



YMCA Early Years Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How do the YMCA Early Years waitlists work?

A. The YMCA manages over 1,000 licensed child care spaces for children ages 0 to 5 years old at 30+ locations throughout Metro Vancouver. Our waitlists **do not** operate on a “first come – first served” basis. There are several priorities taken into consideration for enrolment such as:

- siblings of current participants
- children that are currently in the program and aging into the next age group
- children who are transferring from one YMCA Child Care program to another
- partnership agreements

Q. How do I apply to the waitlist?

A. The YMCA has moved to an online system called OneHSN. The link to apply to the waitlist is in the auto reply you receive when you send us an email. You can also access the waitlist using this link:

[YMCA BC Child Care Waiting List](#)

- Please only apply to centres you are willing to attend. Look at the location map to see if it makes sense to apply based on distance from home or work. Families can apply to a maximum of 5 centres total (including child care and school age programs).
- Parents have control over their account so you can look at it any time, update your personal information, add siblings, add centres, etc. **Families should only have ONE account for all children in their family.**
- Please apply only one time to any centre. There is no need to add your child to each age group as the system will automatically move your child into the next age group when they reach the age to move.
- Please consider any centre you accept a placement at to be permanent. Internal transfers may be considered if a family has moved or changed employment (proof may be required). Even then there is no guarantee.

Q. What does having priority mean?

There are a few different priorities when offering spaces. These priorities come before the general waiting list.

- Sibling priority – Once a child is registered, their sibling will only have priority at the same centre. Once the first child has left the program, the sibling will no longer have priority.
- Children currently attending the program have priority for the next age group up if there is space.
- Internal Transfer – If you are currently attending one centre and you want to move to another, you would need to contact us for the Internal Transfer Request Form. We cannot guarantee when or if a space will be available where you want to attend. Keep in mind that some centres have employee requirements so you may not qualify.
- Employee or Licensing agreements – Certain centres give priority for employees, such as Kids at Heather YMCA Child Care, which gives priority to employees of Vancouver Coastal Health; Djavad Mowafaghian YMCA Child Care, which gives priority to employees of Provincial Health Services Authority; Renfrew Station YMCA Child Care, which gives priority to employees of the Broadway Tech Centre; and Surrey City Hall YMCA Child Care, which gives priority to employees of City Hall as well as City of Surrey employees. There are a few others as well and there will be a pop up message if you try to apply. If you do not fall into one of those categories, it is unlikely you would get a space at our centres that have an employee or licensing agreement.

Q. I was on the waitlist for a few years and when you switched over to OneHSN, my application was removed. How come?

A. Families from the manual list were transferred over to OneHSN in December 2021 and January 2022. Families were sent several emails asking them to log in and confirm their applications. Parents were given more than 90 days to do this. If you did not do this, you would have been removed and would be invited to reapply. **We will not backdate your application to your original application date.**

Q. I was on the waitlist and logged in when the list was moved online. Now six months later I have been removed. Why?

A: You will receive an email if you have not logged into your account every 90 days. This email will ask you to log into your account. If you do not log in by the deadline, your child will be removed from the waitlist. You can add your child back to the list, but we **will NOT** backdate your application.

Parents should add gv.childcare@bc.ymca.ca to their safe senders list. The YMCA is not responsible for emails that go to your spam or junk.

Q. When can I join the Early Years waitlist?

A. Families are welcome to join the Early Years waitlist at any time when they are pregnant and have a confirmed due date. **You will be responsible to update the child's name and birthdate when they are born.**

Q. Is there a fee to join the waitlist?

A: There is no joiner fee for our programs. There is a \$200 non-refundable registration fee for all centres that are not \$10 a day centres.

Q. How long do I have to wait in order to get a child care space?

A. The length of time is different for each location. Waitlist times can vary from one year to 3+ years and there is no guarantee that a space will come up. It is very difficult for us to predict when a space might become available for you, as there are many factors that are used to offer spaces (i.e. priorities such as partnership agreements, siblings, age ups and internal transfers come before the waitlist). Typically, most spaces become available between July and September of each year. You will remain on the waitlist unless:

- You are offered a space
- Fail to log in every 90 days as requested
- Request to be removed
- Your child ages out.
- If we offer a space on your preferred start date and you decline the space, you will be removed from the waitlist and be required to reapply if needed.

Q. Can I find out where my child is on the waitlist?

A. We do not provide families with waitlist numbers and are unable to respond to requests related to where your child is on the waitlist. It is difficult to forecast when your child can expect to receive an offer for a space. As mentioned in previous questions, there are many factors that go into offering a space, and therefore, we will not be able to answer questions related to where your child is on the waitlist.

Q. What if I want to withdraw my child from the program or I accept a child care space and then decide I don't want it or?

A: We have a 45-day withdrawal policy that applies to all parents who accept a space. If you accept a space and then change your mind, we require 45-days' notice (we have an online form you request from us by email at gv.childcare@bc.ymca.ca). All withdrawals take effect the 1st of the month only. For example: to withdraw for December, you would need to complete the withdrawal form no later than October 15th. If notice is not received by the 15th of the month, you would be responsible for the fee until January 1. **Registration fees are non-refundable under any circumstance.**

Q. What if I am offered a space and decline?

A: Due to the length of each waitlist, if you are offered a space and decline you will be removed from that waiting list but are welcome to re-join. In some cases, parents may decide they want to wait a few more months. It is up to the parent to go in and change their preferred start date to avoid being removed.

Q. Can the admin staff go into my account and help me by changing my information on the waitlist?

A: We do not have the ability or authorization to change any of your personal information. Parents need to log into their account and make information changes themselves.

Q. Are child care spaces full-time or part-time?

A. All our spaces are full-time. If you decide you only want to attend a few days a week, you will still be required to pay the full-time fee.

Q. Can I have a tour of the centre?

A. We do not offer tours of any of our centres. Once you are registered, you will be sent a welcome email with all the centre contact information and you may contact the centre then. Centres will offer a tour once you are registered.

Q. What is the difference between your full-day 3-5 program and pre-school programs?

A. The only differences are the hours of operation and the staff ratio. The program is the same.

Q. I no longer require space for my older child. Can I update this application to a sibling/friend/relative?

A. Spaces are non-transferrable so you cannot switch children.

Q. What if my child has additional support needs?

A. The YMCA is an inclusive environment and we welcome children with additional support needs. If your child has additional support needs, please answer “yes” to that question on the waiting list. If your child has been diagnosed after you applied to the waiting list, please let us know. We will work with you and any other service providers involved to:

- Assess your child’s strengths, interests, and needs.
- Determine how or if 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.

If a centre already has children with additional support needs, they may not be able to support another child at the same time.

Q. Are all of your centres \$10 a day?

A. Many of our centres are \$10 a day, but not all. The YMCA applies for this, but it is a provincial decision that we have no control over. Typically a new centre can take well over a year to become a \$10 a day centre (if it is approved).

Q. Once my child is registered into an Early Years program, is their space held until Kindergarten?

A. Children registered in the infant/toddler group are prioritized for space in the 3-5 groups. We can't guarantee space in the next age group will come up, but children in the programs usually move up when children withdraw and age up in the program. If there was any reason we could not offer you a space in the older group, we try to find you space in one of our other programs. If that is not possible, you would be required to remove your child from the centre until there is space.

Q. How long can my child stay in a YMCA child care centre?

A. Families with a child who is eligible for kindergarten for the upcoming school year will be withdrawn automatically from the centre the last day of August. We will not be able to keep them after the end of August as we will have a group of new children coming in. If you decide to withdraw before August 31st, please send us an email for a link to the withdrawal form as 45-day's notice will apply in this case. For inquiries regarding our YMCA licensed school age Kids Club (school age child care programs K-12) please email them directly at ymcakidsclubs@bc.ymca.ca.

Here is the link to the Family Handbook. Please read through it for more information on how our Child Care programs work.

[Early Years Family Handbook](#)