



Childcare

There are a range of childcare services available to help parents balance work and family life. From birth until the end of primary school, children are integrated into a structure that promotes their development and supports their learning. Care services are subject to a fee. If there are no such structures where you live, you should enquire in person at the municipality. The municipalities do their best to ensure people have access to a range of childcare services.

Opening and operating hours

Many childcare facilities offer opening hours from 6.30 am to 6.30 pm. Opening hours do not always correlate with parents' working hours, especially in the case of shift work. In such cases, childcare provided by day care families is a good alternative.

During the company holidays of the childcare facilities (on a weekly basis in summer and over Christmas, sometimes also in spring and autumn), care must be organised privately. In the agglomeration municipalities of Brig-Glis, Visp and Naters, holiday care is available in the childcare facilities during most school-free periods.

Day care centres

Day care centres (or crèches) look after children for the entire day. Most of the offers cater for children from three months of age until they are old enough for primary school. Since waiting lists are usually long, parents must register their child very early. Costs vary depending on the day care centre and the family's income, and are shared by the municipality in which you live. Because some day care centres are organised and financed by associations of municipalities, your child may not be able to attend a nursery in your home municipality.

Out-of-school care and recreation (OSCAR)

Voluntary childcare from the age of 4, i.e. from entry into compulsory school until the end of primary school, is offered in most cases by an out-of-school care and recreation (OSCAR). In some cases, this type of care is offered by nurseries, but depending on the municipality, it may also be offered directly by the school or by a separate institution.

School hours in Valais are usually divided into a morning and afternoon block. Many children spend the time before and after school and especially over lunchtime at home with their families. If both parents are working, it is their responsibility to organise childcare through a childcare facility, a day care family or privately. In principle, supplementary school supervision is organised in individually bookable days and modules (before and/or after school and/or over lunchtime) and cannot be booked by the hour. Parents must pay to use these services. The rates are often dependent on income.

Play group and creche

The playgroup is aimed at children who are not yet in kindergarten (from about 3 years). Playgroups serve more to socialise the children and do not aim to enable parents to combine work and family life. The children are looked after by a trained specialist. The composition of the group remains unchanged over a school year. In the creche, children are looked after without advance notice and irregularly by the hour or half-day (without lunch).

Day care family

Day care families look after one or more children in a family setting at home. The parents, together with the day care parent coordinator and the day care family, agree on which days and for how many hours their child will be cared for. The day care family can also adapt to changing needs (e.g. when the child starts kindergarten or school, or the parents' working conditions change).

Childcare at home

If a child or their parents are ill, the Red Cross childcare service offers quick and straightforward assistance. One call is all it takes for a caregiver to arrive promptly at your home (four hours after the call). This offer is for babies and children up to 12 years of age. The Red Cross also provides babysitters so that parents can treat themselves to an evening off.

Overview and availability of childcare services / www.valais4you.ch

Extrafamilial childcare Valais / www.vs.ch

Childcare at home, Red Cross / www.otes-kreuz-wallis.ch

