



BC Screen Time Policies Prompt Families to Seek Indoor Play Alternatives for Young Children

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Indoor playground operators report growing family interest since provincial policy changes on screen time in child-care settings.

Since British Columbia introduced restrictions on screen time in child-care centres and cellphone bans in schools, some indoor play venues in the Lower Mainland have observed increased interest from families seeking hands-on alternatives for young children. The World of Kidtropolis, an indoor playground and miniature city in Richmond that operates a pretend play education model across 18,000 square feet, is among the facilities reporting consistent demand for active, screen-free play options since the policy updates took effect. The facility, which opened in 2016, provides themed play zones where children navigate a kid-sized city with its own grocery store, fire station, theater, and other interactive environments designed to encourage imaginative play and social interaction among peers.

British Columbia's Ministry of Education and child-care regulators introduced the screen time measures as part of a broader framework addressing digital device use in early childhood settings. The policy changes, which apply to licensed child-care facilities and K-12 schools, have brought attention to how young children

spend their time outside the home and what alternatives exist for parents looking to supplement school and care hours with active, screen-free options. The changes follow similar measures adopted in other provinces including Ontario and Alberta, reflecting cross-country attention to the role of screens in early development. For parents in Richmond and the broader Lower Mainland, the policy discussions have prompted many to seek out venues that offer supervised recreational environments where their children can play without relying on digital devices.

"We have seen families become more deliberate about choosing activities that involve direct interaction and physical play rather than passive forms of entertainment," said Aleem Kassam, owner of Kidtropolis. "Parents tell us they are looking for environments where their children can engage with real objects and other children in a supervised setting. That has been consistent with what we offer since we opened, and the recent policy discussions around screen time have reinforced that approach for many families. When children come here, they are making decisions about what to play, negotiating roles with each other, and moving through physical spaces at their own pace, which is fundamentally different from screen-based activity."

The facility offers drop-in play sessions, birthday party packages that include dedicated rooms and staffing, and specialty events such as Kids Night Out, which provides supervised evening care for children. Kidtropolis marks its tenth year serving Richmond families in 2026 and maintains timed entry booking to manage capacity and ensure adequate space for each visitor group. The facility is designed around themed play zones where children engage in role-play and imaginative activities at their own pace, with staff supervising activity areas throughout the space while allowing children to direct their own play. Regular programming accommodates different age groups from toddlers through elementary-aged children, with summer camps and school-break activities offered seasonally.

For families in the Lower Mainland, indoor playgrounds serve as a practical resource when outdoor activity is limited by weather and shorter daylight hours. From October through March, Vancouver and Richmond receive significant rainfall, making covered and indoor recreation spaces a regular part of weekly planning for many households with young children. Kidtropolis operates seven days a week from 10 AM to 5 PM, including statutory holidays, providing Richmond families with a consistent indoor play option throughout the year. The facility's model of supervised free play combines physical movement, social interaction with peers, and imaginative exploration in a controlled indoor environment, meeting a need that has become more prominent as conversations around children's screen time and active play continue to evolve across British Columbia.

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For more information about The World of Kidtropolis, contact the company here:[The World of Kidtropolis](https://www.theworldofkidtropolis.ca)
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The World of Kidtropolis

Kidtropolis is an interactive miniature city where kids become community members like doctors and shop owners. Kids explore careers through play, developing social and cognitive skills. It's perfect for birthdays, events, and field trips.

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