

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **North Vancouver Chamber Outreach Suggests Lack of Available Childcare is Impacting Local Businesses**

In a recent series of outreach efforts, including a survey conducted from August 1–15, 2019, the North Vancouver Chamber found that a lack of affordable, quality childcare is having a direct impact on employers, employees and the local economy overall.

Among the survey's key findings are that availability and operating hours for local childcare facilities are the greatest challenge faced by North Vancouver employers — both in preventing employees from working their full hours and contributing to greater employee workday absences. Other associated factors, including the distance to and from suitable childcare and available transportation to childcare facilities, were also cited by employers as key factors.

Of the 47 owners and managers who responded to the Chamber's survey, more than 50 per cent indicated they had higher employee turnover due to the challenges of balancing childcare and work obligations. While employers did not see childcare obligations as impacting their business profitability, they do see it impacting on-the-job employee performance and productivity.

A related roundtable conducted by the Chamber in mid-September found that local daycare facilities are at capacity, there are long waitlists and that demand is greatest for before- and after-school care.

"These are significant challenges faced by businesses in our local community," says Patrick Stafford-Smith, CEO of the North Vancouver Chamber. "There's a tangible link between childcare and local businesses, one that affects employees, employers and the local economy. As a Chamber, we want to help advocate for more quality childcare in the local community — childcare with extended hours that's also readily accessible by public transit for those who choose North Vancouver as their place of work." Adds Stafford-Smith, "Today, there are very real opportunities for all levels of government to work together with us and our local businesses to effect change in this area."

Presently, North Vancouver employers are supporting their employees in bridging any gaps — as best they can — through flexible working hours and work-from-home options. However, these in-between solutions are not possible for many businesses in our community.

**About the North Vancouver Chamber**

*The North Vancouver Chamber supports a strong, local business community that is thriving thanks to North Vancouver's growing and engaged population, an increase in its younger demographics and an injection of millions of dollars into its industry. We make business ownership easier by offering a variety of services and benefits to help members promote their business, develop strong networks and overcome obstacles to business growth. The Chamber includes more than 650 businesses, representing 24,000 employees and 12 major sectors, with 94 per cent being small businesses.*

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