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# Saskatchewan

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## OVERVIEW

Kindergarten support, prekindergarten (pre-k) and regulated child care are all the responsibility of the Early Years Branch within the Ministry of Education. Authority for kindergarten lies with the Student Achievement and Supports Branch in the Ministry of Education while being supported by the Early Years Branch.

Kindergarten and pre-k are half-time programs. Children aged five and six years old attend kindergarten while children age three and four years old may attend pre-k. Pre-k is a targeted program offering educational opportunities for vulnerable children and families. Both programs are funded by the Ministry of Education and are at no cost (free) to families.

Regulated child care is termed licensed child care. In Saskatchewan, part-day preschool (nursery school) programs are exempt from licensing and are not funded. Regulated family child care homes use an individual licensing approach.

Historically, regulated child care centres have been almost entirely non-profit (there are currently three for-profits). For-profit services receive no public funding at all including fee subsidies. There are several municipally-delivered centres in small rural communities.

## PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

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### Number of children 0-12 years (2014 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	11,900
1	12,100
2	12,300
3	13,100
4	13,700
5	14,300
6	14,200
7	12,500
8	12,700
9	11,700
10	12,400
11	11,100
12	11,800
Total	163,700

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### Number of children 0-12 years (2014 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0-2	36,300
3-5	41,100
6-12	86,400
Total	163,700

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### Number of children 0-12 years with employed mothers (2014 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	7,600
1	7,900
2	7,400
3	8,600
4	9,000
5	9,700
6	9,500
7	8,900
8	9,300
9	8,600
10	8,700
11	8,000
12	8,400
Total	111,700

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**Number of children 0-12 years with employed mothers (2014 rounded estimate)**

Age	Number of children
0-2	22,900
3-5	27,300
6-12	61,400
Total	111,700

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**Children 0-14 years identifying with an Aboriginal group (2011)**

Age	First Nations	Metis	Inuit	Multiple	Other	Total
0-4	14,705	5,040	10	150	105	20,015
5-9	12,430	4,340	15	60	60	16,990
10-14	12,140	4,450	30	75	80	16,770
Total	39,280	13,830	145	285	245	53,780

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**Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2014 rounded estimate)**

Age of youngest child	Number of mothers	Participation rate (%)
0-2	23,200	70.9
3-5	18,600	75.6
6-15	42,500	83.9

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**FAMILY-RELATED LEAVE****Maternity leave**

Eighteen weeks.

**Parental leave**

Birth mothers may take 34 weeks immediately following maternity leave. The other parent may also take up to 37 weeks. These parental leaves may be taken consecutively.

*Note: Paid maternity and parental leave provisions are divided between federal and provincial/territorial governments. All leave provisions are set under employment standards legislation by provinces/territories. The federal government benefit for these leaves pays for up to 15 weeks of maternity leave and 35 weeks of parental leave/ adoptive leave (either parent) for new parents eligible under Employment Insurance rules. In all jurisdictions except Quebec (which has its own approach), the benefit is paid at a rate of 55% of earned income to a maximum of \$524/week (2015).*

## KINDERGARTEN

### PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

Ministry of Education  
Student Achievement and Supports Branch  
2220 College Avenue  
Regina, SK, S4P 3V7  
Telephone: (306) 933-5436  
Website: [www.education.gov.sk.ca](http://www.education.gov.sk.ca)

### LEGISLATION

Saskatchewan. Legislative Assembly. *The Education Act*. 1995. E-02. Amended 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002.

The Independent Schools Regulations set out the criteria with which independent schools are required to comply. Under *The Education Act*, 1995, independent schools must be registered with the Ministry of Education in order to operate legally.

### KINDERGARTEN SERVICES

Kindergarten is delivered in public schools under school boards and independent schools (as defined in *The Education Act*, 1995).

### AGE ELIGIBILITY

*The Education Act*, 1995, gives school divisions the authority to set the age of entry into kindergarten programs (for Grade 1, a child must be six years old by December 31). In most school divisions, children must be five years old by December 31 of the year in which they begin kindergarten.

### COMPULSORY

Kindergarten is not compulsory (although more than 90% attend) nor is it an entitlement. Provision is determined by school divisions; all 28 school divisions provide kindergarten.

### HOURS

As defined in *The Education Act*, 1995, a kindergarten program requirement is not less than one-half the length of the school year. Thus, 475 hours are required for kindergarten and 950 hours are the requirement for Grades 1 to 12.

School divisions have legislative authority to administer and finance kindergarten in a matter that benefits both the needs of children and the school division. Many rural schools offer kindergarten full days every other day with urban schools offering half-day every day. School divisions are given funding for half-time provision.

### CLASS SIZE

There is no provincial class size limit in kindergarten.

### TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

For a teaching certificate, the following requirements must be met: Saskatchewan Grade 12 or equivalent; an approved university degree or equivalent; four years of post-secondary education; completion of an approved teacher education program. English or French proficiency is also required.

There are no ECE requirements for kindergarten teachers or for ongoing education or professional development.

### CURRICULUM

[Saskatchewan Kindergarten Curriculum](#)  
[Children First: A Resource for Kindergarten](#)

### SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN

The Ministry of Education has introduced a new funding formula to allocate operating grants to school divisions. The new formula no longer relies upon a base per student rate. Rather, enrolments are used throughout multiple formulas for instruction, administration, etc.

K-12 per pupil spending	\$12,948
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## PREKINDERGARTEN

### PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREKINDERGARTEN

Ministry of Education  
Early Years Branch  
2220 College Avenue  
Regina, SK, S4P 4V9  
Telephone: (306) 787-3858  
Website: [www.education.gov.sk.ca/ELCC](http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/ELCC)

### PREKINDERGARTEN SERVICES

Prekindergarten is a developmentally appropriate early childhood education program that currently targets vulnerable three- and four-year-old children and their families; it is not a universal program. The program requires a qualified teacher and provides programming for up to 16 children for minimum of 12 hours per week for 10 months of the year.

In 2015-16, there are 316 ministry funded programs across the province. The Ministry provides funding, program guidelines and consultative support. School divisions hire staff and operate the program. Most pre-kindergarten programs are operated in schools although school divisions have the option of partnering with a community organization to offer programming.

Prekindergarten focuses on fostering social development and self-esteem, nurturing educational growth and school success, promoting language development and engaging families.

Prekindergarten programs offer opportunities for enhanced play and exploration as guided by the Ministry developed and supported documents *Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide and Essential Learning Experiences*.

### ELIGIBILITY

Prekindergarten is offered in targeted communities/ neighbourhoods for three- and four- year old children who meet specified eligibility criteria (i.e. family and environmental risk, existing delays, behavioural challenges, isolation, low socio-economic status).

### HOURS

Prekindergarten is offered for a minimum of 12 hours per week, usually three hours/day for four days a week.

### PREKINDERGARTEN SPENDING

In 2015-16, the total allocation for prekindergarten was \$26 million.

## REGULATED CHILD CARE

### PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

Ministry of Education  
Early Years Branch  
2220 College Avenue  
Regina, SK, S4P 4V9  
Telephone: (306) 787-3858  
Website: [www.education.gov.sk.ca/ELCC](http://www.education.gov.sk.ca/ELCC)

### LEGISLATION AND REGULATIONS

Saskatchewan. Legislative Assembly. *The Child Care Act*. Bill 8, 1990 as amended by the Statutes of Saskatchewan, 2000.

Saskatchewan. Legislative Assembly. *The Child Care Regulations*. 2001.

### CHILD CARE SERVICES

#### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

##### Unregulated family child care

Care provided to no more than eight children including the caregiver's own children under 13 years. Of the eight, five may be younger than six years; of these five, two may be younger than 30 months.

##### Nursery schools

Part-time preschools operating less than three hours/day.

##### School-aged

Programs located in schools and solely for school-aged children.

### **Child care services on-reserve**

Services provided on a reserve as defined in *The Indian Act* (Canada).

## **REGULATED CHILD CARE**

### **Child care centres**

Services that provide care to children in group settings. Centres must have a license from the Early Years Branch and may care for up to 90 children from six weeks to and including 12 years. Child care centres can include non-profit services governed by parent boards of directors, and for-profit services that have parent advisory committees.

### **Teen student support centres**

Teen student support centres are located in or near a high school and provide child care services to children of parents attending the high school.

### **School-age child care**

Care outside school hours for children under 13 in a mixed-age centre, family child care home or in a program solely for school-age children that is not located in a school.

### **Family child care homes**

Operated by individually licensed family child care providers in a residence. They may care for up to eight children depending on the children's ages.

### **Group family child care homes**

Operated by individuals in a residence and licensed for up to 12 children. The caregiver must have an assistant adult caregiver in attendance when the numbers or ages of children permitted in a family child care home are exceeded.

### **Teen student support family child care homes**

Teen student support homes are family child care homes formally associated with a high school, and provide child care services to children of parents attending the high school. Teen student support family child care homes are licensed to care for up to six children, depending on their ages.

## **CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK**

[Play and Exploration: Early learning Program Guide](#)  
[Jouer et explorer, Guide du programme d'apprentissage, Pour la petite enfance](#)  
[Play and Exploration for Infants and Toddlers](#)

## **CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

The Child Care Inclusion Program provides various grants to child care facilities to include children with diverse or exceptionally high diverse needs. Up to 15% of a centre's spaces may receive inclusion grants (up to 25% with special approval).

Individual inclusion grants are available to licensed centres and family child care homes to include children with cognitive, physical, social, emotional, behavioral or language needs that require additional support. Grants may vary from \$200 to \$300/month depending on the need within three defined levels.

Enhanced accessibility grants of up to \$2,000 per month may be provided to assist with additional costs of including a child with exceptionally high diverse needs. The child must have a referral (not necessarily a diagnosis) and must require significant additional support. The parents must be enrolled in an education program or employed. The grant may be provided in the case of employed parent/guardian(s) during maternity/paternity leave. Parents of children with diverse needs pay for the space but not for the additional supports.

Facilities may receive a training and resource grant of \$100 per child with diverse needs per year, as well as a grant of up to \$600 (\$1,200 for exceptional needs) for adapted equipment required to meet the child's needs.

## **ABORIGINAL CHILD CARE**

Saskatchewan does not regulate or fund on-reserve child care programs. Since 2001, at the request of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, monitoring of child care on-reserve has been the responsibility of First Nations.

The federally funded First Nations and Inuit Child Care Initiative has resulted in the development of approximately 70 on-reserve child care facilities with 840 spaces monitored by First Nations.

## SPACE STATISTICS (2014)

<b>Number of regulated child care spaces</b>			
<i>Centre-based</i>			
Age Group	Full-day	Part-day	Total
Infants (6 weeks-17 months)	1,083	-	1,083
Toddlers (18-29 months)	2,704	-	2,704
Preschool (30 months-kindergarten)	6,006	-	6,006
School-age (grade 1-13 years)	1,411	-	1,411
<b>Total centre-based spaces</b>	11,204	-	11,204
<i>Family child care spaces</i>			
Number of children enrolled in family child care homes			953
Number of children enrolled in group family child care homes			1,157
<b>Total family child care spaces</b>			2,110
<b>Total number of regulated child care spaces</b>			13,314
<i>Note: Saskatchewan does not license part-day preschools. The number of hours services may be provided is restricted by the legislation.</i>			
<i>Note: As of March 2014 an additional 711 child care centre spaces were in various stages of development; totalling 14,025 spaces operational /in development.</i>			
<b>Children with special needs in regulated care</b>			388
<b>Children receiving fee subsidies</b>			3,250
<b>Number of regulated child care programs</b>			
Centre-based			282
School-based child care centres for preschool-age children (included in centre-based)			115
<b>Total number of family child care providers</b>			243
<b>Sponsorship of regulated centre-based spaces</b>			
Non-profit			10,985
Municipally operated			141
For-profit			78

### Parent fees

There is no set parent fee.

In 2012, a national survey of child care centres and staff found median monthly fees of:

Age group	Median monthly fee
Infant	\$650/month
Toddler	561/month
Preschool	535/month

In 2014, a national survey of child care fees in Canada's large cities included Saskatoon:

	Median monthly preschooler fee
Saskatoon	\$645

## STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

### REGULATED CENTRES

**Maximum centre size:** 90 spaces  
(maximum of 12 infant spaces)

**Maximum room size:** not specified

### Maximum staff/child ratios and group sizes

Age	Staff:child ratios	Max. group sizes
Infants (under 18 months)	1:3	6
Toddlers (19 to 29 months)	1:5	10
Preschool (30 months – 6 years)	1:10	20
School-age (Grade 1 – 12 years)	1:15	30

### Centre staff qualification requirements

Saskatchewan has three levels of certification:

- **ECE Level I:** Completion of an ECE orientation from an approved accredited post-secondary institution, or completion of nine credit units (three courses) that are directly related to early childhood – one course from each of three areas: Child Development, Programming, and Relationships.
- **ECE Level II:** Completion of a one year ECE certificate from an approved, accredited post-secondary institution or an equivalent combination of post-secondary coursework.
- **ECE Level III:** Completion of a two year ECE diploma from an approved, accredited post-secondary institution or an equivalent combination of post-secondary coursework.

Only courses completed through an approved, accredited post-secondary institution are considered for ECE certification.

Centre directors hired after July 2001 must have at least a two year diploma or equivalent and be certified as an ECE III. Directors appointed to a centre director position prior to July 2001 must meet or exceed the qualifications of an ECE II (one year ECE certificate or equivalent) but must upgrade to a two year diploma if they accept employment with another centre.

All staff employed in a centre for 65 hours or more per month have to meet the qualifications of an ECE I.

- 30% of staff are required to have a one year ECE certificate or equivalent (ECE II).
- 20% of staff are required to have a two year ECE diploma or equivalent (ECE III).
- All staff members in each centre must have completed a first aid and CPR course.

Individuals must apply to Educator Services, Ministry of Education for certification. The requirements for certification and the courses required to achieve equivalency status are set out by the Ministry of Education.

ECE certification from another *Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT)* province or territory is automatically recognized. Individuals must submit an application for certification and a photocopy of the certificate and a letter of authentication from the certifying agency.

If a licensee is unable to hire a centre director, supervisor, or child care worker whose qualifications meet the requirements of *The Child Care Regulations, 2001*, the licensee may apply to Educator Services for an exemption from those requirements. An education plan must also be submitted, indicating how the licensee intends to meet the requirement of the regulations through further education of the individual to be hired.

## REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE

### Model of organization

Individually licensed

### Maximum capacity

Family child care homes: Up to eight children (including the provider's own children under 13 years) between six weeks and 12 years. Of the eight children, only five may be younger than six years; of these five, only two may be younger than 30 months.

Group family child care homes: Up to 12 children (including the provider's and assistant's own children under 13 years). Of the 12 children, only 10 may be younger than six years, of these 10, only five may be younger than 30 months and only three younger than 18 months.

Teen student support family child care homes: Up to six children (including the provider's own children under 13 years). Of these six children, no more than four may be younger than six years; of these four, only two may be younger than 30 months

### Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Program consultants conduct annual visits to renew licenses in addition to a minimum of two drop-in visits throughout the year.

### Family child care provider qualification requirements

Must be 18 years old. All providers require an orientation session with a program consultant and first-aid/CPR training, plus six hours of professional development workshops each licensing year. Must submit the results of a criminal records search with respect to the applicant and each adult who resides in the premises in which the home will be operated.

Providers in regular family child care homes must complete a 40 hour introductory early childhood education course within the first year of licensing.

Providers in group family child care homes have three years to complete the 120-hour orientation course (ECE I). Assistants require first-aid and CPR training plus six hours of professional development each licensing year.

## FUNDING

### CHILD CARE SERVICES ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

Funding is available to regulated child care, which includes child care centres, teen student support centres, school age child care, family child care homes, group family child care homes, and teen student support family child care homes.

Only non-profit and municipal child care services receive public funding, including base, capital and subsidy funding.



## TYPES OF FUNDING

### Fee subsidies

#### *Child care subsidy program*

Subsidies are available in regulated non-profit child care centres and licensed family child care homes. They are paid directly to service providers. Parents must secure a child care space before applying for a subsidy.

Child care subsidies are available to all families that meet the income and social requirements. Subsidy rates vary by age of the child, the type of care and by region.

Subsidy rates do not cover full fees; a family eligible for subsidy is required to pay a minimum fee of 10% of the actual cost of care. Centres and regulated family child care homes may also surcharge subsidized parents above the minimum fee. The average surcharge fee for subsidized parents has been estimated to range from 30% to 40%. The child care subsidy program pays for the parent portion of fees for parents who are on social assistance.

### One time funding

#### *Tuition reimbursement grant*

Grant to a licensee of a facility for reimbursement of tuition fees paid and required books purchased for ECE courses completed by licensee or staff to meet requirements or for upgrading ECE qualification. Maximum grant per individual course taken by the person is \$500 (in the case of courses leading to qualification as an Early Childhood Educator I level or above and the maximum grant for the Early Childhood Educator orientation course is \$1,500)

### Space development funding

#### *Start up grants*

One time grant for the purpose of developing child care spaces in centres.

- Maximum grant is \$615 per child care space

Grant for a family child care home or a teen student support family child care home located within or outside the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District.

- Maximum grant within district \$2,250
- Maximum grant outside district \$1,800

Grant for group family child care home located within or outside the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District.

- Maximum grant within district \$2,500
- Maximum grant outside \$2,000

Grant for licensees that change from a family child care home to a group family child care home.

- Maximum per licensee \$400

### Space development capital grant

One-time grant to a developmental licensee or a licensee of a non-profit centre to assist with costs of developing, renovating or constructing new child care spaces in a centre.

- \$3,360 per new child care space approved by the minister for development.

### Fire, health and safety grant

One-time grant to a provisional licensee with respect to costs associated with meeting necessary fire, health and safety requirements.

- Maximum grant is \$1,200 for a new family child care home.

### Enriched learning environment grant

One-time grant to the licensee of a facility to support the design implementation of an enriched learning environment.

- \$246 per licensed child care space in a non-profit centre.
- \$1,025 per family child care home, group family child care home or teen student support family child care home.

### Recurring funding

#### Early childhood services grants

*For centres: Grants to support on-going operating and staffing costs to provide child care services.*

Maximum grant for licensee of extended hours centre that operates less than 120 hours per week

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Amount per month, per space</i>
infant	\$975
toddler	585
preschool	292
school-age	195

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Maximum grant for licensee of extended hours centre that operates 120 hours per week or more

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Amount per month, per space</i>
infant	\$812.50
toddler	487.50
preschool	243.75
school-age	162.50

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Maximum grant for licensee of full-time centres or student support centres

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Amount per month, per space</i>
infant	\$650
toddler	390
preschool	195
school-age	130

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### **Inclusion grants**

*For centres: Grants to support children with diverse needs*

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#### *Individual inclusion grants*

- Maximum grant per month to assist with additional costs of supervising the child, for a period not exceeding one year is \$300
  - Maximum grant per year for the purchase of adapted equipment required to meet the needs of the child is \$600 (\$1,200 per year if the Director approves the exceptional circumstances)
  - Maximum grant to assist with the cost of training employees and the provision of resources other than those listed above is \$100
- 

#### *Enhanced accessibility grants*

- Maximum grant per month to assist with additional costs of supervising the child, for a period not exceeding one year is \$2,000
  - Maximum grant per year for the purchase of adaptive equipment required to meet the needs of the child is \$600 (\$1,200 per year if the Director approves the exceptional circumstances).
  - Maximum grant to support training of employees and the provision of resources other than those above is \$200
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*Support service grants for on-going costs associated with centres providing parenting programs*

- Maximum grant for centres is \$810 per month per infant child care space and \$680 per month per toddler child care space
  - Maximum grant for homes is \$350 per month per teen student support child care space
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#### *Nutrition grant for family child care homes*

Grant to licensee with respect to the provision of nutritious meals and snacks

- Maximum grant per month per licensed child care space in a home located within the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District is \$50 and outside the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District is \$40
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#### *Northern transportation grants for centres*

Grant for licensee of a centre located within the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District for transportation of children attending the centre

- Maximum grant is \$20 per month per child provided with transportation to the centre Northern equipment grants
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#### *Equipment and program grants for centres*

Grant for licensee located within the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District for replacement of equipment and supplies

- Maximum grant is \$100 per year per licensed child care space
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#### *For family child care homes*

Grant to a licensee of a child care home for developmentally appropriate programming, equipment and supplies

- Maximum grant is \$100 per year per licensed child care space
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PROVINCIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR REGULATED  
CHILD CARE

<b>Fee subsidies</b>	\$15,435,215
<b>One time funding</b>	
Development funding (Start-up grants, Space development capital grants, Fire health and safety grants)	\$1,732,457
Capital (school-based)	3,857,404
Enriched Learning Environment Grants	108,103
Equipment – family child care homes	176,384
<b>Recurring funding</b>	
Early Childhood Services Grants	\$35,352,930
Teen Student Child Care Centre Support	2,940,690
Nutrition - family child care homes	957,724
Inclusion grants	4,276,371
<i>Total recurring funding</i>	\$43,527,715
<b>Total regulated child care</b>	\$64,837,278
<b>Other funding</b>	\$1,011,099
<b>Early Childhood Training</b>	\$960,027

*Note: Inclusion grants include Individual Inclusion, Centre Inclusion, Enhanced Accessibility and Adaptive Equipment Grants.*

*Note: Other funding includes Targeted Initiatives, Preschool Support, Home Alternates Program, Early Childhood Initiatives, Northern Equipment/Transportation, ELPG Grant.*

*Note: Early childhood training includes funds paid to licensed child care programs for tuition reimbursement, professional development, and northern training.*

