

## How would an accredited program meet my family's needs?

- 1 Accredited programs demonstrate their commitment to work in partnership with parents to meet your child's specific needs.
- 2 Accredited programs document your child's development.
- 3 An open door policy is essential to an accredited program's practice, and your input and feedback are welcomed.
- 4 Additional opportunities are available to access workshops and other resources that support planning of activities specific to your child's skill level and interests.
- 5 Accredited programs have access to provincial government funding at enhanced rates to attract and retain qualified staff and to promote staff development.
- 6 The facility exceeds licensing standards.



Alberta  
Association for the  
**Accreditation**  
of Early Learning and Care Services

**(AELCS)**

*The Alberta Association for the Accreditation of Early Learning and Care Services (AELCS) is a non-profit organization that is funded by Alberta Children's Services*

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**Alberta**

# Accreditation



## Interested in Quality Child Care?

*Accreditation is a tool  
parents can use to help  
them choose child care  
that meets their needs.*



## What is Accreditation of Early Learning and Care Services?

Alberta's Child Care Accreditation Program was designed to improve the quality of child care in Alberta and to help parents choose child care that meets their needs. Accreditation is available to licensed day care programs and contracted family day home agencies.

It demonstrates how programs go beyond minimum requirements to meet higher standards of care in delivering child care services.

## How is accreditation different from licensing?

Licensing is required by provincial legislation to ensure that minimum standards of health, safety, and care are in place at all times. Accreditation is voluntary. Accreditation exceeds the regulated standards of licensing.

## How does a centre or agency become accredited?

Programs engage in a self-study process and undergo a site visit by external examiners to demonstrate they meet ten quality standards.

## Why would I want my child in an accredited program?

High quality child care can positively influence your child's development because children learn and grow best in programs that provide quality care and activities.

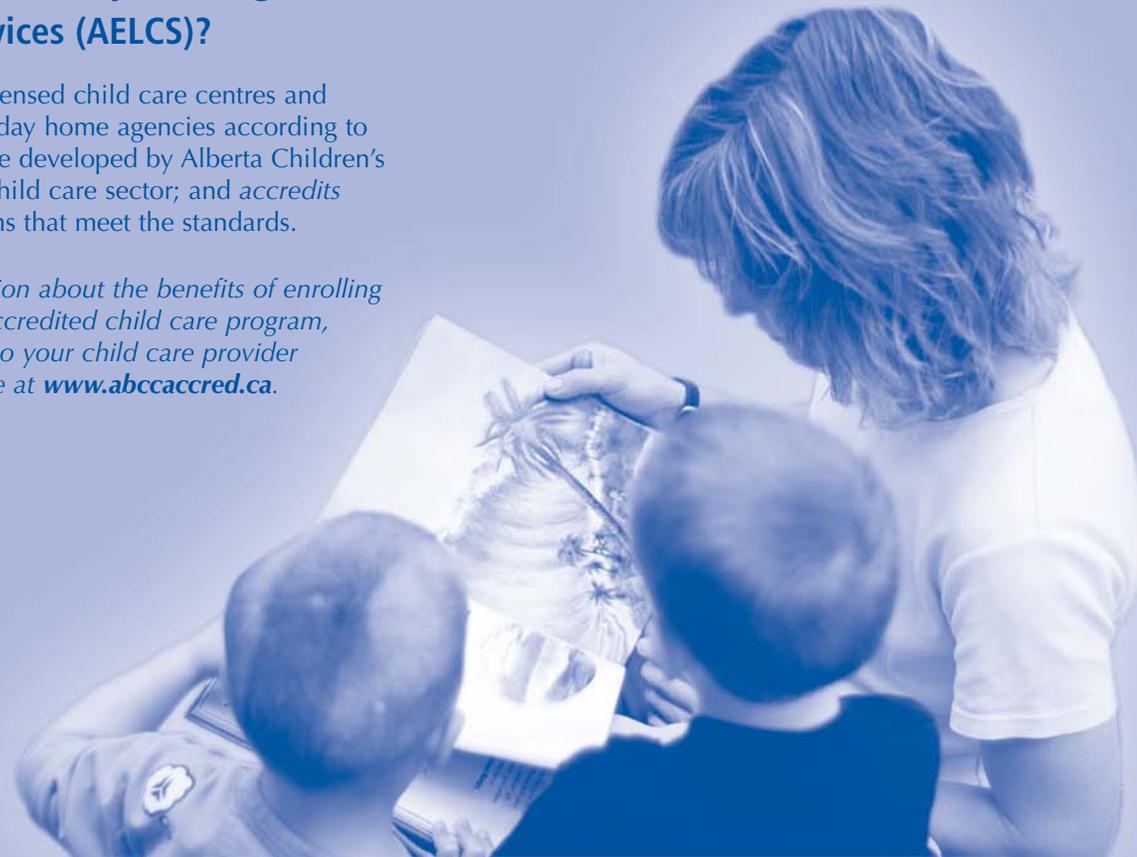
Accredited programs encourage the involvement of parents in the child care program.

## What is the role of the Alberta Association for the Accreditation of Early Learning and Care Services (AELCS)?

AELCS assesses licensed child care centres and contracted family day home agencies according to standards that were developed by Alberta Children's Services and the child care sector; and *accredits* child care programs that meet the standards.

*For more information about the benefits of enrolling your child in an accredited child care program, feel free to speak to your child care provider or visit our website at [www.abccaccred.ca](http://www.abccaccred.ca).*

# Recognizing excellence in child care across Alberta



## Accredited Child Care Guides Parents to Quality

Finding and choosing child care can be a worrying experience for parents. They naturally want the best for their children as to safe environments, caring professionals and appropriate developmental experiences. Accreditation gives parents an essential tool in evaluating and selecting the high quality early learning and care services they want for their children.

Accreditation informs parents that a child care service is providing quality care. It does so voluntarily through extensive self-examination of its programs, personnel and operations, and an onsite validation of its findings by independent child care professionals. Accreditation requires that a service commit itself to quality enhancements. Parents can be confident that organizations providing accredited services have shown themselves to offer quality child care and have committed themselves to continually strive to improve.

Accreditation helps parents select appropriate services. It defines quality child care services, differentiates them from other services, and certifies the quality of child care services. It identifies and recognizes high quality early learning and care services.

Knowing that a service is accredited is valuable information for parents. It tells them that the service has shown that it provides the staff, stimulating programs and settings in which children may learn and grow toward their optimal development. It tells them that the staff of the service has the tools they need to support and maintain high quality care. Accreditation increases the professional recognition of people working in early learning and care services and heightens their awareness of the important service they provide.

Alberta's child care standards are to promote excellence within its child care services. They challenge services to show expected outcomes for the children in their care, their families, the staff of the services, and the communities in which they operate. An accredited service has to identify and correct its weaknesses and build upon its successes to meet Alberta's standards of care. Accreditation informs parents that a child care service meets or exceeds Alberta standards.

Accreditation is also based upon how well a child care service is managed. Parents can expect that accredited services have clear policies on their administration and development of their staffs. In particular, parents can expect an accredited service to regularly communicate with and involve them in decisions on the operation of the service and the care of their children.

A child care service that becomes accredited has shown its willingness to be accountable to parents, their communities, the child care profession and government. It has confirmed that its philosophy, goals, programs and services, facilities and financial stability are consistent with standards and practices of quality early learning and care of children. It has shown that it invests its funds in quality programming.

In short, the accreditation of child care services benefits children, parents and service providers by aiding the development of high quality services. By voluntarily obtaining accreditation, a service has an incentive to continue to

develop and improve. Of major importance, accreditation helps parents by certifying the quality of a service based on province-wide standards. The ultimate goal of the Alberta Association for the Accreditation of Early Learning and Care Services is the accreditation of all child care services to enhance services to children and families across Alberta.