and Parental Choices

While this report is focused on licensed, centre-based care, most comprehensive examinations of non-standard hour care highlight the role played by other forms of care. In particular, it is observed that the vast majority of non-standard hour care in BC is provided through licensed family care rather than licensed group care. Additionally, families often rely upon unlicensed or informal care (provided by family members, friends, or neighbours) by those who have access such resources.

Many parents may be in the position of having to assemble what are termed "child care packages." This involves seeking childcare from multiple sources and having to orchestrate and coordinate among multiple providers – be they co-parents, extended family members, neighbours, unlicensed or licensed formal care providers either in-home or in a centre – as their schedules and resources allow. Sharing childcare duties between parents (or primary/secondary caregivers) are sometimes called "split-shift" or "tag-team childcare" are also often used to bridge gaps to allow for extended hour care coverage. These patchwork approaches may be even more necessary in two-parent households where both parents are engaged in non-standard hour work. The additional coordination effort and emotional labour on parents who are regularly engaged in securing (and re-securing) conditional, time-limited care arrangements should be understood for adding stress on those who may already be disadvantaged, and having time displacement effects that keep families from using time for other things.

Little is known about parents' reasons for preferring or not preferring licensed, centre-based group childcare; their decisions are likely the outcome of a complex juggling of trade-offs. Families' needs and preferences around location, commute, cost, advance commitments to hours in care, flexibility, required notice for changes to care scheduling, and specific requirements such as cultural fit or accommodation for disabilities are all potential factors, in addition to a program's hours of operation and availability. For these reasons, not all parents working non-standard hours may be able or willing to rely on non-standard hour childcare in

licensed settings, were it made available, even if their particular barriers to use it were reduced or removed.

There are additional unknowns regarding the causal relationship between non-standard hour work and non-standard hour care. Some research indicates that in some cases, parents may deliberately seek out or prefer non-standard hour work because they are able to access non-standard hour care (possibly through low- or no-cost means, via spouses or informal caregivers like family members), and that this care is only available outside standard hours. With childcare becoming more universally accessible (both in availability and cost), it may be the case that parents presently making this trade-off, will in the future have access to standard hour care and therefore no longer constrain their employment choices to non-standard hour work.

### Existing non-standard hour care in Vancouver

For parents seeking childcare in Vancouver, Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre (WCCRC) maintains a publicly accessible list of all childcare providers, the programs they operate, their hours of operation, as well as the number of spaces they have available (updated regularly). Further, the Provincial government hosts and maintains the BC Child Care Map, a publicly accessible online resource. The BC Child Care Map draws on childcare licensing information through the Provincial Health Authorities, and allows parents to search for programs based on a number of features, including hours of operation.

As of March 2022, searching the map for Vancouver identified 3 licensed family child care facilities and 1 licensed group child care facility operating with non-standard hours. The family childcare facilities were listed as operating the following hour types: weekdays after 7pm; weekdays before 6am and after 7pm; and on weekdays and weekends. The licensed facility was listed as operating on weekdays and statutory holidays.

### Current Programs in Vancouver

One noteworthy program that provides non-standard hour childcare in Vancouver is the multi-age childcare program at the Hastings Park Childcare Centre. More information about this program is below as part of *Informant Interviews*.

This facility was built as part of a negotiated agreement between the City of Vancouver and Great Canadian Gaming Corporation (GCGC). The agreement includes a provision to offer extended hours for a portion of the spaces, originally intended to meet the needs of racetrack workers whose racing-season hours begin before 6am. As part of this agreement, GCGC provides ongoing funding for the multi-age childcare program that runs from 5:30am to 1:30pm on weekdays and daytime hours on weekends. The program, operated by the non-profit Kiwassa Neighbourhood House, has been in operation since the childcare facility opened in 2011.

### Past Programs in Vancouver

The Kids in General childcare program located at Vancouver General Hospital was constructed in anticipation of providing extended hour or overnight childcare for hospital employees on shift work. These services were offered for a short time after the facility opened and subsequently discontinued. In 2015, Development Disability Association (DDA) took over as service provider for the childcare. Present staff state that there has been no interest expressed in extended hour service. This has been verified through regular surveys of families enrolled in their services, including surveys conducted since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Vancouver Society of Children's Centres (VSOCC) was reported to have previously made attempts to offer extended hours and Saturday care. Their staff reported that the programs were not viable due to consistently low uptake from parents. Staff indicated that these programs were financially unsustainable in the absence of ongoing external funding support, for example from government grants or employers of parents working non-standard hours.

## Non-Standard Hour Childcare beyond Vancouver

Non-standard hour childcare has been studied, trialled and in some cases operated consistently in a number of other jurisdictions, and at various points in time. Case studies of these programs documented factors associated with their success or failure, which vary from program to program and are often related to local conditions. The applicability of the insights gained from programs is limited, given the significant changes in childcare policy and direction in Vancouver.

This section starts with a high-level overview of non-standard hour care licensed centre-based childcare services regionally, highlighting the themes previously identified in the research consulted. It will then summarize the key takeaways from evaluations of flexible childcare trials in two jurisdictions that have extensively trialled non-standard hour care: Quebec and Australia.

### British Columbia

#### Richmond

Richmond's childcare assessment for 2017-2022 surveyed parents and identified need for care on early mornings, evenings (6:30pm – 9:00pm) and weekends and holidays. The main barriers for parents to accessing non-standard hour care were found to be (1) that non-standard care was unavailable or (2) that available options were cost-prohibitive to use. In Richmond, 13% of surveyed parents indicated that they needed different hours or days than what their present childcare provider offered. 19 providers across all license types operated outside non-standard hours, and the majority of this care was offered on weekend days.

#### Trail - Unicorn Childcare Centre (Planned)

The Unicorn Childcare Centre facility in Trail is presently under construction and slated to open in late summer 2022. The facility is targeting the creation of 65 new licensed child care spaces, 46 of which are supported by the Provincial government's Childcare BC New Spaces grant, which funds capital costs for childcare operators. The spaces include 12 infant and toddler spaces, 24 spaces for children aged three years to kindergarten, 10 preschool spaces and 24 school-age spaces. The operating hours for the facility are planned for 4:30 am to 8 pm, seven days a week. The project is a partnership of the City of Trail, the Union of BC Municipalities and the Columbia Basin Trust. (One of the regional employers, Teck Trail Operations, is contributing to the project via a land transfer for the lot where the facility is being built.)

In 2018, a consultant (working at the direction of the Skills Centre, a non-profit workplace skills and economic development agency) produced a detailed costing and business case for a non-standard hour childcare facility. Building on previous research brief, the consultant surveyed employees at the region's two largest employers (all with high numbers of workers with shift, casual and other irregular-hour arrangements) and regional health authority, in order to identify employees' preferred location of childcare and the span of needed hours. The study then costed the gap in capital funding for the

construction of the facility in a suitable location at competitive wages, as well as the ongoing operational funding needs of an extended hour facility.

#### [Kitimat - Status of Women Tamitik \(Planned\)](#)

Status of Women Tamitik is a non-profit society providing social services in Kitimat (in operation since 1974). The organization is presently developing a three-phase facility consisting of a transition house, second stage housing units for women and children, and secured affordable housing units. A 24-hour child care component was added to the vision of the project in mid-2019 both in recognition of the importance of childcare in supporting women's access to the workforce (especially in relation to shift work and non-standard hours) and with the announcement of then-newly available of provincial funding for childcare. The centre will consist of 60 spaces total - with 36 daytime spaces and 24 overnight spaces. There is also commitment for involvement of the Haisla Nation in the childcare program.

Partnership support for the project include construction and operational funding from the Province's Building BC: Women's Transition Housing Fund; project Development Funds from the Canadian Housing & Mortgage Corporation and BC Housing; the Affordable Housing Fund from the District of Kitimat; Nechako-Kitimaat Development Fund Society; and additional private funding. This project speaks to the potential benefits of co-locating social services alongside childcare, whereby the cost of facilities can be partially defrayed by sharing space with other social programs that have a mandate that includes extended or 24-hour service provision.

#### Nationally

As of 2019, seven out of 13 jurisdictions in Canada reported having additional funding programs to support non-standard hour childcare. The review also shows that nine out of 13 jurisdictions (including BC) have regulations and policies regulating non-standard hour care. See Appendix C for a summary of regulations in territories and provinces across Canada (as adapted from the review conducted by Lero, 2019).

#### Internationally

In the US, where childcare is provided predominantly in a market-based system, non-standard hour care is difficult to come by and has been researched in particularly constrained markets (such as Washington, DC). Some noteworthy examples include models where unions directly provide and arrange non-standard hour childcare to their worker-members.

#### Non-Standard Hour Care in Jurisdictions with Universal Childcare

With the transition to universal childcare, flexible and non-standard hour child care in jurisdictions that have explored providing non-standard hour child care in a publicly supported context is helpful instructive for understanding possible outcomes to potential responses to needs for non-standard hour child care.

#### [Quebec](#)

Since 1997, Quebec has implemented a number of childcare policy reforms to build out a universal childcare system. In 2016, Ministère de la Famille (Ministry of Families) expanded funding to CPEs (childcare centres) and created new funding for SGEs

(education childcare services) with the intent of increasing provision of more diverse and flexible childcare service during non-standard hours.

In 2021, the Ministry conducted a consultation of operators. It reported that while some non-standard hour services were made available (primarily on weekday evenings and weekends) amongst subsidized child care programs (SGEEs), an auditor found that the non-standard hour childcare available was not seen as broadly meeting the non-standard hour care needs of parents. Furthermore, for the operators that did try to expand their offerings beyond standard hours, they observed that their efforts in expanding their operating hours were in competition with or acted as a hindrance to developing other programs for which there was also considerable need (such as part-time child care services).

The Ministry observed that they had little information about either why childcare operators did not choose to offer non-standard hour care or about parents' needs, and that in the absence of this information, were not at time of writing able to offer incentives or measures to better improve the situation of making care available for parents. They further observed that other providers of care, such as drop-in child care services, or those with different, more flexible models (such as part-time care, evening care, care during specific times of the school year for parents enrolled in post-secondary studies, on-call care) were used more by parents needing non-standard hour child care. For this reason, the Ministry is weighing its options in working with parts of the childcare system to develop non-standard hour care services, in part to ensure that the flexible services remain available for their intended purposes.

#### *Australia*

In 2013-2014, the Australian Government undertook a project known as the Childcare Flexibility Trials, to research and pilot childcare arrangements in support of parents working non-standard hours. These trials were used to test and evaluate the viability, strengths and weaknesses of a number of approaches of different kinds of care (in-home family care, centre-based care, fixed schedule, variable schedule), in collaboration with public and private service providers, and stakeholders such as sector employers.

Several of the attempts at creating non-standard hour care were not met with success or high uptake from parents, resulting in early discontinuation. While weekend and evening child care for school-aged children was highly regarded by parents, it was used less than expected and discontinued, likely because parents had other options available to them. Features that appeared to support provision included those that supported flexibility, such as reducing the length of time required for cancellation, or not requiring separate bookings or additional fees on top of existing services. The trials concluded that flexible services are challenging to offer in a financially sustainable fashion. Because the services were also identified as being a trial, parents also viewed these services as unsuited for reliance in the long-term; or their starting and end may not have matched up well enough with convenient times of the year for parents to adjust their other arrangements.

### Workplace Childcare

Given that the demand for non-standard hour childcare is overwhelmingly driven by non-standard hour work (and to a lesser extent, non-standard hour education and training), there is



considerable overlap and potential to involve employers and workplaces in surmounting the challenges of non-standard hour work. In 2018, City of Vancouver staff, in collaboration with UBC Healthy Cities Scholar Jacqueline Hunter, prepared a research report on opportunities and challenges to expanding workplace childcare in Vancouver. The following section summarizes relevant and key findings of that report.

Workplace childcare refers to childcare services that assist workers at a particular workplace, organization, or development with their childcare needs. The nature of a workplace's involvement in childcare programs can vary widely, ranging from “the supply of land, funds, and resources for the capital construction of a childcare facility; assistance with design and development of a facility; support for ongoing operations and maintenance costs; direct subsidies to parents; as well as many other initiatives that support employee childcare needs. Workplace childcare centres can exist on the premises of an actual workplace, or can take place in facilities that are off-site, although they are normally nearby” (Hunter *et al.*, 2018). Locally, models for employer participation have been identified, ranging from:

- for-profit programs;
- non-profit owned and operated childcare programs;
- childcare programs with spaces accessible only a company's employees;
- childcare programs that prioritize a company's employees but with spaces accessible to the broader community; and
- partnerships between employers and independent, non-profit childcare operators.

In some cases, unions may also be in a position to play a similar role as workplaces, through either creating facilities or operating programs, or both.

## Informant Interviews

### Who we spoke to

In order to gather an initial understanding of the local state of practice on this topic, initial interviews were held. We approached staff from three large childcare providers (YMCA, DDA, VSOCC) each with experience operating multiple childcare programs across varying age groups and areas of the city. The interviews were comprised of open-ended, loosely structured conversations regarding extended hour and overnight care. Two of the interviewees had direct experience operating childcare programs associated with regional health care service providers.

We additionally spoke with long-time childcare advocate Sharon Gregson, and workplace childcare consultant Martha Sculley, to better understand what the obstacles to and benefits of non-standard hour childcare are from their respective vantage points and what they have heard about the topic from the people they interact with.

### What we heard

#### *Parent and family needs*

Of the childcare providers we spoke to, VSOCC constitutes the one with the greatest range and depth of experience with operating childcare programs. On the topic of extended hour care, staff from VSOCC identified a past pilot attempt to offer an extended hour service (on Saturday), as a result of parents expressing desire for the availability of such a service. Once the service was made available however, staff found that actual uptake of these weekend services by families to

be low. Since the number of families actually using the service were far fewer than anticipated, the program did not turn out to be financially viable, and was discontinued. The operator expressed hesitation and concern at the idea of attempting to pilot such an offering again.

A second operator, DDA, describes keeping in close touch with families enrolled in childcare programs at their various centres, and surveying these families on a regular basis. Their staff member reported not receiving any signals or indication from families that an extended hour service was needed at this time. At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, DDA staff anticipated receiving requests for extended hour services due to changes in work patterns as a result of distancing measures, but in the end no such feedback was received. Since 2015, has been the operator for Kids in General, a previously-established childcare program in the health services district surrounding Vancouver General Hospital. The centre was designed with features that appear to have been purpose-built to facilitate extended hour or overnight care services (such as bathing facilities). However, in the years that they have operated the service, they report receiving no requests for overnight care service.

The third operator, YMCA, described the positive impact that extended hour care could have for families, including single parent families, and those with a caregiver who works during day and undertakes training or education activities in the evenings (or vice versa). Parents often prefer to find childcare close to home or work, but the choice is even more critical for those families who need non-standard hour care: near home, to allow neighbours or family members to help pickup or drop off children close to home; or near work, to reduce the chances of experiencing commute- or traffic-related delays in picking up a child themselves. The staff member was not aware of many changes to care related to pandemic-related changes in work situations.

The childcare consultant we spoke to, who had past experience consulting and working with the Pacific Immigrant Services Society, suggested that parents who are newcomers to Canada may struggle particularly with the lack of non-standard hour childcare. In general, newcomers are less likely to have a social or support network of extended family or trusted relationships with neighbours on whom they can rely. They may be making do with fewer or constrained economic resources, be single working parents, and be employed in more precarious or inconsistent work arrangements. Parents in these situations may have few if any choices around importance work features like adequate notice for non-standard hour work, or may have to trade-off on things such as quality, appropriateness or distance to childcare.

#### *Staffing non-standard hour care*

When asked if any prospective staff members had ever expressed an interest in working non-standard hours, interviewees from all three childcare service operators responded that they were not aware of any staff had expressed preference or indicated willingness for this. All operators emphasized that it had been stressful and challenging environment in which to hire and retain enough staff for existing standard hour programs, and that this has become even more true as pandemic-related employment challenges strain staff and negatively impact working conditions.

Given the chronic and system-wide nature of the difficulties with staffing being experienced by operators by November 2021, one interviewee speculated that the City's interest in non-standard hour care might be perceived negatively by childcare program staff who are already struggling to serve families enrolled in existing services.

### *Case: Kiwassa Neighbourhood House - Hastings Racetrack Multi-Age Program*

We consulted with a staff member at Kiwassa Neighbourhood House, who operate the Hastings Park Childcare Centre's multi-age childcare program. The program is intended to accommodate racetrack workers, whose contracts vary seasonally and which can sometimes shift with little to no notice, as workers are employed by teams that operate at the track. The programs accommodate workers by allowing for drop-offs at roughly 5:30am and with a pickup time of roughly 1:30pm. The program also offers care hours on weekends. The program is based out of a dedicated, purpose-built facility that has been secured space by the City of Vancouver, with nominal rent collected from the program.

At the time of the interview, the program was not operating at full capacity. The program's staffing situation was noted to be unusually flexible, with long-term staff members in place who were committed to and willing to providing care outside of standard hours. The program is able to operate as a result of these factors, as well as with the support of an ongoing financial contribution from the racetrack.

### *Employer involvement in non-standard hour childcare*

Employer involvement in non-standard hour childcare was primarily discussed with one interviewee whose consulting work brought them in contact with employers and unions. Local sectors and industries where non-standard hour work is common include hospitality, film, and healthcare. Employers (and organizations such as unions) may see childcare as an important tool for supporting retention either within companies or the industry as a whole, particularly if women's workforce participation or equity is a core concern. The structure of the film industry, with entities being formed on a per-project basis and employing individuals on fixed length contracts, makes it incompatible with existing models of workplace childcare in a way that is similar to what is found at the Hastings Racetrack.

## Survey Design

A questionnaire was developed based on the thematic areas that emerged from conversations with initial informants. These themes were:

- Program Operating Hours
- Parents and Families' Needs (and impacts of COVID-19)
- Staffing
- Operations and Facilities

The questionnaire consisted of 21 multiple-choice questions in total, delivered to operators as a web survey. The questionnaire was designed to ask further sub-questions on a topic based on responses to a main question. As a result, operators could potentially complete the survey by answering as few as 14 questions. A general open-ended question was also included for each theme.

## Survey Outreach

Working with Westcoast Childcare Resource Centre, City staff identified contacts associated with programs in the following categories: Group Care (School Age), Group Daycare (36months to School Age), and Group Daycare (under 36 months).

A contact list of 178 unique e-mail addresses was used to distribute an initial invitation e-mail, followed by a reminder e-mail. The survey was open for two weeks, from Tuesday, November

23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 to Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021. A total of 63 surveys were completed, including responses from operators that run multiple centres.

## Survey Response Summary

### Operating Hours

An overwhelming majority (95%) of the 63 operators who responded to the survey stated that they did not and had never provided any childcare services outside of standard hours.

- Four out of 63 respondents stated that they had previously provided services outside standard hours. When prompted to describe what services they offered and (if they were no longer being offered) what the reasons were for it being discontinued:
  - Two respondents stated that they had previously offered care on weekend days.
  - Of these two respondents, one respondent indicated that they were located in a neighbourhood house that had a family drop-in program on Saturdays
  - The other respondent stated that they had offered extended hour care during evenings, on an irregular basis for a span of a few months when specific families needed it for work or family reasons.
  - One respondent stated that although their weekend service was requested, actual take up by families of the service when run as a pilot was low and proved difficult to staff.

The majority of survey respondents stated they did not anticipate making changes to the existing childcare programs.

- Three of the 63 respondents stated that they believed their programs could change
  - Of those, one stated they were potentially going to reduce their hours (closing earlier) due to challenges of maintaining ratios of children to staff.
  - Two respondents stated that they would be willing to explore extending their hours of operation.

Five respondents stated that they had at some point considered extending their hours to extended weekday and weekend hours. These respondents indicated that their interest was driven by (1) parent demand, (2) the desire to expand or diversifying revenue within their business model, and (3) the Provincial government's stated interest in exploring extended hour care.

### Staffing

The majority of respondents (77%) indicated that no current or prospective staff had expressed interest in working non-standard hours. Roughly 10% stated that staff had expressed some interest, and 12% stated that they were unsure if staff had expressed this interest.

Respondents that had received indication of staff willingness or interest to work non-standard hours gave the following reasons for this preference/interest:

- That staff would have more hours for additional income (62%);
- That non-standard hours would allow for better accommodation of other employment or education opportunities (46%);
- That non-standard hours would better allow for personal obligations for family or care commitments (39%).

For those that stated a staff preference to work standard hours, respondents gave the following reasons for this interest/preference:

- Non-standard hours would be difficult for staff members to manage / accommodate with other personal obligations (care, other employment / education, etc.) (75%); and
- Staff did not/would not want to work additional hours (59%).
- Additional responses provided for staff preference to work standard hours rather than extended or overnight hours included references to the rate of pay, and the shortage of ECEs in the Province resulting in unpleasant working conditions.

In open-ended responses, some operators stated that their staff's preferences for not wanting to work non-standard hours pertained to concerns about overwork, workload and burnout, as a result of the overall shortage in staffing in childcare as a whole. Some stated that it was challenging to hire auxiliary staff to cover for permanent staff, and that enhanced sanitation procedures associated with COVID-19 had added to responsibilities.

Two respondents also used the survey to convey objection to consideration for extended hour care and overnight care, on the basis that

- Providing childcare service during non-standard hours would add to already-overwhelmed workloads,
- Tasks related in particular to overnight care would not be appropriate tasks for early childhood educators (ECEs), and
- The inclusion of non-standard hour care in future childcare policy would be detrimental to the broader goal of professionalizing the ECE workforce.

## Parents & Families

While some operators expressed interest in learning more about parents and families' needs for extended hour childcare, an equal number expressed confidence that the families they served did not require any services outside standard hours.

One identified a "self-selection phenomenon" as the reason they would not hear queries from parents needing services outside standard hours, *i.e.* that families of children already enrolled in a program wouldn't ask for extended or overnight care because they are aware that such services are not currently available at this childcare centre.

Based on operator's responses, we can expect that approximately one-third of all families may have some level of interest in non-standard hour childcare. One-fifth of operators who responded also reported that families had to remove their child(ren) from care as a result of a mismatch between childcare operating hours and the families' scheduling needs.

One operator shared that they had heard of parents requesting weekend care or care during evenings; others speculated about the need for extended hour care due to changing schedules associated with COVID-19. Some articulated that extended hours could be useful to help accommodate commuting times.

## COVID-19-related challenges

Roughly 70% of operators reported hearing no interest from parents relating to non-standard hour child care or overall scheduling, that they attributed to impacts of changes in work policies as a result of COVID-19.

- 11% (7 respondents) responded that they did see a change in parental interest as a result of COVID-19, while 19% (12 respondents) were not sure.
- Some operators expressed that expanded availability of work from home meant children were in care for fewer hours per day and/or that families were able to exercise more flexibility around drop off and pick up as a result of increased incidence of work-from-home.

For those who did observe a change, two respondents observed that more non-standard hour care was required (particularly for healthcare workers' families and for families in need of weekend care), and one described parents changing their work patterns in order to retain childcare services during standard hours.

## Operations & Facilities

When asked what features of their childcare operation could potentially facilitate offering extended service hours, roughly one-third of all respondents (11 operators) identified beneficial features of their facilities and programs that they perceived as conducive to providing non-standard hour care.

Some considered being located in a residential area to be of benefit for care; others cited having a central location, access to transit, being located in public facilities that are unoccupied or unused outside standard hours, and proximity to job sites with concentrations of shift work, to be positive factors.

Some operators expressed that they would need to renegotiate leases or agreements with facility partners regarding use of spaces in order to operate outside their existing hours. Some identified other potential challenges related to co-location, such as the impact of sound on neighbours. Others expressed concerns or uncertainty about ensuring staff would be adequately resourced in the event of emergency. Some had non-specific concerns about safety about the surrounding area of their facilities during evening or overnight hours, while others made suggestions around lighting or security monitoring.

## Analysis & Discussion

### Variations by Geography, Auspice and Age of Children in Programs

Due to limitations in the data on programs associated with respondents as well as constrained sample size, the explanatory power of findings around operators' age of program and geography is limited (as some responding operators operate multiple programs located in different geographies or programs serving multiple age groups).

One noteworthy finding related to auspice is that non-for-profit operators responded that they had explored extended hour care with school-aged children. Conversely, providers who stated that they had explored non-standard hour care for children aged 0-3 and 3-5 years old were operating in for-profit models.

For those operators who had tried providing non-standard hour child care, the ages served by their programs were children aged 0-3 and school-aged children.

Operators who conveyed that parents were interested in non-standard hours care were primarily operator programs for children aged 0-3. It was also primarily operators of programs for children

aged 0-3 who expressed that their present facilities were adequate for providing non-standard hour care.

### Parents and Families' Varying Needs and Demand for Care

Overall, operators' reports about parents and families' needs showed a great deal of variation. This finding was expected, as operators are drawing on different sources of information, many of which may be based on highly local circumstances. It also confirms what was found in explorations of non-standard childcare provision in other locations and reflects the constrained nature of the market, whereby parents who need care are not generally making their needs known to operators. The stability of parents' preferences for licensed family care or licensed group care outside standard hours in particular is unknown, as household or employment factors shift.

Mismatch between childcare offerings and parents and families' childcare needs may be exacerbated as a result of both COVID-19 related changes in working hours, the staffing shortage and general unavailability of childcare. In standard hour care, this might look like parents who pay for full-time childcare spaces despite only needing part-time care, because a part-time arrangement is not offered, or is financially unfeasible for operators to offer. For parents needing non-standard hour care, as observed in other jurisdictions, this may involve parents drawing on multiple care options (such as occasional childcare) as part of their overall "care package," while displacing capacity from the system for other childcare needs (such as emergencies) that these care types are intended to address.

With COVID-19 social distancing policies having affected commuting patterns, and remote work policies increasingly available, it is likely to be challenging to anticipate many important factors for providing non-standard hour child care successfully. These include features such as hours (or days) of care, the location or distance of the childcare facility from home or work, and regularity of care.

It has also been observed that the pandemic has encouraged a great deal of labour mobility, as workers transition in and out of industries or seek non-standard work due to illness or disability, as people pursued training in new fields, or changing family circumstances. For this reason, it is unknown whether and what kind of role employers or industry organizations might play, who might seek ways to offer childcare to present or prospective employees in order to support recruitment or retention in their organizations or sectors. The extent to which employers may seek to explore both policies permitting work from home and supporting childcare access for employees, and the impact this might have on needs for non-standard hour childcare in particular, is unknown.

### Co-location and Facility Leases

Several responding childcare operators expressed uncertainty about what they would be able to do in their space outside standard hours as a result of being located in facilities leased from or provided by the Board of Parks and Recreation, Vancouver School Board, City of Vancouver, or faith-based organizations. Given the high number of operators that operate out of spaces leased from other entities, there may be an opportunity for the City of Vancouver to assist in helping to understand and manage any impacts on lease conditions involving child care service with extended hour or overnight operations. These could range on topics from training, safety and security, to insurance and local procedures. With co-location and assets such as proximity to

public transit being perceived as potential advantages to parents in need of non-standard hour care, this could additionally allow the City to realize more value from public facilities.

As the BC government's approval of childcare projects in other jurisdictions has shown, co-location of childcare with programs that have extended hours serving communities and parents in supportive facilities, can potentially be a win-win. While the facilities are not yet operational, it is anticipated that co-located programs will be able to provide convenience and benefits for parents and families accessing care, while being an effective and efficient use of public facilities.

Most operators expressed awareness that their facilities must meet licensing requirements in order to provide care overnight, though many stated they did not know the specifics. Almost no operators cited any specific part of the regulations as an impediment to offering non-standard hour child care.

### Staffing unknowns & ECE Industry Development Concerns

There is little known about what might support ECEs' willingness to work non-standard hours and continuity in staffing an extended hour or overnight program. Survey respondents indicated that offering wages might attract some staff. However, the effect of this on the overall model alongside the changes associated with universal care, as well as impacts on staff turnover in extended hour or overnight childcare programs, are both unknown.

A minority of respondents expressed strong opposition to non-standard hour licensed group childcare as a concept. Their opposition rested on three assertions: that extended hour and overnight care was better suited to in-home care rather than licensed group facilities; that extended hour and overnight care was not suited to ECEs, whose professionalization is noted as key for universal childcare systems; and that educators are presently overburdened in meeting standard hour childcare needs. While the City of Vancouver has little to no direct influence over the ECE industry, it may be worth noting these arguments as a factor in any operators' attempts to expand their non-standard hour child care services.

### Ongoing Information Gaps

Based on Census information about non-standard hour work and the makeup of households, it is reasonable to assume that some form of non-standard hour care would be useful to a sizable number of parents and families. However, the extent to which those needs can be acceptably addressed through licensed centre-based care specifically is unknown and constitutes an information gap. This gap is likely to persist and grow in importance, as the situation of families accessing care is likely in significant flux (with standard hour care becoming increasingly available, or generally as people's employment situations conceivably change).

As the research indicates (and which some survey respondents allude to), the provision of non-standard hour type of care differs significantly from that of other forms of licensed group child care. These differences include (but are not limited to):

- Different and evolving expectations / working conditions for childcare staff;
- Higher overhead costs associated with administration and staffing, depending on the amount of flexibility an operator can provide or which is desired or needed by parents;
- Finding and retaining staff who are willing to provide high quality, continuous and stable childcare during non-standard hours (which may require additional pay either for



incentive or to offset additional costs borne by staff associated with non-standard hour work);

- Revising and adjustment agreements with facility partners as necessary; and
- Addressing the varying needs and preferences of parents and families regarding non-standard hours, in combination with other childcare needs.

Given the heightened challenges faced by operators that deliver standard hour care, operators' expressions of hesitation to change their operating hours make sense. Several acknowledge the need and desire for non-standard hour care from families, but may also be unsure of how to manage the risk of potentially destabilizing existing standard hour services. With the rising costs associated with securing space, many childcare programs operate on thin margins and rely on full, or nearly full enrollment to remain viable and sustainable while also juggling the constraints imposed by staffing challenges.

Based on the experience of previous programs where non-standard hours have been piloted, parents who express interest in non-standard hour care may not actually use or find workable the non-standard hour care offered by a centre. Without validation that parents are willing to actually (not simply hypothetically) use non-standard hour services, and which specific non-standard care services are desired (weekend, weekday evening / early morning, or overnight), operators are likely hesitant to move forward. In addition, childcare operators may not have the resources to effectively assess demand for potential services on their own.

In large worksites and/or for employment sectors where non-standard work is widespread, the broader availability of non-standard hour childcare for employees may be a good fit. Industry organizations, educational or training institutions, or large employers are likely in the best position to be able to assess childcare needs resulting from non-standard hour work or training activities.

Being able to make this information available on an ongoing basis, in a manner comparable to the Childcare Needs Maps that is currently maintained and updated regularly by the City of Vancouver, is a potentially useful source of information that would support operators in assessing the viability of expanding their operating hours for families in need of non-standard hour care.

### Regional-level Coordination to Respond to Uncertainty

The challenge of meaningfully addressing the lack of non-standard hour childcare service is further complicated by the issue's regional dimensions, amidst a significant amount of uncertainty in both supply and demand of non-standard hour care.

A number of other Metro Vancouver municipalities have identified the lack of non-standard hour care as an issue for their residents<sup>1</sup>, some of whom presumably are employed at sites in the City of Vancouver. The extent to which either employers or families' homes (or both) are located inside or outside of Vancouver, and the impact of these locational aspects on up-take for non-standard hour care located in Vancouver, is presently unknown.

As other municipalities explore creating non-standard hour care, demand for care from parents may shift. It will likely be advantageous to coordinate closely with employers based in

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<sup>1</sup> Non-exhaustively, the need for non-standard care in Metro Vancouver has been identified as part of childcare needs assessments and actions plans in North Vancouver, Richmond, Port Coquitlam and New Westminster.

Vancouver to understand whether their non-standard hour working employees need or prefer care in Vancouver or elsewhere in the region. With both travel behaviour, housing and workforce development all having regional-level impacts, regional coordination on non-standard hour care will ensure efficient use of resources for developing spaces and staffing childcare operations.

## Potential Next Actions

The City of Vancouver, by virtue of its varying roles in areas such as economic development, transportation, land use and community services, and long-standing partnerships and involvement in facilitating childcare, is in the unique position of having ongoing visibility into the impacts experienced by residents unable to access non-standard hour childcare.

While the City of Vancouver is able to invest and use regulatory tools, the impact of these actions is limited if not coordinated adequately with other actions related to the creation of a universal care system. Having identified significant information gaps around both the supply of and demand for non-standard hour childcare, partnerships are likely to be central for improving families' access to non-standard hour care in Vancouver.

Grouping by the three aforementioned categories (*partnership, investment, and regulation*), potential actions for the City of Vancouver to support provision of non-standard hour childcare in Vancouver are listed below.

### **Investment**

- Develop and/or model best practice for other major employers in Vancouver by assessing non-standard hour child care needs for City of Vancouver's workforce.
- Ensure non-standard hour care facility considerations are incorporated into future City-facilitated sites (where appropriate).

### **Regulation**

- Ensure sites with high co-location potential for non-standard hour childcare is incorporated into existing processes for assessing development sites for potential childcare opportunities.
- Support public facilities in developing procedures in partnership with childcare operators on non-standard hour care, with regards to facility management, safety, and other operational requirements.

### **Partnership**

- Advocate to senior levels of government to incorporate ongoing actions on this issue, such as:
  - develop and maintain ongoing information resources on non-standard hour child care relating both to demand for care (regional employment and parent needs assessments) and supply (operators, staffing, guidance on overnight care needs and standards, etc.).
  - Employer engagement: identifying public institutions and/or industry representatives for workers with caregiving obligations that are required to work non-standard hours:

- Shift work (regular or rotating)
- Non-standard work - contract based, entrepreneurial, informal / undocumented, seasonal, or precarious work
- Build on existing / ongoing work:
  - Engage with Vancouver Economic Commission on childcare impact on workforce;
  - Engage with creative industries and local experts on nighttime economies to determine ongoing non-standard hour care needs and challenges.

Taking together the process undertaken in the development of other facilities in the province, as well as the experience of other jurisdictions, a fully-costed proposal would be strengthened by a detailed assessment of parent's needs for non-standard hour care. This would provide validation for features of the project to ensure sustainable levels of enrollment in services for operators. Collecting the following information about prospective parents would be beneficial for an operator exploring extended hour or overnight care:

- Where employees presently access childcare versus where they would prefer to access care;
- Preferred times for start and end of child care services (based on employment);
- Where adequate fit with operating hours is amongst other childcare priorities (such as location, quality, support for special needs, costs, cultural safety, etc. ), and what their present challenges are for accessing care;
- Whether their lack of access to child care has had an impact on their employment.

## Conclusions & Findings

As has been noted by both researchers and local expertise familiar with childcare delivery, non-standard hour child care is a challenging service to provide. While its impacts are significant, particularly on low-income working parents and their households, there has been little information collected to date about the needs, capacities and constraints of employers, parents and families, and ECE workers.

### Staffing

Staffing is a top concern for childcare providers. The existing staffing crisis across all childcare services makes it challenging for operators to learn more about parents' needs or to develop their understanding through trialling services, nor do they have ready access to resources to gather information to manage risk or uncertainty. Furthermore, there is little to no widespread information on how to effectively recruit or retain a workforce with the capacity and willingness to continuously provide quality non-standard hour care.

Additionally, staff wages, workplace wellness, availability of coverage (especially related to sick leave or enough staffing that would enable vacation time or time for professional development) are high priorities for the sector. Professionalization of the early childhood educator workforce is also an important component of the \$10/Day plan for universal childcare, which runs contrary to the kinds of tasks expected of staff who would care for children overnight.

## Operational Feasibility

Many operators are interested and willing to explore extended hour and/or overnight care, but their margins and business models do not give them room to ensure services would be feasible or sustainable. It may call for a different kind of workforce and delivery model than what is called upon for standard hour licensed care. Non-standard hour childcare inherently has more complex logistics and different risks to manage for operators, as well as administrative burdens. The present state of best practice to manage these effectively in Vancouver's context is not well-developed.

## Space Requirements

The Province's requirements for all childcare facilities are defined in the Childcare Licensing Regulation. The requirements were not identified by operators to be a barrier to establishing overnight or extended hour care.

The City of Vancouver's Childcare Design Guidelines presently do not specify any additional requirements relating to space or equipment for child care centres providing overnight care, beyond what is required for a program to be fully licensed by the Province through Community Care Facilities Licensing (CCFL).

For the operators surveyed, many were unsure whether expanding their operating hours would mean renegotiating their tenant agreements, as a result of their programs being located in public facilities.

## Regulatory Oversight & Tracking

CCFL staff have indicated that they are willing to inquire with operators about their willingness to explore extended hour childcare as part of the information they collect during the licensing process.

## Employers, Parents and Families

Parent and family buy-in for extended hour or overnight care is vital for the success of childcare programs, but the relationship between a need for extended hour and overnight care, and non-standard employment or education hours of parents is complex, widely varied, and challenging to predict.

The variable nature of parents and families' non-standard hour care needs may require parents to draw on multiple childcare options, of which licensed group care is only one kind. Other jurisdictions that have extended hour and/or flexible care further highlight the importance of good communication and upfront planning on timing, so that parents and families can feel confident that their care arrangements are reliable and continuous.

The precise role that employers and workforce or industry organizations might play both in universal childcare overall and non-standard hour childcare specifically, is yet unknown, but potentially core to enabling the delivery of service.

## Final Remarks & Next Steps

With this report, the City of Vancouver has sought to provide guidance on how local government involvement in childcare dovetails with prospective actions by senior government in support of non-standard hour childcare. This report has emphasized the value of coordinated approaches informed by the needs of working parents and their families.

The City will also endeavor to take the following actions as next steps:

- Distribute the research report to other local governments and interested parties (i.e. employers).
- Share the report with the Province's Child Care Reference Group, emphasizing the benefits of a regional approach to coordinating responses to the issues related to non-standard hour childcare service provision (namely: employment, housing, transportation).
- Advocate to the Province to set-up a working group to determine potential actions to address the system-wide challenges and ongoing information gaps relating to expanding provision of non-standard hour childcare.
- Explore the City's internal policies for non-standard hour working employees with caregiving obligations, to better understand and model prospective approaches, policies and actions.

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## Sub-Appendix A: Survey Responses

Open-ended text responses are presented as entered into the online survey software, except where noted. In open-ended responses consisting of multiple sentences touching on different themes, the sentences from a single response have been sorted to permit grouping with a statement's respective themes.

### 1. Does your organization currently provide, or has it ever previously provided, any services for parents / families outside of standard hours?

Response	Percent	Count
Yes	4.8%	3
No	95.2%	60
	Totals	63

### 2. Please tell us more about your current or previous non-standard hour childcare service.

- What were or are its hours of operation?
- How many families are using it? How do they find out about it?
- How long has the service run for?
- Is it still running? If it's no longer running, was there a specific reason it was withdrawn or discontinued, and what did you learn from the experience of offering it?

*[Note: this question was only shown to respondents who answered 'Yes' to Question 1.]*

Theme	Response
Past non-standard hour care experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Many years ago, we offered care on Saturdays &amp; Sundays for a short period (8am- 5pm) as a pilot; it only ran for a short period of a few months. Although we had numerous families indicating that they would like this option, when offered, very few actually signed up for it, and it was extremely difficult to staff. We made the decision to not continue.</li> <li>- Hours of operation - 8am to 530pm We have have opened several times at 630am to 7pm, to accommodate specifics families who needed to start earlier or stay a bit later due to their work and family situations. We only extended the hours for several months or when required by families. It is not an ongoing service. (though some would like it to be more permanent)</li> </ul>

**3. Do you anticipate your service offerings staying the same, or changing (becoming broader or more focused) in the next 3 or 4 years?**

Response	Percent	Count
Our services are likely to stay the same.	85.7%	54
Our services are likely to change in the next few years.	6.3%	4
I don't know / Not sure	7.9%	5
	Totals	63

**4. Please describe how you think your program or services might be changing in relation to hours of care available. Are there any circumstances, challenges or opportunities spurring this on?**

*[Note: this question was only shown to respondents who answered 'Our services are likely to change in the next few years' or 'I don't know / Not sure' to Question 3.]*

Theme	Response
Expanding hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Our neighbourhood house use to offer a family place drop in program on Saturdays (closed now) WE use to offer way more evening workshops for parents and others</li> <li>- We are interested in expanding our programs. There is interest in offering extended hours if our community requires it, however there are some roadblocks. Mainly limited available space, and Park Board policies requiring Park Board staff to be onsite during any open hours.</li> <li>- At present we had to reduce our hours from 7:30 to 6:00 to 7:30 to 5:30. We were having difficulty maintaining ratios between 8:45 and 9:30 so for the next 2 months we will be closing at 5:30. This may stay depending on staffing.</li> </ul>
Changes not related to hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We wish to open another infant and toddler facility to serve the parents and families who are in need of our service.</li> </ul>



**5. Has your organization looked into potentially extending weekday operating hours, or providing care beyond weekdays?**

Response	Percent	Count
Yes	8.3%	5
No	76.7%	46
I don't know / Not sure	15.0%	9
	Totals	60

**6. Can you describe what led your operation to consider non-standard hour service, and what the outcome was?**

*[Note: this question was only shown to respondents who answered 'Yes' or 'I don't know / Not sure' to Question 5.]*

Theme	Response
Capacity & Revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some of our centres remain empty on the weekend and evenings so it would nice to utilize these spaces.</li> <li>- Shrinking margins in our core business and the need to increase revenues.</li> </ul>
Parent need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We get a number of requests from parents who do shift work and have to work on the weekend.</li> <li>- Parent demand.</li> <li>- A couple of families requested extended hours</li> </ul>
Outcomes of attempts at non-standard hour care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We have some families who work long shifts or evening/afternoon shifts and require hours outside of our normal hours. We found that we did not have enough interested to maintain a balanced budget and if we were to try this now, we would not have enough staff.</li> </ul>

**7. Have any staff (current or prospective) expressed willingness in, interest in or preference for working outside of standard hours and/or weekdays?**

Response	Percent	Count
Yes	9.5%	6
No	77.8%	49
I don't know / Not sure	12.7%	8
	Totals	63

**8. Please indicate any and all reasons staff members give who are interested or prefer to work non-standard hours:**

*[Note: this question was only shown to respondents who answered 'Yes' or 'I don't know / Not sure' to Question 7.]*

Response	Percent	Count
Non-standard hours would better allow for family or care commitments	38.5%	5
Non-standard hours would better accommodate other employment or education opportunities	46.2%	6
Non-standard hours would allow for more work hours for additional income	61.5%	8
Non-standard hours would allow for more work hours for additional work experience	7.7%	1
Not sure	23.1%	3

**9. Please indicate any and all reasons that staff members give for preferring to not work non-standard hours:**

*[Note: this question was only shown to respondents who answered 'No' or 'I don't know / Not sure' to Question 7.]*

Response	Percent	Count
Standard hours are preferred because staff members don't want to work any more hours.	59.6%	34
Standard hours are preferred because non-standard hours are difficult for staff members to manage / accommodate with other obligations (care, other employment / education, etc.)	75.4%	43
Not sure	7.0%	4
Other - please describe Note: the open-ended submissions for this question have been combined with the observations and comments in Question 10.	7.0%	4

**10. Do you have any additional observations and comments about childcare staffing and extended hour or 24-hour / overnight services?**

Theme	Response
Parent demand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The families we serve, never demanded extended hours, overnight or 24-hours services.</li> <li>- while we are asked about providing at home and BI services in evenings, we do not and have never needed to offer evening care.</li> <li>- There is a need out there for this and in particular for our centre as we are located very close to several hospitals which employ many parents that work evenings, weekends and nights.</li> <li>- In our area (Kits) it doesn't seem to be needed</li> <li>- We have never had the request.</li> </ul>
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is incredibly challenging to find Qualified Early Childhood Educators every day. Growing the workforce is critical prior to growing the sector. This is where Quebec failed with their universal system. BC is tracking for the same failure if intentional growth of the sector labour force is not prioritized.</li> </ul>

	<p>I would also be curious how the BCTF would respond to the request to have overnight and extended hours in the school system. This idea does not acknowledge Early Childhood Educators as professionals and this message will further damage the desire for Early Childhood Educators to remain in the field. Alternatives to this proposal should be considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are not enough ECEs in our sector to cover the regular service and growth in progress, let alone trying to add more workers to the day. Just wondering where the funding and qualified ECEs will come from to staff extended hour or overnight programs.</li> <li>- If we are to open for an extended hour, we will need more staff because our current staff are not interested in working for longer hour. For regular staff, regular work hours are already too much in term of fatigue created. Specific non-regular staff must be assigned to those shift</li> <li>- we would never be able to staff any extra opening hours</li> <li>- Many years ago they tried it in New West. They said they had a hard time finding staff to do the late shifts.</li> <li>- Lack of teachers</li> <li>- The labour market for ECE's is extremely tight for standard hours and there are not enough students entering the field. It will be even more challenging to hire for non-standard hours.</li> <li>- Likely staff working extended hour of over night services will be looking for a higher rate of pay</li> <li>- I will hire additional staff to work in overnight service.</li> <li>- staff would be willing if compensation is supported well</li> <li>- It's difficult enough to find staff to work regular hours!!</li> <li>- its hard to find good/qualified staff ECE wage needs to be higher more incentives need to given to already hard working ECE's</li> <li>- Finding teachers is hard as it is now for standard hours and trying to find qualified people to work overnight or on weekends would be difficult.</li> <li>- where will this staffing come from. It is already hard to find good, qualified, passionate child care workers as is.</li> <li>- It would be very difficult to implement as staff already have a very busy and tiring day with standard hours. Staff have family and other obligations outside of work hours as well.</li> <li>- We are already facing the challenge of hiring qualified, competent auxiliary staff to provide back fill for the regular permanent staff who are sick or on vacation.</li> <li>- As previously mentioned there are not enough qualified ,competent auxiliary staff to cover the regular permanent staff who are sick or on vacation. We need a registry similar to the ones that the schools use for substitute staff. Then we can look at extending hours.</li> <li>- In addition to that, we have to allow the staff at the beginning and end of each day more time to do the additional cleaning and sanitizing.</li> <li>- Most staff wages are low and some have other jobs to supplement their income so being able to having the option for additional hours would be ideal. Also i think a wage supplement would be appropriate for evening/overnight hours</li> <li>- It is hard to find qualified staff that are willing to put in the work for standard hours as there is often shifts that you will always need to work overtime just to maintain ratios.</li> <li>- Our hours of operation reflect the extreme shortage of ECE's in the province. When staff members are sick, we frequently cover for one another. This means a 9 hour day in which it is difficult to take breaks as mandatory staff to child ratios must be maintained. It would be impossible to extend our hours at this time.</li> </ul>
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	- [reason staff prefer standard hours] rate of pay
Child experience	- It was very hard for children to get adjusted to night care. - most parents want their children at home at night, not at a centre
Facilities	- Not feeling safe for a overnight care regarding the neighborhood. - We are a school...we are not set up for overnight care.
Feasibility	- We do not have the staff to offer that service. We had to reduce our hours to maintain ratios. - It is difficult enough to staff the daycare for standard hours and stay within the staff /child ratios, adding additional hours or days would not be managable

**11. Have any parents/families of the children in your care expressed interest in or need for regular extended hour care?**

Response	Percent	Count
Yes	30.2%	19
No	68.3%	43
I don't know / Not sure	1.6%	1
	Totals	63

**12. Have any parents/families of the children in your care expressed interest or need in regular overnight care?**

Response	Percent	Count
Yes	1.6%	1
No	93.7%	59
I don't know / Not sure	4.8%	3
	Totals	63

**13. Have any parents/families needed to take a child out of your care to better work with their scheduling needs?**

Response	Percent	Count
Yes	20.6%	13
No	68.3%	43
I don't know / Not sure	11.1%	7
	Totals	63

**14. Has interest or preferences from parents/families for non-standard hour child care or scheduling changed from prior to the COVID-19 pandemic compared to present day?**

Response	Percent	Count
Yes	11.1%	7
No	69.8%	44
I don't know / Not sure	19.0%	12
	Totals	63

**15. Can you describe more about how parents/families' needs or preferences for non-standard hour care have changed since prior to the COVID-19 pandemic?**

*[Note: this question was only shown to respondents who answered 'Yes' or 'I don't know / Not sure' to Question 14.]*

Theme	Response
More non-standard hour care required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More parents are working non-standard hours. Weekends are a norm for many of our families.</li> <li>- The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the families who work in health care, especially the 7am-7pm shifts, so I am more aware of this need, even though it's not really different than pre-COVID, just more highlighted.</li> <li>- The pandemic has made some parents work hours change. Some parents have had to leave their work due to the hours they have to work and the hours our centre offers.</li> </ul>
More childcare generally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We had to add 12 more places in our after school care in our Junior School (grades 1-5) and 2 more in our Little School (Kindergarten) when school resumed in Sept 2021 due to increased parental demand - more parents needing to leave the home to work. parents more likely to want full time rather than part time.</li> </ul>

**16. Do you have any other observations or comments that you can share on parents and families' needs for non-standard hour care?**

Theme	Response
Care Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Families can employ nannies, emergency nanny services, ask family members to help. It is not necessary to have LICENSED Early Childhood Educators for this type of work. There are many options. Please DO NOT put more strain on an already overwhelmed work force by putting this in place.</li> </ul>
Observations of need / changes in need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- With more families working from home we find children are in care for less hours/day.</li> <li>- I think it would be really difficult for families to find care in group centres. I think this would be suited more for in home centres where there is more flexibility for scheduling.</li> <li>- Some time some of the parents ask whether we could provide weekend care and few hours during the nights.</li> <li>- I think there are more families now who have had to change jobs etc and need more flexible child care arrangements</li> <li>- Families need flexibility in their work schedules to be able to work from home with children</li> <li>- For families who are working from home, they continue to require daily care, but they often have more flexibility with the time of drop off / pick up.</li> </ul>
No need observed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Most parents need standard 9-5 (work hours) The only ones who may need additional care may be some of the families who need support and have Social workers assigned to there case. Keep in mind children need consistency. They need caring loving caregivers.</li> </ul>
Need more info	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parents would of course love longer hours of care as most families (both parents are working). However, as we are still in the middle of a pandemic, most children are picked up earlier than their designated pick-up time.</li> <li>- Some of our parents need more time to commute and/or a change in their work hours. And thus, need an extended hour of child care service.</li> <li>- I suspect people don't ask or bring it up because it's not an option right now; if it were, we would hear more accurately about it. Also, I suspect some underserved families would accept non-standard hours of care as a bridge until they could get the schedule they actually want (i.e., wants M-F but takes Th-M while they are waitlisted for M-F).</li> </ul>

**17. If you were to incorporate extended hour or overnight care into your services, are there any particular strengths or features of your facilities or operations that would be helpful in making those services successful?**

Response	Percent	Count
Yes	17.5%	11
No	50.8%	32
I don't know / Not sure	31.7%	20
	Totals	63

**18. Please describe the features of your facilities or operations that you think would help make extended hour or overnight services successful.**

*[Note: this question was only shown to respondents who answered 'Yes' to Question 17.]*

Theme	Response
Facilities & Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We have plenty of indoor and outdoor spaces, we provide snacks (and possibly) meals for children</li> <li>- we have residential based group services - so being in a more home-like environment is more what parents would hope for for overnight care.</li> <li>- Our facility is also located on the fifth floor making it very secure as a centre and is access controlled through the elevator fob system. Our centre also has 5 nap rooms, full kitchen and a gross motor room allowing ample space to accommodate overnight care.</li> <li>- Our facilities are leased from the COV, and are designed to provide quality spaces for children.</li> <li>- Teacher area that is more comfortable for overnight stays.</li> <li>- We can use facility as it's empty during the night.</li> <li>- The Community Centre is currently not in use during the late evenings which would give us access to a larger amount of space.</li> </ul>
Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- we are strategically located near Commercial-Broadway skytrain station and many bus routes.</li> <li>- Our proximity to hospitals where a lot of families work shift work.</li> <li>- Our centre is located in a transit friendly area and is on a major traffic hub for the city.</li> <li>- we are operated in a residential zone</li> <li>- We have smaller stand alone facilities located in residential communities that wouldn't require large buildings opening up for use.</li> </ul>
Programming & Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- trained ECE staff</li> <li>- Consistent /reliable /dependable ECE staff</li> <li>- loving caring and fun ECE staff</li> <li>- more \$\$ more incentives nice environment</li> <li>- Strong family to staff relationships, trusted for unique care with their children.</li> </ul>

**19. If you were in a position to offer overnight care, would you be able to do so with the existing physical facilities you already have?**

Response	Percent	Count
Yes	31.7%	20
No	49.2%	31
I don't know / Not sure	19.0%	12
	Totals	63

**20. Could you please describe the kinds of changes would you need to make to your facilities in order to provide extended hour or overnight care?**

*[Note: this question was only shown to respondents who answered 'No' or 'I don't know / Not sure' to Question 19.]*

Theme	Response
Space-related needs & Licensing Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not sure what the requirements would be. Definitely cannot bathe them in our facility</li> <li>- Our facility is not licensed for daycare. We do not have the environment for best practice overnight care. We also have a huge homeless issue with folks sleeping on site and at the doors of our facility</li> <li>- Equipment for sleeping would need to be changed, standard cots for naps would not be sufficient for longer hours of sleep, concerns with where we would store these.</li> <li>- upgrades would be required. in the pass the by-laws for zoning has been extremely unsupportive of an upgrade to our existing permit. we still turn families away when we can accommodate them.</li> <li>- We would need considerable additional space including sleeping set up.</li> <li>- bathing/showers more storage staffing more of a home type environment instead of a classroom / learning environment</li> <li>- More lighted area bedding as most kids will be sleeping an emergency phone (in case) at least 2-3 trained staff</li> <li>- We do not have a room for sleeping</li> <li>- Larger sleep rooms and a proper staff room.</li> <li>- We are a daycare located in a school who operate in a classroom.</li> <li>- Would need changes for providing dinner, proper sleep area for longer duration than naps.</li> <li>- Larger space for beds</li> <li>- We would have to expand our washroom facilities to include more storage for overnight toileting needs, a better sleeping area (closed off space)for overnight needs as well as a space for staff to observe the children while they sleep.</li> <li>- Our centre which was built in 1982 is basically modeled on the one room school house. We would need a bigger centre with at least one to 2 more rooms for sleeping and another play area.</li> <li>- We do not currently have licensed space for sleeping, or infant care. New spaces would need to be licensed. Our kitchen is also not currently licensed for cooking (heating bottles for infants)</li> <li>- Space we are a one room school house. Storage for beds and bedding.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I'm not aware of licensing's requirements for overnight care - what is the ratio of teachers to children and does this change? It's one thing for a child to nap on a cot - for overnight would a proper bed be required?</li> <li>- I have no ability to increase the size of my center</li> <li>- At this time, we do not know what the requirements are to allow for overnight care or extended hours. Will need more clarification from licensing officer.</li> <li>- become license for this program</li> <li>- Sleeping area and full working kitchen</li> </ul>
Facility-related needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- [...] We would also have to work out a plan with the building management that we rent from to include overnight heating.</li> <li>- We are situated in a building. We will probably have to think of extra security at night time as all the offices' hours of operations end maximum 8:00 pm. We also have to confirm with the building owners and get approval from the licensing to provide services overnight.</li> <li>- Within Elementary School</li> <li>- We are located in a community Centre. their permission would be needed</li> <li>- We are located on VSB property and are therefore beholden to their terms, restrictions, wishes, etc. My impression is that it would be an uphill battle to force their rentals model to accommodate flexible hours.</li> <li>- Insurance Security Union contract</li> <li>- building is alarmed overnight and that would have to be changed.</li> </ul>

**21. Do you have any other observations or comments to share regarding operating non-standard hour care in your facilities?**

Theme	Response
Support or interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Families will like it</li> <li>- Would love to learn more. We are always available to provide additional feedback and perspective.</li> <li>- It is something we would be interested in exploring</li> </ul>
Opposition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As stated previously, it's a terrible idea.</li> <li>- Not in favour</li> </ul>
Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- May require added sound barrier / room separations for break out rest spaces.</li> <li>- This might suit family child care or multi-age license settings as they are "homier" than a large group centre.</li> <li>- space and storage.</li> <li>- We need to get extra beds, Bed sheets, Blankets,</li> <li>- Some of the locations are in questionable areas and staff may not be comfortable working in them at night. Day is fine when there are a lot of people around and safety is not a concern then.</li> </ul>
Co-location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- would be unable to due to VSB policy that care are only within hours of 7am - 6pm</li> <li>- We are based in a community Centre that closes at 10pm</li> <li>- Note there may be additional challenges with neighbour concerns with weekend / evening programs cause higher levels of noise for neighbours.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some of our space we lease from churches - would they be agreeable to us using the space 24 hours? If other user groups are using other space in evenings, it could get noisy.</li> <li>- Our services are located in a school, so there is no space for overnight care which would require sleeping arrangements.</li> </ul>
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staffing</li> <li>- Staffing, staffing, staffing. I can't stress that enough.</li> <li>- Early childhood educators are working maximum of 8 hours a day and they have to balance the work, family, physical, emotional and well being of themselves. Finding a qualified ECE as a substitute is hard because of the lower wages they leave the field or they do not come with the adequate skills to work with children such as developed kindness, compassion and care for them.</li> <li>- I wonder how staffing will work out, since we have staffing issues already.</li> <li>- There is a shortage of licensed and qualified educators for regular hours. It is going to be impossible to hire qualified educators to even extend of services. Please focus on helping the existing regular service hours for more families. Priority please, not doing because of the government pressure.</li> </ul>
Suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More lighted area close parking an emergency phone (in case) at least trained / qualified staff</li> </ul>
Parent constraints, preferences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We could operate within existing facilities if families felt it was appropriate for children to sleep on floor mats rather than in beds.</li> </ul>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- we currently have an long waitlist of families hoping to get a spot in our program.</li> <li>- Childcare providers are facing more and More difficulties with ensuring financial viability. Costs have increased significantly higher then revenues. We need support and welcome it. This should be considered in any model that is offering "non-standard" hours of operation.</li> </ul>

## Sub-Appendix B: Survey Questions & Responses

### Operating Hours

1. Does your organization currently provide, or has it ever previously provided, any services for parents / families outside of standard hours?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I'm not sure
2. [If answered Yes to Question 1] Please tell us more about your current or previous non-standard hour childcare service. What were or are its hours of operation? How many families are using it? How do they find out about it? How long has the service run for? Is it still running? If it's no longer running, was there a specific reason it was withdrawn or discontinued, and what did you learn from the experience of offering it? (Open Text)
3. Do you anticipate your service offerings staying the same, or changing (becoming broader or more focused) in the next 3 or 4 years?
  - a. Our services are likely to stay the same.

- b. Our services are likely to change in the next few years.
  - c. I don't know / Not sure
- 4. [If answered Yes or I don't know to Question 3] Please describe how you think your program or services might be changing in relation to hours of care available. Are there any circumstances, challenges or opportunities spurring this on? (Open Text)
- 5. Has your organization looked into potentially extending weekday operating hours, or providing care beyond weekdays?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I'm not sure
- 6. [If answered Yes to Question 5] Can you describe what led your operation to consider non-standard hour service, and what the outcome was? (Open Text)

### Staffing

- 7. Have any staff (current or prospective) expressed willingness in, interest in or preference for working outside of standard hours and/or weekdays?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I'm not sure
- 8. [If answered Yes or I don't know to Question 7] Please indicate any and all reasons staff members give who are interested or prefer to work non-standard hours:
  - a. Non-standard hours would better allow for family or care commitments
  - b. Non-standard hours would better accommodate other employment or education opportunities
  - c. Non-standard hours would allow for more work hours for additional income
  - d. Non-standard hours would allow for more work hours for additional work experience
  - e. Not sure
  - f. Other (please describe)
- 9. [If answered No to Question 7] Please indicate any and all reasons that staff members give for preferring to not work non-standard hours:
  - a. Standard hours are preferred because staff members don't want to work any more hours.
  - b. Standard hours are preferred because nonstandard hours are difficult for staff members to manage / accommodate with other obligations (care, other employment / education, etc.)
  - c. Not sure
  - d. Other (please describe)
- 10. Do you have any additional observations and comments about childcare staffing and extended hour or 24-hour / overnight services? (Open Text)

### Parents & Families

- 11. Have any parents/families of the children in your care expressed interest in or need for regular extended hour care?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I'm not sure

12. Have any parents/families of the children in your care expressed interest or need in regular overnight care?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I'm not sure
13. Have any parents/families needed to take a child out of your care to better work with their scheduling needs?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I'm not sure
14. Has interest or preferences from parents/families for non-standard hour child care or scheduling changed from prior to the COVID-19 pandemic compared to present day?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I'm not sure
15. [If answered Yes to Question 14] Can you describe more about how parents/families' needs or preferences for non-standard hour care have changed since prior to the COVID-19 pandemic? (Open Text)
16. Do you have any other observations or comments that you can share on parents and families' needs for non-standard hour care? (Open Text)

#### Operations & Facilities

17. If you were to incorporate extended hour or overnight care into your services, are there any particular strengths or features of your facilities or operations that would be helpful in making those services successful?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I'm not sure
18. [If answered Yes to Question 17] Please describe the features of your facilities or operations that you think would help make extended hour or overnight services successful.
19. If you were in a position to offer overnight care, would you be able to do so with the existing physical facilities you already have?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. I'm not sure
20. [If answered No or I'm not sure to Question 19] Could you please describe the kinds of changes would you need to make to your facilities in order to provide extended hour or overnight care? (Open text)
21. Do you have any other observations or comments to share regarding operating non-standard hour care in your facilities?

## Sub-Appendix C. Policies for Non-standard Hour Childcare Across Jurisdictions (Canada)

*Adapted from Lero, Donna S, Susan Prentice, Martha Friendly, Brooke Richardson, and Fraser Ley. 2019. "Non-Standard Work and Child Care in Canada: A Challenge for Parents, Policy Makers, and Child Care Provision."*

Province / Territory	Regulations / Policies
NL	- Yes - As of 2017, new legislation allows operators to request in writing hours of operation other than the standard hours legislated (6:30 am to 8:30 pm). These requests must be approved by the Minister.
PEI	- No - While there is nothing in the current regulations that specifically restricts nonstandard hours, the expectation is that as nonstandard hours become more common, some parts of the regulations may require fuller definition.
NS	- Yes - Regulations/policies have specific standards for N-SH; N-SH is a condition of licensing
NB	- No – currently there are no specific regulations. Regulation changes in 2014 allowed centres to stay open past 9:00 pm. Operators must apply to provide N-SH.
QC	- Yes - regulations specify that Centres de la petite enfance (CPEs) and funded garderies <sup>2</sup> must be open from at least 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. There are no specified times for home child care. - CPEs and funded garderies are required to provide a maximum of 10 hours of child care per day. Child care may take place in any of the following time periods: 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, 6:00 pm to 12:00 am, or 12:00 am to 6:00 am. In centres, a child cannot be present for more than 48 consecutive hours.
ON	- Yes - New child care legislation from 2014 specifies that child care provision may not exceed 24 continuous hours. As well, under ON Regulation 137/15, child care operators must comply with municipal fire, health/, building, and zoning regulations, which may restrict the possibility of N-SH child care.
MB	- Yes - Child care services must submit written proposals for providing extended hours to the Director of the ELCC program who may approve them. There must be specific licensing visits regarding space and equipment for N-SH care. Monitoring must be conducted during N-SH operation.
SK	- Yes – There are restrictions on the number of hours a child may be cared for in home child care, but no restrictions for child care centres. License holders must notify their consultant to provide N-SH child care.
AB	- Yes - Licensing regulation states “a license holder must not provide overnight child care to children in the program”. Note that licensing regulations do not apply to day homes, or home child care, which are approved, not licensed. The Standards Manual for day homes states a child may not receive care for more than 18 hours within a 24-hour period without prior written notification to the agency. For accommodations that are longer than 18 hours, bedding, sleeping and bathing arrangements are specified.
BC	- Yes - Regulations limit the maximum number of hours a child can be in care to 13 hours per day. There are specific requirements for overnight care including pre-approval from a medical health officer. Licensing categories for occasional child care and child minding are also relevant

<sup>2</sup> CPEs (non-profit centres), licensed home child care, some garderies (for-profit centres) and school-age child care are operationally funded in Québec with provincially-set parent fees; there are no individual parent fee subsidies. Parents using an additional category of unfunded (Non-Reduced Contribution) garderies, which do not have set fees, receive a substantial tax rebate from the Québec government.

NU	- No
NT	- No
YT	- Yes - There are extensive regulations for both home and centre child care for all age groups, including regulation on adult to child ratios, sleeping arrangements, bedding, and supervision. Regulations also state that staff must be awake at all times. There is the potential for restriction related to ratio requirements (this has not been experienced).



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**MAYOR KENNEDY STEWART**

April 15, 2021

The Honourable John Horgan  
Premier of British Columbia  
PO Box 9041, Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E1

The Honourable Jennifer Whiteside  
Minister of Education  
PO Box 9041, Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E2

The Honourable Katrina Chen  
Minister of State for Child Care  
PO Box 9041, Stn Prov Govt  
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Via email: [Premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Premier@gov.bc.ca); [EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:EDUC.Minister@gov.bc.ca); [CC.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:CC.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

**Re: Vancouver City Council's support for 24 hour or extended hour childcare spaces and \$10/day affordable child care**

Dear Premier Horgan, Minister Whiteside, and Minister of State Chen,

I am writing you to seek your government's financial support for a 24-hour or extended hour childcare spaces in Vancouver, and offer our support for the \$10/a day child care plan, *Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning*.

For too many in Vancouver, the lack of affordable care has placed incredible financial pressure on families. Hospital workers, front-line workers, lower income and single parent families work in shift-patterns, including overnight and weekends, and the availability of after-hours child care simply does not meet their needs. Governments and care providers must adapt to the increasingly common reality of a non-traditional work-schedule. Additionally, we know that affordable, accessible childcare is fundamental to increasing a gender balanced and productive work force.

We are encouraging your government to provide additional operational supports and explore funding a program that will enable child-care operators to more readily provide extended, flexible hours of care. Additional considerations should be made for childcare operators who want to offer 24-hour childcare options, similar to the Kitimat Tamitik Status of Women Centre (a 24-hour pilot expecting to provide care for 60 children in 2022).

Vancouver is eager to increase childcare access for all, and to support a child care sector that is responsive to the needs of working parents. At the moment, we are working to gain a better understanding of the demand, feasibility and opportunities for 24-hour care in Vancouver. In order to be successful, we will require continued and expanded assistance from your government, including:

- additional capital to support the development of more new child care facilities;
- commit to funding sectoral-wide operational supports/incentives for childcare operators that may wish to provide extended hour or 24-hour childcare.

Finally, we would like to affirm the City of Vancouver's strong support for the *Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning* – also known as the \$10/a day affordable childcare plan. The City was the first local government to endorse this plan, and since 2016, an additional 64 local BC governments and 34 school districts (including the Vancouver School Board) have endorsed it.

I would like to thank you again for your government's leadership, and the important work done in partnership through our Memorandum of Understanding between the City and provincial staff. We are looking forward to further collaborative opportunities with your ministries and the Vancouver School Board to ensure that accessible, affordable childcare is increasingly available to Vancouverites and all British Columbians.

Sincerely,



Kennedy Stewart  
Mayor, City of Vancouver



**Appendix B:**

**MOTION - Childcare that Works: Extended Hour and Around-the-Clock Childcare for Working Families in Vancouver (Member's Motion B.9)**

On February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Vancouver City Council unanimously approved the following motion:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT Council direct staff to consider policy to encourage and incentivize the development and operation of 24-hour and/or extended hour childcare centres in Vancouver.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to add a question to applications related to development or licensing of childcare, to survey and measure the interest these stakeholders may have in future applications to provide 24-hour childcare models, if specific policy was implemented.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to explore the possibility of supplementing current requirements for licensed childcare centres to include specific considerations and requirements for childcare offering 24-hour or extended care models, including overnight and weekend childcare.
- D. THAT Council direct staff to explore the possibility of Provincial funding specific to 24-hour or extended hour Childcare in the City of Vancouver.
- E. THAT Council direct staff to include this work in the workplan, report back and recommendations to Council on the actions passed in the motion "Building a Family Friendly Vancouver: Affordable Child Care" or earlier, if possible.
- F. THAT Council direct the Mayor to send a letter to the Premier as well as the Minister of Education and the Minister of State for Childcare expressing Council's support for the widely endorsed *Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning* (supported now by 65 local BC governments and 34 school districts including the VSB) - known as \$10 a day Plan which, based on evidence and research, calls for a public system of high quality affordable child care where educators are fairly compensated.