

# PROPOSAL FOR NEW CHILDCARE LAW CARIBBEAN NETHERLANDS

*Information  
for  
parents.*



**BES(t) 4 KIDS**

## Proposal for new Childcare Law in the Caribbean Netherlands

The BES(t) 4 kids program aims to offer all children in the Caribbean Netherlands good-quality, safe and affordable childcare. We want to ensure a safe and caring environment for children, which is available to all families, so every child has the opportunity to develop themselves to their full potential. The rules for children's centres and host parents in the Caribbean Netherlands will be laid down in a new law. Before the new law is final, there are still many steps to be taken. In this brochure, you can read about the main points in the proposal for a new law that is being prepared.

### Why a new law?

A Childcare Island Ordinance, which specifies many rules for the quality of children's centres and host parents, is already in force. In addition, there already is a temporary childcare subsidy scheme. A childcare facility can use this subsidy to improve the quality of childcare and to reduce costs for parents. All quality rules will be laid down in the proposal for the new law for a longer period of time. Additionally, the proposal describes how we will finance childcare in the future when the temporary subsidy scheme stops. All this combined enables us to ensure good-quality, safe and affordable childcare.

### What will change for children?

Just like in the Childcare Island Ordinance, the proposal for the new law states that children are cared for in a safe and pleasant environment and that they are stimulated in their development while playing. Staff in the childcare sector will be trained for this. This is already happening at many childcare organisations.

The proposal for the new law also states that children must get at least one healthy meal every day in the childcare facility. The (out-of-school) care facilities must also regularly organise fun activities such as sport, drawing and drama, taking into account the children's age and interests. Children can attend out-of-school care for the full day during school holidays.

Childcare organisations and primary schools will also have to collaborate closely in order to ensure that children will always continue to thrive and that the transition from childcare to school goes smoothly.

The Inspectorate of Education will supervise childcare organisations. They will ensure that children are cared for properly and safely.



## What will change for parents?

The BES(t) 4 kids program aims to ensure that all parents can bring their children to childcare without having to worry about the finances. Of course it is not mandatory for parents to use childcare facilities. It is, however, beneficial to children's development that they attend childcare at least a couple of days a week.

### Payment of parental contribution

The proposal for the new law states that parents will make arrangements with childcare organisations on the care of their child(ren), as in the current situation. Those arrangements will be recorded in a written agreement.

What will be different is that the parents will pay the parental contribution to the RCN unit SZW, instead of to the children's centre or the host parent. The amount of the parental contribution then becomes dependent on the income of the parents, so that childcare is affordable for all parents. Parents can also choose to have the parental contribution settled with the child benefit they receive from SZW. Because all parents pay via SZW, the childcare organisation does not know what the parents earn.

The RCN unit SZW will subsequently pay the childcare organisations the allowance for childcare costs in one go. The amount of this payment to the childcare organisation is not dependent on how much a parent can pay. This way, childcare organisations get certainty about their income and they do not have to worry about whether parents will pay the bill (on time). A children's centre or host parent is not allowed to charge parents for an additional parental contribution, nor a voluntary contribution. Neither are childcare organisations allowed to reject children if there is no waiting list.

### Amount of parental contribution

The amount of the parental contribution in the proposal for the new law depends on the income of the parents. The exact amount of the parental contribution is still being determined. For parents earning (together) more than \$25,000.00 gross a year is now being considered approximately:

- **\$100.00 to \$150.00 a month for five days a week of day care;**
- **\$50.00 to \$75.00 a month for five days a week of out-of-school care.**

**The mentioned amounts can still change. This also applies to the income threshold of \$25,000.00.**

If a child attends childcare only half of the time, the parent will also pay half of the parental contribution.

Parents with an income lower than \$25,000.00 a year, will pay approximately \$40.00 a month for day care and \$25.00 for out-of-school care as of 2022. Parents can submit an application to the RCN unit SZW on the island where they live.

The Public Entity can also decide to fully compensate the parental contribution if a family lives in poverty and has many problems. For a child it can then be extra important to go to day care. For those parents, childcare will then be free of charge.

## Actively involve parents

With the new law we want to stimulate childcare organisations to involve parents in the development of their child. This is why the proposal, for instance, states that childcare organisations must form a parent committee. Furthermore parents can participate in the organisation of activities for the children. Sometimes the childcare organisation will want to share information about the development of children with other organisations like primary schools. In that case the parent must be asked for their permission.

