Waitlist Policy

Wild Wapiti Playschool Society (WWPS) opened its waitlist with an initial intake period from April 14–20, 2023. Registrations received during that period were randomly ordered to create the initial waitlist.

As we reopen the waitlist, registrations received during the intake period of October 5–12, 2026 will also be randomly ordered to ensure a fair and equitable opportunity for all families. Registrations during this period will not affect the position of families currently enrolled on our waitlist.

After October 12, 2026, the waitlist will remain open, and new registrations will be added on a first-come, first-served basis following the randomized list. At this time, WWPS does not anticipate closing and reopening the waitlist again.

Please note that each waitlist registration is specific to an individual child. A waitlist position cannot be transferred between siblings or reassigned to another child within a family.

Information about the waitlist and registration process will continue to be shared through our website and email communications.

As spaces become available, children on the waitlist will be prioritized in the following order:

1. Children already enrolled with WWPS in the Infant Toddler (11-36m) program who are ready to move to the Preschool (30m to school age) program
2. Children of staff at WWPS
3. Siblings of children currently enrolled in a program with WWPS
    a. Once a space becomes available it will only be offered to a sibling if they are within one month of an age old enough to attend. The

eligible ages to attend each program are minimum 11m old for the I/T program, and minimum 29 months old for the Preschool program. A holding fee of 50% the cost of the Parent Fee will be charged for the one month holding period, and then full payment will be due in subsequent months.

b. If the sibling is not within one month of an age old enough to attend, the space will be permanently offered to the next child on the waitlist.
c. The sibling location on the waitlist won't be affected by the current child graduating away from the program.

4. Children who fall within the following two categories, will be prioritized on a first-come first-serve basis:
    a. Children who are already enrolled within WWPS on a contract, and who are waitlisted to increase their time on a permanent basis
        i. Once their contract is finished, these children will hold their prioritized position on the waitlist.
    b. Children that qualify based on WWPS' Staff Housing Program (see details further below)
        i. These children will hold their position on the waitlist, regardless of whether or not the staff continues to be employed by WWPS.
5. Children from the community who are registered on our waitlist and require full-time care. The order of children is based upon the order randomly generated as part of the in-take process.
6. Children from the community who are registered on our waitlist and require part-time care. The order of children is based upon the order randomly generated as part of the in-take process.

The Manager and the Board of Directors reserve the right to manage the waitlist in the best interest of the WWPS. WWPS will aim to reserve at least four spots for priority populations (e.g. low-income, single parents, Indigenous, new to Canada, additional support needs).

Maternity/Parental Leave policy

Children already enrolled at Wild Wapiti Playschool who have a parent on parental leave may reduce their days to 2 or 2.5 days/week, while holding their full time spot for when they return, no later than 18 months from the first day of leave.

A 6-18 month contract will be made with a parent of the next eligible child on the waitlist to fill the resulting empty spot. The child with the temporary contract spot will then be prioritized to receive a spot after the parental leave ends. While not anticipated, if the maternity/parental leave contract can not be filled, it is ultimately the responsibility of the family on leave to pay the full fee to hold their child's spot for the duration of the contract.

Waitlist Acceptance Policy

If a parent is called for a space and they cannot be reached, we will provide them with 3 business days to get back to us. If we do not hear back from the parent or guardian in the set time, we will move down the waitlist. If they have not acknowledged the offered space within 30 days of the call, the child will be removed from the waitlist.

Upon confirmation of the family interest, a meeting and tour of our facility will be set. The child must be present, and a mutual agreement will be needed to move forward with enrollment.

If you choose to decline the offered space, but would like to remain on the waitlist, you will remain in your place for the next available spot.

Wait times

It is impossible for us to predict exactly when a space may become available for you. As a result, we are unable to give you an approximate entry date. Typical wait times vary from a few months to several years. We will let everyone on the waitlist know their initial spot on the list. Everyone on the waitlist will be notified periodically (approximately every 6 months) to update your place. Please do not contact us for information about your place on the waitlist. Please remember, this position may fluctuate based on the priority factors listed above.

It is the responsibility of the parent to update WWPS if your requested date for child care or the amount of child care needed (full-time vs. part-time, or part-time schedule adjustments) changes from what was indicated on the original application form.

As WWPS foresees availability opening up, those at the top of the waitlist (top 2 on list) will be contacted to be updated ahead of time (at least one month in advance of when spot is expected to be available).

Staff Housing Program

Affordable and available housing in the City of Fernie is a well-known, ongoing municipal issue. It is one of Wild Wapiti Playschool Society's (WWPS)' goals to attract Early Childhood Educators/Early Childhood Educator Assistants (ECE/ECEAs) from outside of Fernie, in order to create new child care spaces in the community. WWPS aims to overcome the issue of finding accommodation for new ECE/ECEAs through the development of the Staff Housing Program.

A google form will be available through the WWPS website to any families that are willing to provide housing to a newly hired ECE/ECEA. The new ECE/ECEA will be able to look at this document and can contact the families in regards to their proposed housing.

A family will be given priority for child care spot(s) if the following conditions are subsequently met:

- WWPS must have on record an employment letter that is signed and dated by the ECE/ECEA.
- The family must demonstrate to the WWPS that a BC Residential Tenancy Agreement has been signed between themselves and the ECE/ECEA employed by Wild Wapiti Playschool.

If, for any reason, the ECE/ECEA is no longer employed by WWPS, the child(ren) will still hold their prioritized position on the waitlist in order to honour the original commitment of the family who provided housing.

WWPS recognizes that not all members of the Fernie community are home owners and thereby may not have access to the opportunities provided through this Staff Housing Program. To rectify this, WWPS does not require that the family own the housing for it to be offered. Sub-leases or private rooms are acceptable under this Program, so long as the owner of the property has given written consent.