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PROVIDING INCLUSIVE CHILD CARE

Introduction

Inclusive child care meets the needs of all children regardless of individual ability, language, culture, family income status, family employment or structure or other unique circumstance.

This package includes information about:

- Inclusive Child Care Philosophy and Practice
- Funding and Service Guidelines for Provision of Inclusive Child Care

Inclusive Child Care Philosophy

An inclusive child care philosophy includes statements of commitment to the following principles:

- All families have a right to access the same range of child care options within their communities - preschool, group child care, family child care, license-not-required care, after school care or in-own-home care.
- Families differ in their personal circumstances, experiences and culture, and therefore also vary in their priorities, values and strengths.
- Child care providers recognize and celebrate the diversity of needs, strengths, interests, and learning styles of individual children and their families.
- Children may require a range of flexible supports to ensure they can successfully participate in the same routines and play experiences as their peers in a child care setting.

Inclusive Child Care Practice

- In providing inclusive care, child care settings exhibit the same characteristics as all high quality child care programs. Care is based on policies that guide and promote quality care and effective inclusion as well as culturally relevant, developmentally and individually appropriate practice.
- Child care providers have knowledge of typical child development and the skills necessary to successfully include children with extra support needs.

- The learning environment is responsive, reinforcing and matched to each child's developmental level and special interests.
- The same hours of attendance are available to all children in the program.
- Child care providers approach each family with respect and appreciation for individual differences in culture, values, attitudes and learning styles.
- Families are actively involved in the planning and programming for their child and help determine which support services their child will receive while in the child care setting.
- Child care providers provide necessary accommodations to ensure effective communication is established with all families.
- Working as a team, child care providers are committed to reducing barriers to inclusion, while promoting accessible, high quality child care for all children and families in the community.
- Child care providers use teaching strategies and adaptations that promote each child's participation in all activities.
- Additional staffing may be needed for a specific time period to facilitate a child's entry into a program, or on an ongoing basis to ensure successful participation.
- Child care providers access relevant professional development opportunities.
- Curriculum planning integrates identified goals from individual program plans into ongoing program activities.
- A health care plan is developed with the family, the child care provider(s), program staff and health care professionals for children with exceptional health care needs.

Guidelines for the Provision of Inclusive Child Care

Funding Guidelines

Basic Child Care Monthly 'Space Fee'

Each licensee or license-not-required provider sets a basic monthly fee for a child care space, sometimes referred to as a 'space fee'. When a child who requires extra support attends a child care program, parents pay the same basic child care 'space fee' as parents whose children do not need extra support. Each enrolling parent/legal guardian is responsible for ensuring this monthly fee is paid.

Child Care Subsidy

Parents that meet the eligibility criteria for a child care subsidy can apply to have their basic 'space fee' subsidized. In accordance with the *B.C. Benefits (Child Care) Act*, specific eligibility criteria must be met in order to access Child Care Subsidy. Eligibility criteria for Child Care Subsidy include

- working and earning a low income
- seeking work
- attending school or training-for-jobs programs
- having child care recommended by the Ministry of Children and Family Development

- having a medical condition, which interferes with the adult's ability to care for the child

Some families will be eligible for assistance in paying for part or all of the monthly 'space fee'. If the monthly 'space fee' exceeds the subsidy amount, families are expected to pay the difference. For example, if the monthly space fee is \$500.00 and subsidy amount equals \$415.00, the family is expected to pay the difference of \$85.00.

Special Needs Funding

In recognition of the additional costs that may be associated with child care for children with special needs, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) provides two levels of financial support for Supported Child Development:

1. **Special Needs Supplement** – income-tested support payment to assist parents with the cost of the child care space
2. **Range Payment** – additional supports and resources that help child care settings include children with special needs

Special Needs Supplement

The Special Needs Supplement of up to \$150.00 per month assists families with the cost of the basic monthly 'space fee'. To qualify for the Special Needs Supplement, an enrolling parent/legal guardian must also be eligible for Child Care Subsidy. Like the Child Care Subsidy, the Special Needs Supplement is administered through the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Range Payment

This payment is to pay the additional staffing and equipment that may be needed by a child care setting to include a child who requires extra support.

Autism Funding

There is a separate funding stream specifically for families with children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This funding is intended to allow families maximum choice and flexibility in choosing interventions for their children with ASD under two programs:

1. For families with children 0 – 6 years
2. For families with children 6 – 18 years

Please see the government website:

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/funding_programs.htm

Service Guidelines

Extra Support to the Child Care Setting

Some child care settings may require extra supports from the Supported Child Development Program so a child can successfully be included. The services of a Supported Child Development Coordinator/Consultant are free. If a support worker is needed, the Ministry of Children and Family Development provides the funds for extra staffing.

Supported Child Development Coordinators/Consultants

Supported Child Development Coordinators/Consultants are early childhood professionals with a background in child development and specific training and education in working with young children with special needs and their families. They work collaboratively with parents, child care providers, infant development consultants, therapists, social workers, behavioural consultants, school district special education staff, nurses and other community partners who may be providing services to a young child with special needs and his or her family.

Consultant services include:

1. Consultation with child care providers, families and others
2. Resources
3. Referrals to other services
4. Training for child care providers
5. Transition planning for children moving from one program to another
6. Additional staffing

1. Consultation with child care providers, families and others

Quality child care settings typically access community based resources to build their capacity to provide good care. For children requiring additional supports, Supported Child Development Coordinators/Consultants are available to assist caregivers in making adaptations and changes based on an individual child's strengths, interests and needs.

2. Resources

The Supported Child Development Program typically offers a variety of resources such as books, toys, adaptive equipment, and activity ideas to assist child care providers in offering inclusive care.

3. Referrals to other services

With a parent/guardian's permission, the Supported Child Development Coordinator/Consultant may make referrals to other services such as therapists or specialists on behalf of the child and family.

4. Training for child care providers

The Child Care Licensing Regulation specifies the staff qualifications required for each type of care and level of staff responsibility. On-going professional development for child care providers enhances the quality of care they are able to offer. In some cases, specific training related to the individual children's needs may be required for a child with extra support needs to be included. The Supported Child Development Program regularly offers such training to child care providers.

5. Transition planning for children moving from one program to another

Supported Child Development Consultants participate in planning for children and families that need support as the child makes the transition from one program to another or from a child care setting to kindergarten. Consultants share information on the various supports and programs available and assist families during the transition process.

6. **Additional staffing**

Funding for extra staffing to enhance the child staff ratio as outlined in the Child Care Licensing Regulation may be requested for some or all of the hours a child is enrolled. In many regions, the Supported Child Development Coordinator/Consultant is responsible for reviewing the extra staffing support needs. Extra staffing may be provided at one of three levels of support depending on the specific situation:

- initial (transitional support)
- interim (short term support)
- on-going

The Ministry of Children and Family Development is responsible for providing funding for additional staffing. The cost of additional staff salary and benefits is based on the employer's personnel policies or collective agreement or on BC Employment Standards. The employer is typically either the licensee of the child care program or the Supported Child Development Service depending on the Regional Supported Child Development plan.

Each employer must meet all requirements under provincial legislation (e.g., *Employment Standards Act; Workers' Compensation Act; Human Rights Act*; and if the employees are unionized, *the Labour Relations Act*) and all federal legislation (e.g., *Employment Insurance Act; Income Tax Act; and Canada Pension Plan*).

Extra Support Activities and Administration

The costs of typical administrative requirements are covered in the basic monthly 'space fee'. This includes maintaining children's files as required by the Child Care Licensing Regulation, facilitating family meetings/conferences, preparing written reports, participating in consultations with community resource persons (e.g., community health nurse, therapists, mental health services, psychologists etc.) and maintaining human resources accounting/record keeping.

If there are administrative costs beyond the norm that cannot be covered by the 'space fee', these costs should be identified to the Supported Child Development Coordinator/Consultant and Ministry of Children and Family Development Social Worker. Depending on the specifics of these identified costs, a licensee/child care provider may be able to negotiate some additional funding.

Appendix:

Extra Staffing Budget Considerations Work Sheet from Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre

More information:

Summary of Salary and Benefits Expenses, available from Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre Marketplace.

Policies and Procedures for Child Care Programs: Tough and Sensitive Issues, Part 1 available from Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre Marketplace.

These and other resources are available through Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre. Call 604.709.5661 or toll-free 1.877.262.0022 or visit our website at www.wstcoast.org.

References:

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School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria. *Children Enabling Change – Education, Advocacy, Action Plan for Children With Disabilities and Their Families in Multi-Cultural Communities*.

York, Stacey. *Roots and Wings: Affirming Culture in Early Childhood Programs*.

*The information presented in this document is for reference use only.
Westcoast Child Care Resource Centre does not assume any responsibility for actions taken
based on any of the information provided in this document.*

Appendix

Extra Staffing Budget Considerations Worksheet

Expenses	\$/Month	\$/Year	Notes
Salary			① \$/Year = hourly rate x hours/day x days/week x weeks/year ② \$/Month = Divide ① by # of months/year employee works
Mandatory Benefits			
CPP			Please check for current rates (Canada Customs and Revenue Agency)
EI			Please check for current rates (Ministry of Human Resources)
WCB			Varies from organization to organization. Please check with Workers' Compensation Board / WorkSafeBC.
Additional Benefits (if applicable)			Only for any additional benefits paid on the employee's behalf by the employer.*
Medical			
Dental			
Life Insurance			
Short/Long Term Disability			
Extended Health			
Other Benefits			
Substitute Expenses			To cover employee leave entitlements – e.g. annual vacation, sick/family leave, bereavement leave, etc.
Professional Development			As outlined in Personnel Policies/Collective Agreement. Pro-rated.
Extra Support Activities (if applicable)			e.g. additional report writing/family meetings/conferences, staff consultations with community resource persons.
Administration Costs			If applicable, may be negotiated.
TOTAL			

* in accordance with Employment Standards/Personnel Policies/Collective Agreement