

Assessing child care needs and forecasting demand ^[1]



MOVING FROM PRIVATE TO PUBLIC PROCESSES.

A SERIES ON CREATING CHILD CARE IN CANADA

Childcare Resource and Research Unit
childcarecanada.org

5 Assessing child care needs and forecasting demand

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About the series

One aspect of Canadian child care provision is that the supply of child care services is too limited to meet demand, unevenly distributed and inequitable in terms of location. The primary reason for this is that “creating” child care services in Canada has mostly been treated as a private responsibility. This private approach is in contrast to public processes where governments take responsibility for ensuring that child care services are developed where and when they are needed.

As Canada begins to fulfill a historic commitment to build a universal early learning and child care system, the challenge of limited, uneven, inequitable child care availability must be tackled systemically—a more publicly managed, planned, intentional approach based on greater public responsibility for ensuring the availability and determining the characteristics and distribution of regulated child care.

This series of short, topical papers covers the importance of designing effective child care expansion strategies and some elements that can contribute to developing them. The series is based on a longer publication, *Moving from private to public processes to create child care in Canada* (2020), and has been revised and re-developed in this more accessible series format to reflect current Canada-wide policy developments.

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This paper examines the use of two kinds of tools—needs assessments and demand forecasting—that can be used to support more planned publicly managed creation and growth of child care. It provides overviews of approaches to needs assessment and demand forecasting in several local or regional contexts, discussing what needs assessment and demand forecasting are, why these are useful tools, their key components and what variables should be considered when implementing these in different communities.


This publication is paper 5 in the series *Moving from private to public services: A series on creating child care in Canada* ^[3].

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[3]

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