



Saskatchewan

■ OVERVIEW

In Saskatchewan, early learning and child care (ELCC) includes prekindergarten, kindergarten, child care centres, school-age child care, family child care, and group family child care. All ELCC programs are the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

Kindergarten is part-day every day or full-day every other day in most schools. The province-wide Conseil des écoles fransaskoises offers full school-day kindergarten in all its schools. Part-day prekindergarten is a targeted program for three- and four-year-olds in vulnerable communities. As of 2024, there were 316 prekindergarten programs across the province. Neither kindergarten nor prekindergarten is mandatory.

Child care in Saskatchewan includes full-day centres, family child care, group family child care, and before- and after-school child care. Part-day preschools and stand-alone school-age programs in schools are not required to be licensed.

Child care centres in Saskatchewan are overwhelmingly delivered by non-profit operators, with a small number of publicly operated and for-profit programs. Most public funding is only available to non-profit and public programs.

Family child care providers and group family child care homes are individually licensed.

Since April 1, 2023, Saskatchewan's maximum parent fee for children below the age of six has been set at \$10/day. Fees for children aged six and older have not been reduced.

Effective January 16, 2024, the Child Care Subsidy System was replaced with the [Saskatchewan Employment Incentive program](#). These funds are paid directly to parents as part of a broader program for low income families.

Saskatchewan provides [wage enhancement](#) for all certified early childhood educators (ECEs) and for assistants working in group family child care homes. Saskatchewan does not yet have a wage grid.

Saskatchewan signed the Canada-Saskatchewan Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (Multilateral Framework Agreement) on March 5, 2017. This agreement allocated \$41.5 million over

three years; it was extended on June 29, 2020 with another \$13.7 million allocated to the 2020 – 2021 fiscal year, and renewed on August 13, 2021, with a further \$68.5 million allocated over four years.

The Canada-Saskatchewan Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement was signed by Saskatchewan and the federal government on August 13, 2021. This agreement allocated \$996 million over five years. The Canada-wide agreement does not replace but runs parallel to the Multilateral Framework Agreement.

Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years since CWELCC

	2021	2023	Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2023
For-profit	263	591	+328
Non-profit and public	13,472	14,628	+1,156
Total full-day spaces	13,735	15,219	+1,484
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	2%	4%	+2%
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit			22%

Family child care spaces (2021, 2023)

	2021	2023
Family child care spaces (enrolment)	778	808
Group family child care spaces (enrolment)	1,528	2,673
Total family child care and group family child care	2,306	3,481

Note: A breakdown by child's age is not available for family child care. These figures include all family child care spaces across age groups.

■ PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded, while totals are based on exact figures and may therefore not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

Number of children 0 – 12 years (2023 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children (2023)
0	11,100
1	12,800
2	14,200
3	14,300
4	14,400
5	16,500
6	14,600
7	15,300
8	13,800
9	14,600
10	13,400
11	14,400
12	14,700
Total	184,200

Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2023 rounded estimate)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children (2023)</i>
0 – 2	38,100
3 – 5	45,200
6 – 12	100,800
Total	184,200

Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (2023 rounded estimate)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children (2023)</i>
0	6,800
1	7,900
2	9,100
3	8,700
4	9,600
5	10,500
6	9,900
7	10,100
8	9,200
9	10,200
10	10,000
11	10,200
12	10,900
Total	123,000

Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2023 rounded estimate)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children (2023)</i>
0 – 2	23,800
3 – 5	28,800
6 – 12	70,500
Total	123,000

Number of children 0 – 14 years identifying with an Indigenous group (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>First Nations</i>	<i>Métis</i>	<i>Inuk (Inuit)</i>	<i>Multiple</i>	<i>Other</i>
0 – 4	12,730	5,040	30	245	110
5 – 9	13,705	5,690	55	295	120
10 – 14	14,810	5,935	40	175	125
Total	41,245	16,665	125	715	355

Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2023 rounded estimate)

<i>Age of youngest child</i>	<i>Number of mothers</i>	<i>Participation rate (%)</i>
0 – 3	27,400	75.7
4 – 5	12,200	78.2
0 – 5	39,600	76.3
6 – 12	33,700	88.0

Living arrangements by age of child by number of parents (2021)

Age	Living with two parents	Living with one parent	Lone mother	Lone father
0 – 4	53,595	13,050	10,670	2,380
5 – 9	56,225	16,920	13,155	3,760
10 – 14	54,005	18,950	14,570	4,380

Languages spoken most often at home (2021)

Age	English	French	Non-official	Multiple
0 – 4	61,025	245	5,985	2,085
5 – 9	68,600	255	5,045	2,530
10 – 14	69,245	200	4,825	2,610
Total	198,865	695	15,860	7,235

Median after-tax income among families with children 0 – 5 years (2020)

Two-parent families	Male lone parent	Female lone parent
\$100,000	\$46,000	\$46,000

KINDERGARTEN

Part-day kindergarten enrolment (2023)

<i>Enrolment in public schools</i>	
Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	13,900
Prekindergarten (for 3- and 4-year-olds)	5,635
<i>Enrolment in independent/private schools</i>	
Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	162
Prekindergarten (for 3- and 4-year-olds)	25
Total kindergarten enrolment	19,722

FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE

First Nations child care on reserves

Saskatchewan does not typically regulate First Nations child care programs on reserve. Since 2001, at the request of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, monitoring child care in Indigenous communities on reserve has been the responsibility of First Nations. However, in 2016, the Child Care Regulations were amended to allow licensing of a child care centre on reserve through agreement between an Indian Band and the minister.

There are two provincially licensed child care centres located on reserves in Saskatchewan, with a combined total of 146 regulated spaces. These are located on lands owned by Whitecap Dakota First Nation and Starblanket First Nation.

In addition, there are two on reserve child care centres currently in development by Cowessess First Nation.

There are no licensed family child care providers on reserves.

The number of on reserve child care centres that are not provincially licensed is not available.

Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (AHSOR) is not licensed. There are 77 AHSOR programs in Saskatchewan.

Indigenous child care other than on reserves

There are five licensed child care centres not on reserve that are either operated by an Indigenous organization or established to primarily serve Indigenous children. These centres are First Nations-led or focused and operate a combined 339 spaces. These spaces are included in the overall provincial space statistics.

Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) programs are not licensed. There are 15 AHSUNC programs in Saskatchewan.

CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

Number of regulated spaces (March 31, 2023)

Full-day centre spaces

Infants (6 weeks – <18 months)	1,564
Toddlers (18 – <30 months)	4,243
Preschool-age (30 months – 5 years, not yet in Grade 1)	9,399

Total full-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years) 15,206

Before- and after-school care centre spaces (licensed or regulated)

Children in kindergarten and Grades 1 – 6	1,620
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Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years) 16,826

Regulated family child care (licensed capacity)

Family child care	808
Group family child care homes (more than one provider)	2,673

Total regulated family child care spaces 3,481

TOTAL REGULATED SPACES

(centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)
20,307

Number of child care centres and family child care homes (March 31, 2023)

Centre-based child care

Total number of centres 378

Centre-based programs

Number of centres providing a full-day program	378
Number of centres providing a part-day licensed program for children attending school (Grade 1 – 6)	246
Number of centres providing infant care (6 weeks – <18 months)	230
Number of centres providing toddler care (18 – <30 months)	348
Number of centres providing preschool-age care (30 months – 5 years)	361
Number of centres providing non-standard hours care (non-standard hours as defined by the province)	2
Number of centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – 12)	147

Regulated family child care

Number of individual family child care homes (active)	109
Number of group family child care homes (active)	237

Total number of family child care homes 346

Participation in CWELCC

Number of child care centres	377
Number of family child care homes	346

Note: Provision for children older than 0 – 5 years in school-age centres is not eligible for CWELCC funding.

Municipal delivery

Number of municipalities or municipal entities operating child care centres (i.e. are the licence holder)	4
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Auspice

Full- and part-day programs by auspice (2023)

	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit	14
Non-profit and public	364

Centre spaces by auspice

	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>BASC¹</i>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	591	22	613
Non-profit and public	14,628	1,598	16,226

¹ Before- and after-school care (Grades 1 – 6).

Fee subsidies

Number of children receiving fee subsidies (March 31, 2023)

Full subsidy	267
Partial subsidy	517
Total children receiving fee subsidies	784

Disability support

Special needs/disability support (March 31, 2023)

Children in licensed child care receiving special needs/disability support funding	341
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CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

Number of children enrolled in regulated centre-based programs (March 31, 2023)

Full-day centres

Infants (6 weeks – <18 months)	251
Toddlers (18 – <30 months)	550
Preschool-age (30 months – 5 years, including kindergarten)	10,122

Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years) 10,923

Note: Enrolment statistics do not include enrolment in 712 licensed funded teen centre spaces.

Before- and after-school care (licensed)

Children enrolled in before- and after-school care *Not available*

PARENT FEES

As of April 2023, parent fees for infants and preschool-age children in child care facilities receiving operating grants were set at a maximum fee of \$10/day.

Full-time average monthly fees for centres and family child care homes (2022) and provincially set fees for centres and family child care homes participating in CWELCC (2023)

	<i>Full-time average monthly fee (2022)</i>	<i>Provincially set monthly full-time fee (2023)</i>
<i>Centres</i>		
Infant	\$414	\$217
Toddler	\$351	\$217
Preschool-age	\$327	\$217
<i>Family child care homes</i>		
Infant	\$434	\$217
Toddler	\$405	\$217
Preschool-age	\$317	\$217

Source: Macdonald, D., & Friendly, M. (2023). *Measuring Matters: Assessing Canada's progress toward \$10-a-day child care for all*. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

WORKFORCE

Saskatchewan provides [wage enhancement](#) for all certified ECEs and for assistants working in group family child care homes. Saskatchewan does not have a wage grid.

■ FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (Fiscal year 2022 – 2023)

The funding figures in each category represent provincial spending, which may include both provincial funds and federal funds transferred under bilateral agreements, Canada-wide ELCC agreements, or other federal programs used for early learning and child care.

Fee subsidies

Total fee subsidies	\$2,095,533
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Note: These are fee subsidies in licensed, regulated, or approved child care. The subsidies are associated with an individual child and family. There are provincial eligibility criteria. Fee subsidies are sent to service providers, not to parents.

Operational funding

Program	Amount
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Northern Transportation Grants (Centres)	\$14,000
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Equipment and Program Grant (Homes)	\$636,000
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Early Childhood Services Grant (Centres and Northern Centres)	\$55,433,000
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Support Services Grants – Teen Student Support Centre and Family Child Care Homes	\$1,252,000
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Nutrition Grant (Homes)	\$2,746,000
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Individual Inclusion Grant	\$158,000
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Minority Inclusion Grant	\$308,000
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Enhanced Accessibility Grant	\$6,696,000
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Parent Fee Reduction Grant	\$69,213,000
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Wage Enhancement Grant	\$12,065,000
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Total operational funding	\$148,521,000
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Note: Operational funding includes regularly paid public funding that contributes to the ongoing operation of the child care service. It may include: operating grants or formula-based funding, family child care agency operating funds, wage grants/enhancement, special needs funding, and other grants/funding that is paid on a recurring basis.

One-time funding – capital (major and minor)

Program	Amount
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Start-Up Grant (Centres and Homes)	\$1,668,000
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Space Development Capital Grant (Centres)	\$18,857,000
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Play and Exploration Grant	\$229,000
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One-time funding – other

Program	Amount
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Fire, Health and Safety Grant (Homes)	\$171,000
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Adaptive Equipment	\$12,000
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Active Play Grant	\$183,000
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Preventative Maintenance and Repair Grant	\$23,478,000
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Workforce Enhancement Grant	\$2,687,000
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Operating Grant to Offset Inflation Costs	\$14,917,000
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Winter Season Grant	\$1,976,000
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Change Management Grant	\$3,828,000
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Total one-time funding	\$68,006,000
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Note: One-time funding is paid occasionally or just once to a child care service and is not part of the regular operating budget. It may include: major capital, minor capital, start up, one time equipment, or repair funding.

TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE

(fee subsidies, operational funding, and one-time funding)	\$218,622,533
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Other ELCC funding

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Tuition and Book Reimbursement Grant	\$718,000
Tuition Reimbursement Top-Up Grant	\$121,000
Professional Development Grant	\$1,583,000
Training Support Grant	\$680,000
Early Childhood Education Training	\$7,436,000
Funding to Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association	\$250,000
Preschool Support Grant	\$498,000
Children Communicating, Connecting and in the Community (4Cs) Deaf and Hard of Hearing Program	\$222,000
Early Learning Intensive Support and Specialized PreKindergarten Grant	\$5,245,000
Bursaries	\$3,000,000
Transitioning Vulnerable Children	\$400,000
Building Capacity	\$390,000
Differential Monitoring	\$99,000
Public Awareness	\$245,000
Data System	\$17,000
Early Childhood Initiatives	\$67,000
Total other funding	\$20,971,000

Federal transfers to Saskatchewan

<i>Federal transfer</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$17,295,000
Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care	\$172,644,000

Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to Saskatchewan for fiscal year 2022 – 2023. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements as they are updated in line with population estimates on an annual basis. They do not represent funds carried over from the previous fiscal year or carried into the next fiscal year.

Source: Early Learning and Child Care Secretariat, Employment and Social Development Canada (2024).
