

Child care centre workers serving children aged 0 to 5 years in Canada, 2021 to 2022 ^[1]

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Abstract

In 2021, the federal government of Canada committed over \$27.2 billion in funding through bilateral agreements with the provinces and territories towards building a Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care system. As part of these agreements, a multilateral workforce strategy was proposed in recognition of the central role of child care workers in providing high quality child care services, and the need to attract and retain qualified and committed individuals in the sector. This study fills information gaps related to the centre-based child care workforce providing care to children aged 0 to 5 years. First, it describes the composition, training and roles of employees in child care centres; pay and benefits; and turnover. Second, it describes how these differed across models of service delivery, jointly determined by ownership (not-for-profit or government-operated, or for-profit) and organizational structure (single site or multisite). This study uses the 2022 Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services, the first national survey to give an overview of child care services in Canada from the perspective of child care providers. A typical centre offering full-time services had about 12 employees on average, of whom about two-thirds were staff providing direct care to children. About three-quarters of centres provided benefits to employees, and about two-thirds of centre budgets were allocated toward paying employee wages. Turnover and vacancies in centres were highest for employee positions requiring training in early childhood education. Models of service delivery were frequently associated with differences in the characteristics of centres and staff, particularly in relation to employee pay and benefits.

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