
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Children and Family Development

Nass Valley families to benefit from a new child care centre

GITLAXT'AAMIKS (NEW AIYANSH) – The first fully licensed child care centre in Gitlaxt'aamiks (New Aiyansh) will help families stay in the Nass Valley and entice professionals to move to the region by providing affordable, quality child care.

"We know it can be challenging for families in Indigenous communities to find child care that meets their needs," said Katrine Conroy, Minister of Children and Family Development. "The Nass Child Care Centre will provide culturally inclusive, quality child care that honours the traditions of the Nisga'a and supports children and families in the Nass Valley."

The Province is providing \$492,585 under its Childcare BC New Spaces Fund to help School District 92 create the new Nass Child Care Centre, which will provide 32 new licensed child care spaces – 12 for infants and toddlers and 20 for children aged 30 months to school age.

"For a number of years, there have been aspirations to bring a fully licensed child care centre to the community of Gitlaxt'aamiks for all the parents of the four Nisga'a communities in School District 92," said Elsie Davis, school district board chair. "This new facility will give parents peace of mind and allow them to continue to be productive contributors to our school district and our communities."

The centre will be operated by the district and is expected to open in time for the new school year in September 2019.

"Children's early years can shape the rest of their lives and this new centre will ensure Nisga'a children have culturally relevant care that will build pride in themselves, their culture and their language," said Rob Fleming, Minister of Education. "It is why we support having school districts partner with Indigenous communities to provide affordable, accessible, quality care so that Indigenous children can stay closer to home and their families."

Nisga'a culture will be built into every aspect of early learning provided at the centre. Elders will regularly visit the centre to share oral history with the children and provide teachings in traditional languages, helping to preserve and pass down Nisga'a practices. Children will also benefit from a free hot meal program that promotes healthy eating.

"The new Nass Child Care Centre will certainly be beneficial for many young Nisga'a families in the Nass Valley who are seeking to further their education or enter the workforce," said Eva Clayton, president of the Nisga'a Lisims Government. "The close proximity to the schools and the Nation's institutions will also prove beneficial to our young families."

Construction is already underway to convert former student residences that the district owns into the bright, new child care centre. A convenient location for many, the centre will be

minutes from Nisga'a Elementary and Secondary school and a short drive to the local college and medical clinic.

"Indigenous early childhood education is a key part of our government's Childcare BC plan," said Katrina Chen, Minister of State for Child Care. "We are working in partnership with School District 92 and the Nisga'a Lisims Government to bring quality, affordable child care to the region, supporting families in the four area communities who want or need child care."

Under the Childcare BC New Spaces Fund, child care providers can apply for funding to create new child care spaces at any time throughout the year under a continuous application process.

Creating new licensed child care spaces is a key part of the Province's Childcare BC plan and supports its commitment to give B.C. families access to affordable, quality child care when they want or need it. Since July 2018, the Province has funded approximately 9,000 new licensed child care spaces across all of its space creation programs throughout B.C. More new spaces will be announced as projects are approved.

Investing in child care and early childhood education is a shared priority between government and the BC Green Party caucus and is part of the Confidence and Supply Agreement.

Learn More:

For more information about Childcare BC, visit: www.gov.bc.ca/childcare

To learn more about the Childcare BC New Spaces Fund and to apply, visit:
www.gov.bc.ca/childcare/newspacesfund

Local parents who need information about choosing child care can get help through the Skeena Child Care Resource and Referral Centre or by visiting:
<http://childcarechoices.ca/main/North/Skeena/>

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

Learn more about the Nisga'a Lisims Government and School District 92:
www.nisgaanation.ca/school-district-92

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