



Child Care Waitlist Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How does the VSOCC waitlist work?

A: The Vancouver Society of Children's Centres (VSOCC) operates nearly 800 licensed child care spaces for children ages 3 months to 12 years old.

While our goal is to provide child care for as many families as possible, our wait list does **NOT** operate on a "first come, first serve basis". **We give priority to current VSOCC families and families who live in neighbourhoods around our Centres. (* see map on page 4)**

Q. When can I apply and place my infant on the waitlist?

A: You may put your child's name on the waitlist when your child is born (a birth certificate is required for children under 14 months).

Q. Is there a waitlist application fee?

A: No, however, there is a \$55.00 registration fee when you accept a space.

Q. How long can I expect to wait to receive an offer of child care space?

A: The majority of spaces become available between May and September of each year as children are leaving our program to commence kindergarten.

Given we do not operate on a 'first come – first serve basis it is very difficult for us to estimate when a space may become available. There are many factors we consider (i.e. siblings currently attending, the date you came onto the waitlist, the type of program you are looking for, where you live or work). Please review "[How the Waitlist Works](#)" for detailed information.

The length of time is different for each age group and type of care. Average waitlist times are as follows:

- **Under 3/Toddler:** 1-3 years
- **3-5:** 1-3 years
- **Preschool:** 1-2 years
- **Junior K:** 1 year
- **Out of School:** 1-3 years

Note: This information is intended to help families understand when spaces are offered. It is general information and as such should not be considered a precise indicator as to when you may receive an offer of care.

Given we cannot guarantee that a space will become available we encourage families to continue exploring child care options. West Coast Child Care Resource Centre can provide more information about child care in your community. <http://www.wstcoast.org/index.html>

Q. What if my child has special needs?

A. VSOCC is an inclusive environment and we welcome children with special needs. If your child has special needs, we will work with you and any other service providers involved to:

- assess your child's strengths, interests & needs
- determine how our program might meet these needs
- identify the supports that would be needed to successfully include your child in our program.

This planning can take some time so we will contact you in advance of a space becoming available.



Q. Where am I on the wait list?

A: Given VSOCC does *not* operate on a 'first come – first serve' basis it is difficult to forecast when you can expect to receive a space offer. We do not provide wait list numbers and are unable to respond to requests related to where your child is on the wait list.

Q. How much notice will I be given when a space becomes available?

A: We aim to provide you a minimum of one month notice.

When a space becomes available, we send a notification by email to a number of families on the waitlist to confirm who is interested.

From the responses received, we offer the space to the first "eligible" child using our established priorities. When we extend a space offer, you will have 24 hours to respond. If we do not hear from you within 24 hours, we will move to the next child on the waitlist. **It is important you inform us of any changes in your contact information.**

Q. Can I see the Centre before I accept the space?

A: We recognize that a key factor in the decision to accept a space is the opportunity to visit the Centre. We do hold regular open houses at our centres and extend invitations by email to those who are nearing the top of our waitlist. Please note that facilitating visits outside these scheduled times is not possible.

Q. What happens if I decline a space when it is offered?

A: If you decline 3 space offers, which match your waitlist application, your child's name will be moved to the bottom of the waitlist and you will lose your priority status.

If you do not require a child care space, please contact us so we can remove your name from the list.

Q. What if I accept a space and then decide I don't want it?

A: We have a 45-day withdrawal policy and withdrawals are effective on the 15th or the last day of the month.

If you accept a space (sign the acceptance letter and submit the fee payment form), you are responsible for a 45 day fee payment unless your notice for withdrawing is more than 45 days prior to your child's start date.

Your child can then be placed back on the waitlist and he/she will have a new waitlist date.

Note: if you do not provide the 45 days' notice/pay in lieu of notice, we will not put your child back onto our waitlist.

Q. Once I have accepted a space can I transfer to another Centre?

A: Once a space is accepted another space in the same age group will not be offered for a minimum of 12 months. A child's feeling of security, connection, and wellbeing is our priority. A child's attachment to and relationship with their caregivers and other children is essential and provides continuity to support their growth and development. Exceptions are granted for siblings.



Q. Once my child is in a VSOCC program, am I guaranteed a child care space in the next age group?

A: Spaces in the next age group are not guaranteed. We will provide you with information about the likelihood of getting into the next program at the time you are offered a space.

If you are offered an Under 3 space, you will be guaranteed care until your child turns 36 months old. We cannot guarantee a space past 36 months old but children already in our programs always have priority.

Note: The majority of spaces become available between May and September of each year as children leave for kindergarten and children move to the next age group.

Q. What is the difference between a Preschool/Junior K program and a full day 3-5 program?

A: The primary differences between these three types of child care are:

- the hours of care offered,
- the age range of the children registered, and
- the adult to child ratio (1 early childhood educator per 10 children in programs that are less than four hours and 1 early childhood educator per 8 children in programs that are more than four hours).

These three programs (and all other VSOCC programs) are based on the same core elements and learning goals as outlined by the [BC Early Learning Framework](#) and provide a high quality curriculum using current best practices in the field of early childhood education and care.