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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release  
2021CFD0036-000942  
May 19, 2021

Ministry of Children and Family Development

### **Northern Vancouver Island families to benefit from new child care spaces**

COURTENAY – More parents on northern Vancouver Island will have the option to return to work, go back to school or pursue other opportunities as the Province invests in nearly 200 new licensed child care spaces.

“Families in the Comox Valley, especially students and staff at North Island College, will soon have even more options for child care,” said Ronna-Rae Leonard, MLA for Courtenay-Comox. “Bringing 75 new spaces to the college will give both parents and their young children even better learning opportunities that will benefit our entire community for generations.”

The Province is supporting three projects to create 190 new licensed child care spaces in Courtenay, Campbell River and Cumberland. New child care spaces are on the way for families in the following communities:

- Courtenay (75 spaces)
- Campbell River (30 spaces)
- Cumberland (85 spaces)

“I feel fortunate to have worked closely with children and their families, as well as providing child care in Campbell River for nearly two decades,” said Kelley Scott, owner, Little Timbers Children’s Centre. “We are beyond excited to be able to create dozens of much-needed new licensed child care spaces and are eager to provide quality early learning programming to support local families and our community.”

The Province has funded almost 26,000 new licensed spaces since the launch of Childcare BC – more than 6,000 of which are now open.

“As we enter the fourth year of our 10-year Childcare BC plan, thousands of families are already feeling the life-changing impact of having affordable, quality and inclusive child care,” said Katrina Chen, Minister of State for Child Care. “As we continue to build toward an inclusive, universal child care system, these new spaces will make it easier for parents, especially mothers, to pursue their own goals, while also being part of B.C.’s economic recovery.”

An additional 4,370 spaces, funded through the 2017 Budget Update and the Early Learning and Child Care agreement with the Government of Canada, take the total number of new child care spaces funded since July 2017 to more than 29,300.

#### **Quick Facts:**

- Since July 2018, almost 26,000 new licensed child care spaces have been funded in British

Columbia, including 235 in Courtenay, 166 in Campbell River and 92 in Cumberland.

- The Childcare BC plan has helped parents save up to \$1,600 a month, per child, for a total of over \$770 million through the Affordable Child Care Benefit and Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative.
- As a result of these investments, parents in Courtenay-Comox, the Mid-Island-Pacific Rim region and North Island region have saved more than \$8.4 million, \$8.5 million and \$10.6 million, respectively.
- Early childhood educators in these communities have received a total of more than \$1.54 million in wage enhancements.

**Learn More:**

For information on health and safety standards for child care during COVID-19:

[www.gov.bc.ca/ChildCareCovid-19Response](http://www.gov.bc.ca/ChildCareCovid-19Response)

Child care factsheet: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/18430>

More about Childcare BC: [www.gov.bc.ca/childcare](http://www.gov.bc.ca/childcare)

A backgrounder follows.

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## BACKGROUND

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### **New child care spaces create more options for families**

This backgrounder contains additional information on the three projects that will create 190 new licensed child care spaces on North Vancouver Island.

#### **Beaufort Children's Centre (Courtenay)**

North Island College will expand an existing facility to create 75 new licensed child care spaces, including 12 infant/toddler spaces, 46 spaces for children aged three years to kindergarten and 17 school-age spaces. The facility prioritizes spaces for the children of staff and students of the college. The facility will also support families new to Canada and hire educators from different cultures.

#### **Little Timbers Children's Centre (Campbell River)**

Thirty new licensed child care spaces, including 20 spaces for children aged three years to kindergarten and 10 school-age spaces, are opening in fall 2021 through the renovation of a commercial building in central Campbell River. This accessible facility offers young parents job opportunities through its after-school and summer programs.

#### **Cumberland Community Childcare Centre (Cumberland)**

The Village of Cumberland is partnering with School District No. 71 and the Boys and Girls Club of Central Vancouver Island to add a modular building at Cumberland Community school. Opening in spring 2022, the facility will create 85 new licensed child care spaces, including 10 infant/toddler spaces, 50 spaces for children aged three years to kindergarten and 25 school-age spaces.

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