

# I have to go back to work, what do I do with my kids?



## Did you know?

81% of parents who use child care say that the cost puts a financial strain on their family.

Child care fees are the second-largest expense for most families after housing.

Average monthly costs for full time daycare in St. Albert is \$769/month per child.

Financial assistance is available through Human Services for eligible lower income families using licensed child care.

The number of accessible, licensed childcare spaces in St. Albert is too low to meet the needs of working parents.

In 2014, there was a shortage of quality accessible spaces in St. Albert for up to 66% of children whose parents are or could be employed.

Despite St Albert's reputation as an affluent community, many families live paycheque to paycheque with very little savings. This series of eight newsletters will highlight some of the most pressing financial strains families face on a day to day basis.

For working parents having access to child care is crucial during the early years. Most pre-school children in Canada are not in a high-quality or even adequate-quality child care setting. For many low income families, quality and affordable child care is just not something they are able to afford. Many have no option but to leave the workforce or to use unregulated care. Poor-quality care can have negative affects on children's development.

Pre-school experiences make a life long difference in the development of children's health, well-being, competence, and coping skills. When searching for quality and affordable child care consider all your options.

## Childcare Options

- ⇒ **Daycare:** Is a Licensed Child Care Program that must meet requirements laid out by the Province. They have rules and standards that ensure a child's health and safety needs are being met.
- ⇒ **Approved Day Home Agencies:** Care is monitored by a contracted family day home agency to ensure the health, safety, and well being of children in their care.
- ⇒ **Unlicensed Day Homes and Family/Friends:** Ensure you are confident in the level of care. It is important to interview and check references.

There are various pre-school options in St Albert for children 3-5 years old. Many community organizations offer programming that meets the needs of any family. Some of these include education, music, physical activity, or art focused learning. When a child is ready for school, full day Kindergarten may be an option for those families where childcare may be restricting.

Any childcare and pre-school program can also be **Accredited**. This is based on standards of excellence that reflect current research and leading practices to provide high quality child care over and above licensing regulations. The focus is on outcomes for children, families, staff, and community to support children's optimal early learning and development.



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## For more information check out:

[humanservices.alberta.ca](http://humanservices.alberta.ca)

\* search **childcare** (for financial assistance, interview guide, and childcare lookup tool)

[stalbertcivc.com](http://stalbertcivc.com)

\* search **babysitting registry**

[facebook.com/stalbertccc](https://facebook.com/stalbertccc)

\***St Albert Child Care Connect**