

**How well do YOU think our children are doing?
Let us know your comments at:
INFO@CATCHCOALITION.CA**



Community Action Toward Children's Health

Acknowledgments~

The 2009 State of the Child Report was developed in consultation with the CATCH Integration Team and National Child Day Committee. Thank you to our partners for providing information: City of Kelowna, District of Lake Country, District of Peachland, District of West Kelowna, Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), Interior Health, Kelowna Child Care Society, Kelowna Community Food Bank, Ministry of Children and Family Development, Okanagan College, Okanagan Regional Library, and School District 23

References~

Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation: www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/
District of Peachland: Peachland.ca
District of West Kelowna: DistrictofWestside.ca
Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP): earlylearning.ca
Interior Health
Library: Interiorhealth.ca
Kelowna Child Care Society: kelownachildcare.com
Kelowna Community Food Bank: kelownafoodbank.com
Ministry of Children & Family Development: gov.bc.ca/mcf
Okanagan College: Okanagan.bc.ca
Okanagan Regional Library: orl.bc.ca



State of the Child Report

2009 Central Okanagan

Every aspect of a child's environment, including secure relationships provides an opportunity to help grow a healthy and happy child. The 2009 State of the Child Report provides information on five elements of the Central Okanagan environment: Child Care, Early Learning, Family Economics & Wellbeing, Child-Friendly Cities, and Health. The report aims to initiate discussions about how well our community is raising healthy children and encourage everyone to take action when and where they can.

Child Care



Quality Child Care sets the foundation for a child's development!

Child Care Spaces~

848 child care spaces have opened in the last 5 years; a **23% increase**.

However, there is still lack of spaces. This year **only 48%** of parents report successfully finding child care, in comparison to **67%** five years ago.

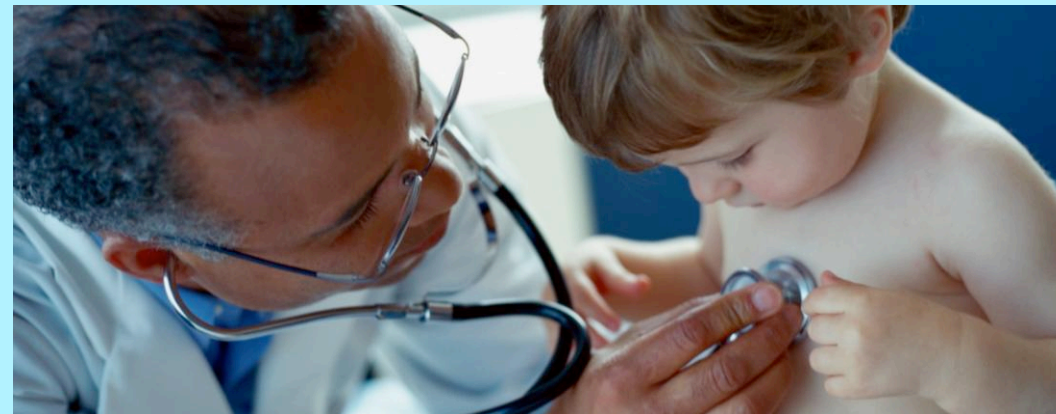
Parent Fees ~

Parent fees have increased by **\$200 per month** in the past 3 years. The average family pays nearly **\$900/month** for toddler care.

The 3 main challenges for child care programs are:

- Expensive start up costs and difficulty finding funding
- Low wages for Early Childhood Educators
- Difficulty recruiting and retaining Early Childhood Educators

Health



Healthy children grow up to become healthy adults!

Newborn~

1660 babies were born at KGH in 2008. The average birth weight was 7.5 lbs (3400 g). **6%** of these babies had a **low birth-weight** (less than 5.5 lbs or 2500 g); the Provincial goal is **4%**.

Since 2009 **all newborns** now have the opportunity to have their **hearing screened** to detect early hearing loss.

Child~

The primary reason for hospitalization of children at KGH was **diseases and disorders of the digestive system**

Hospitalization rates for children with respiratory diseases were **12** per 1,000 locally, whereas it was **4** per 1,000 provincially.

Child-Friendly Cities



Environments are a place for children to feel safe and stimulated.

The Central Okanagan communities **endeavor to be Child Friendly** by working toward the UN Rights of the Child including:

- Influencing decisions about their city
- Participating in family, community and social life, regardless of ethnic origin, religion, income, gender or disability
- Receiving basic services such as health care, education, shelter, and healthy food
- Being protected from exploitation, violence and abuse
- Walking safely on the streets to meet friends and play

Local Successes

Additional playgrounds and water parks, **low-cost** recreation, increased **partnerships** for family supports, and increased **accessibility**, ie. Transportation, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes.

Early Learning



Play is a child's work!

Early Development Instrument (EDI)~

The EDI measures **5 domains** of children's development up to Kindergarten age.

20% of local children were vulnerable on at least one scale of development in 2009, a **reduction of 7% in the last 3 years.**

Family Supports~

There are **7 Strong Starts** and **4 Family Resource Programs** all **free** to families in the Central Okanagan.

Literacy~

Library cards had a cost for people living on Westbank First Nation land. However, since 2008, **120 children** have registered for their **free** library cards.

Last year the six local library branches held **455 story time sessions** for children aged birth to 5.

Family Economics & Wellbeing

The effects of poverty, poor nutrition and unsafe housing during childhood have an impact throughout the life cycle.

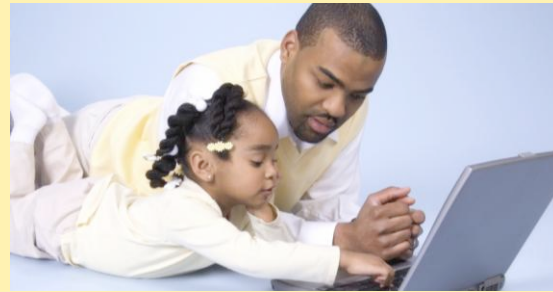


Income~

BC has the **lowest** minimum wage in Canada (\$8) and it has not increased in **8 years**.

In 2007, the median employment income was **\$27,306**; an increase of **more than \$5,000** in the last 4 years.

The incidence of low-income families in 2006 was **9.2%** locally and **13.3%** provincially; **unchanged** since 2001.



Education~

In 2001 **79%** of adults had completed high school. In 2006 that number has increased to **89%**.

However, in 2008 only **75% of 18-year olds** graduated, consistent with the provincial average

Children in Out-of-Home Care~

In August 2009 there were **404 children in out-of-home care**. This is an **11% decrease** since August 2008.



Food~

It costs **\$774** to feed a family of four each month; **10% higher** than the cost of the same food basket six months ago.

Annually for the past **4 years more than 9,000** hungry children came to the Kelowna Food Bank for help.



Housing~

In 2009 the average rent for a 2-bedroom apartment was **\$935**; an increase from **\$800** in 2006.

Kelowna is the **fifth most expensive** place to purchase a home in Canada. Between 2002 and 2009 the median housing price **increased by 125%**. The average home price is now **\$450,000**.