

Lack of licensed care creates daycare 'deserts' across Canada ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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EXCERPTS

About 776,000 young children in Canada — 44 per cent — are living in “child care deserts,” or in communities where licensed care is scarce, according to a new report.

Access to child care varies widely across the country and even within provinces and individual cities, according to the report by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, being released Thursday.

In Brampton, Kitchener and Saskatoon, there is less than one licensed space for every four children not yet in school, the report says. Meanwhile, in Charlottetown and in most cities in Quebec, there are spots for 70 per cent of young children.

Child care deserts are defined as areas where three or more children have access to just one licensed spot, irrespective of fees.

To see how your neighbourhood stacks up, click [here](#). ^[3]

The report, which for the first time in Canada maps the availability of licensed child care by postal code with the number of non-school-age children, highlights the gaps in a service crucial for women’s workforce participation and key to addressing child poverty, says author David Macdonald, senior economist at the left-leaning think tank.

“Canadians should have access to affordable child care near where they live, no matter where they live,” says the report. “Our research into child care deserts shows this is not the case in far too much of the country.”

[...]

The research shows policy-makers need to address both price and availability if they want to ensure equitable access to licensed child care, says Martha Friendly of the Childcare Resource and Research Unit.

“Macdonald’s innovative data analysis shows how many families lack even basic access to an available space,” Friendly says. “And it illustrates how valuable better data could be as a planning tool if Canada were to begin in earnest to develop a systemic approach to child care.”

[Read more](#) ^[2]

Related link: [Child care deserts in Canada](#) ^[4]

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Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/18/06/lack-licensed-care-creates-daycare-deserts-across-canada>

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