



Richmond Parents Seek Early Childhood Development Programs as Play-Based Learning Gains Popularity

August 07, 2026

August 07, 2026 -

Kidtropolis owner Aleem Kassam reports increased demand for structured play-based activities among families with children ages five and under.

Richmond parents seeking early childhood development options have shown increasing interest in play-based programs that combine social interaction with structured learning activities, venue operators report.

According to Statistics Canada, more than 60 percent of Canadian children under age six participate in some form of early learning program, with demand for quality options continuing to grow in metropolitan areas across the country. British Columbia has expanded its early childhood education investments through initiatives such as the Early Learning and Child Care agreement, reflecting rising awareness among parents and policymakers of the developmental benefits of structured play for young children.

Kidtropolis, an interactive miniature city located in Richmond, British Columbia, has operated in the region since 2016 and introduced dedicated play-based learning programming for children ages five and under. The

sessions offer scaled-down versions of the venue's role-play exhibits, including a mini grocery store, a fire station, a veterinary clinic, and a hospital, all sized for younger visitors to navigate independently.

"We have seen a steady increase in inquiries from parents of toddlers who want structured play opportunities that go beyond basic childcare," said Aleem Kassam, Owner of Kidtropolis. "The families coming through our doors are more informed than ever about the benefits of pretend play for early brain development. They are looking for environments where their children can develop social skills, language ability, and problem-solving confidence in a setting that feels like play, not school."

The American Academy of Pediatrics published a clinical report in 2018 emphasizing that play is essential for healthy brain development in early childhood, supporting cognitive growth, language acquisition, and emotional regulation. Play-based learning environments have been shown in multiple studies to improve executive function skills, which are critical for school readiness and long-term academic success. The National Association for the Education of Young Children similarly recommends play as a core component of early childhood programming.

The play-based learning program runs on select Tuesday mornings when the venue is closed to the general public, allowing young children to explore without the crowds typical of weekend visits. Activities include sensory play stations, story time areas, arts and crafts tables, and simplified role-play experiences designed to encourage exploration through hands-on participation in a calm, low-traffic setting.

As Kidtropolis marks a decade of operations in 2026, the venue has continued to expand its programming to meet the needs of Metro Vancouver families. The Clubhouse After-School Care program runs Monday through Friday for children ages five and up, providing structured play and social activities after school hours. Facilities are sanitized between sessions and configured for safety, and caregivers are welcome to stay and participate alongside their children throughout all programming.

Richmond has seen steady population growth among young families, with the city's population of children under 14 increasing by more than 8 percent between 2016 and 2021 according to census data. This demographic shift has contributed to rising demand for early childhood programming across the city, as more families seek developmentally appropriate activities for preschool-aged children. Community centers and children's venues across Metro Vancouver have responded with expanded offerings, though providers note that demand continues to outpace available slots for structured early childhood programs.

This demographic pattern aligns with national trends showing that families with young children increasingly prioritize early learning opportunities when choosing activities and programs for their preschool-aged

children.

###

For more information about The World of Kidtropolis, contact the company here: The World of Kidtropolis
Contact Details: (604) 285-7529 info@kidtropolis.ca 110-5940 No 2 Rd, Richmond, BC V7C 4R9

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.

Website: <https://www.kidtropolis.ca/>

Email: info@kidtropolis.ca

Phone: (604) 285-7529

The logo for Kidtropolis features the word "kidtropolis" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The "kid" portion is colored blue, and the "tropolis" portion is colored green. A small trademark symbol (TM) is located at the bottom right of the word.