



# Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada 2024/2025

15TH EDITION

MARTHA FRIENDLY • JANE BEACH • GAYATHTHIRI ARURAN  
ALEXIE COSSETTE • LUYU HU • JADE LILLACE • BARRY FORER



CHILDCARE RESOURCE AND RESEARCH UNIT





Copyright © 2026 by the Childcare Resource and Research Unit.  
All rights reserved.

*Early childhood education and care in Canada 2024/2025*

Martha Friendly, Jane Beach, Gayaththiri Aruran, Alexie Cossette, Luyu Hu, Jade Lillace, Barry Forer

Childcare Resource and Research Unit

February 2026, 464 pages

ISBN 978-1-896051-89-5

Childcare Resource and Research Unit  
32 Heath St W Toronto ON M4V 1T3 Canada  
Telephone: 416-926-9264  
Email: [contactus@childcarecanada.org](mailto:contactus@childcarecanada.org)  
Website: [childcarecanada.org](http://childcarecanada.org)

Cover: Sonya V. Thursby and Dana Lea Thompson

Interior: Sonya V. Thursby and Dana Lea Thompson

Online interface: Design by Billie Carroll (UNIFOR Canadian Freelance Union)

#### **Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication**

*Early childhood education and care in Canada 2024/2025*

Martha Friendly et al. – 15th edition

Earlier editions of *Early childhood education and care in Canada* by Martha Friendly, Jane Beach, and the Childcare Resource and Research Unit are published under several titles including Child Care in Canada.

1. Child care services—government policy—Canada;
2. Early childhood education and care—government policy—Canada;
3. Early learning and child care—government policy—Canada;
4. Friendly, Martha;
5. Childcare Resource and Research Unit;
6. Beach, Jane.

This report is fully downloadable. Sections may be freely reproduced for educational, scholarly, and not-for-profit purposes if they are limited in length and fully cited. Permission to reproduce longer sections or for commercial publications should be sought in writing from the Childcare Resource and Research Unit.

Childcare Resource and Research Unit [Privacy Policy](#)

Childcare Resource and Research Unit [Accessibility Statement](#)

Citation: Friendly, M., Beach, J., Aruran, G., Cossette, A., Hu, L., Lillace, J., & Forer, B. (2026). *Early childhood education and care in Canada 2024/2025*. Childcare Resource and Research Unit.

Publications by Childcare Resource and Research Unit are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

To view a copy of this licence, visit [creativecommons.org](http://creativecommons.org).

For permissions beyond the scope of this licence, [contact Childcare Resource and Research Unit](#).

# Table of Contents

Land acknowledgement	6
Acknowledgements	6
Acknowledgement of funding	7
About the Childcare Resource and Research Unit	7
About this report	7
Data sources	8
Glossary	9
<b>PARENTAL LEAVES AND BENEFITS</b>	<b>14</b>
Overview	14
Canada outside Quebec: Benefits and leave provisions	14
Quebec: Benefits and leave provisions	16
Duration of leave entitlements	18
<b>FEDERAL EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE PROGRAMS</b>	<b>19</b>
Child Care Expense Deduction	19
Care for Newcomer Children	20
<b>FIRST NATIONS, INUIT, AND MÉTIS EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE</b>	<b>23</b>
First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples	23
The context of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis ELCC	23
Transforming First Nations, Métis, and Inuit ELCC	26
Indigenous ELCC legacy programs	27
<b>PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES</b>	<b>31</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	32
Prince Edward Island	63
Nova Scotia	91
New Brunswick	119
Quebec	148
Ontario	180
Manitoba	212

Saskatchewan	243
Alberta	273
British Columbia	303
The Yukon	336
Northwest Territories	362
Nunavut	388

## COMPARATIVE TABLES

412

<b>The big picture</b>	<b>412</b>
<b>TABLE 1</b> Number of licensed centre spaces by age category (2024, 2025).	413
<b>TABLE 2</b> Number of child care centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years by program type and kindergarten provision (2024, 2025).	414
<b>TABLE 3</b> Number of child care spaces by program type and percent of children 0 – 12 years for whom a regulated space was available (2024, 2025).	416
<b>TABLE 4</b> Number and percent of centre spaces for infants (2025).	417
<b>TABLE 5</b> Percent of centre spaces that were for-profit by type (2024, 2025).	418
<b>TABLE 6</b> Selected characteristics of kindergarten programs (2025).	419
<b>TABLE 7</b> Selected characteristics of regulated family child care (2025).	423
<b>TABLE 8</b> Characteristics of before- and after-school programs (2025).	427
<b>TABLE 9</b> Selected characteristics of unregulated child care (2025).	430
<b>TABLE 10</b> First Nations, Métis, and Inuit licensed child care services on reserves or Inuit lands (2025).	433
<b>TABLE 11</b> Child care fee subsidy provision and eligibility (2025).	434
<b>TABLE 12</b> Inclusion supports in regulated child care (2025).	438
<b>TABLE 13</b> Child care workforce: Wages, benefits, and certification (2025).	441
<b>TABLE 14</b> Workforce qualification requirements for full-day child care centres (2025).	442
<b>TABLE 15</b> Food provision in licensed full-day child care centres (2025).	444
<b>TABLE 16</b> Outdoor play requirements in licensed child care centres (2025).	446
<b>TABLE 17</b> Child care types and auspices eligible for CWELCC funding (2025).	449
<b>TABLE 18</b> Number of centres and family child care homes funded by CWELCC (2024).	450

<b>The long view</b>	<b>451</b>
<b>TABLE 19</b> Total number of regulated child care spaces (centre spaces and family child care) for children 0 – 12 years (2019 – 2025).	452
<b>TABLE 20</b> Number of child care spaces by program type for children 0 – 12 years (2019 – 2025).	453
<b>TABLE 21</b> Percent of 0 – 12 year olds for whom a regulated space was available (2019 – 2025).	454
<b>TABLE 22</b> Percent of centre spaces that were for-profit by type (2021 – 2025).	455
<b>TABLE 23</b> Number of children by age group (rounded estimates in thousands) (2019 – 2024).	456
<b>TABLE 24</b> Number of children by age group with employed mothers (rounded estimate in thousands) (2019 – 2024).	457
<b>TABLE 25</b> Workforce participation rate of mothers by age of youngest child (rounded estimates) (2019 – 2024).	458
<b>TABLE 26</b> Number of regulated child care centres (2019 – 2024).	461
<b>TABLE 27</b> Number of active regulated family child care homes (2019 – 2024).	462
<b>TABLE 28</b> Total public spending for regulated child care (rounded, in millions) (2018 - 2019 to 2023 - 2024).	463
<b>TABLE 29</b> Federal child care funding (rounded, in millions) since CWEELCC was initiated (2021 – 2024).	464



## ■ LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Childcare Resource and Research Unit (CRRU) team lives and works across Turtle Island, on the land now known as Canada. The CRRU is located in downtown Toronto, the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg, the Haudenosaunee, the Huron-Wendat, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. This territory is covered by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, a treaty between the Anishinaabeg, the Haudenosaunee, and allied nations that outlines a commitment to peacefully share and care for the land and resources around the Great Lakes.

A universally accessible, publicly funded, and inclusive early learning and child care system across Canada must be shaped in partnership with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit perspectives, ensuring it is responsive to the needs, values, and priorities of Indigenous children, families, and communities. As a Canada-wide policy research organization, CRRU is committed to working proactively with Indigenous partners to address systemic barriers and improve access to early childhood education and care services rooted in Indigenous knowledge, cultures, and ways of living.

## ■ ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Since its beginnings in the late 1980s, this report has been developed through a collective effort, grounded in the knowledge and cooperation of a number of individuals and organizations. The Childcare Resource and Research Unit (CRRU) is deeply grateful for the contributions of the provincial and territorial early learning and child care officials who have provided the core data and information for this and previous editions of *Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada*. This publication would not have been possible without the expertise and collaboration of these officials, who kindly and voluntarily put up with our numerous requests for data, information, and clarification.

We also wish to express our appreciation to the Early Learning and Child Care Secretariat and the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Secretariat (Employment and Social Development Canada) for providing data, information, and advice. Additionally, the report very much benefited from data, research, policy, and program expertise provided by the specialist experts at Care for Newcomer Children (CMAS Canada), the authors of the Canada chapter in [\*The 21st International Review of Leave Policies and Research\*](#) (McKay et al., 2025), the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, and multiple colleagues in the child care community who helped answer specific questions.

The look and conception of this edition of *ECEC in Canada* originates with Sonya V. Thursby's graphic design; Dana Lea Thompson did a superb job of updating and laying out this version. The content of the report was greatly improved by Eileen Hoftyzer's valuable copy editing services. Billie Carroll, CRRU's long-time webmaster and advisor, provided valuable expert advice on design features such as accessibility and developed the online interface. Jocelyne Tougas continues to be our skillful go-to translator.

## ■ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF FUNDING

CRRU would like to express our sincere appreciation to Employment and Social Development Canada for funding this edition of *Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada* and to the project officers who administered the funding. The perspectives in this report are those of the authors, not the funder.

This project is funded in part by the  
Government of Canada's Social  
Development Partnerships Program -  
Children and Families Component



## ■ ABOUT THE CHILDCARE RESOURCE AND RESEARCH UNIT

The Childcare Resource and Research Unit (CRRU) is an independent, non-partisan policy research institute that conducts, curates, and disseminates research on early childhood education and care and related social and family policy issues. CRRU's mandate is to work toward a universal, high-quality, publicly funded, and inclusive early childhood education and care system. The CRRU team uses the best available evidence about policy and practice, drawn from multidisciplinary research and policy analysis, to inform public policy, advocacy, and early learning and child care system building across Canada. We collaborate with researchers, non-governmental organizations, advocacy groups, the early childhood education community, and policy-makers across multiple levels of government.

All CRRU publications may be downloaded at no cost from the [CRRU website](#). Our publications may be freely used for personal, educational, and other public uses when fully attributed and cited. Please contact us to arrange permissions for specific commercial uses.

## ■ ABOUT THIS REPORT

Between 1992 and 2025, the Childcare Resource and Research Unit (CRRU) has developed [fifteen editions](#) of *Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada* and several smaller *ECEC in Canada* reports. These reports have served as Canada's sole source of consistent, reliably collected, cross-jurisdictional, and longitudinal data and policy information about regulated child care, kindergarten, and parental leave. The publications provide relevant demographic information, profiles of early childhood education and care (ECEC) services and policies in each province and territory, and information on kindergarten and child care, including spaces by age, type, and auspice, as well as enrolment, funding, eligibility, regulations, the workforce, governance, parental leave, and more. A series of summary tables synthesizes key information and data topics across Canada and over time, covering 2019 to the present. For longitudinal tables going back to 1992, see [ECEC in Canada 2021](#). Further details about *Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada* can be found in the [Backgrounder](#).

This report is one of three *ECEC in Canada* reports covering 2022 to 2025. A shorter version that primarily features numerical data along with some descriptive policy and program information for 2022 to 2023 ([ECEC in Canada 2023](#)) was followed by a short report focused on 2024 numerical data ([Interim Space Statistics 2024](#)). The current report, *Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada 2024/2025*, returns to the traditional "full report" format. In addition to data on child care spaces, enrolment, auspices, funding,



and kindergarten enrolment and provision, it covers policy and programs in detail, documenting changes from 2022 to 2025 that have occurred since CRRU's last [full report on 2021 data](#).

As this has been a period of unique change in Canadian child care, we have attempted to document as closely as possible the successive changes in key areas such as parent fees, the child care workforce, and funding, capturing the iterations of policy shifts and developments on key topics as much as possible. Generally, the descriptive information in this report covers 2022 to 2025, while the numerical information captures a point-in-time snapshot. Unless otherwise noted, the 2024 and 2025 numerical data reflect March 31 of that year.

We have made a number of changes to this report from previous editions, including:

- Adding a glossary of key terms to promote consistency in the development of information by provinces/territories;
- Reorganizing the format somewhat, moving data on spaces, enrolment, and funding to the end of each provincial/territorial section;
- Including more enrolment data that shows children's participation in licensed child care, as 11 of the 13 provinces and territories now provide this data for most types of child care;
- Leaving out a table of "coverage" (the percent of children for whom a licensed child care space is available) for 0 – 5 year olds, based on our concern that data gaps could lead to considerable under-reporting of coverage for 0 – 5 year olds, the target age group for the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care plan (CWELCC), in some provinces and territories;
- Adding new data specific to the introduction of CWELCC for each province and territory, such as the child care program types eligible for funding and the regulation of additional fees charged for some aspects of child care provision;
- Omitting a "State of early learning and care in Canada" section, due to rapid and ongoing policy changes (an up-to-date overview will be included in a separate summary report);
- Omitting a section on how early learning and child care is organized in Canada, which will be published in a separate report.

## DATA SOURCES

### **Data sources for provincial/territorial data and information**

Provincial and territorial officials provided and/or verified most of the provincial and territorial data in this report. Additional data and information included in provincial and territorial sections were provided by officials in the Early Learning and Child Care Secretariat, the Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Secretariat, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and Indigenous Services Canada.

To improve the reliability of data across jurisdictions, this report uses the CRRU definition for each unit of measurement (centres, spaces, enrolments, etc.) for all provinces and territories. As a result, the data in this report may differ slightly from other sources, including information released by the provinces and territories, as each jurisdiction has its own methods for measuring and reporting on child care data.



## Data sources for provincial and territorial demographic data tables

These data tables, prepared by Barry Forer, use:

- Special tabulation conducted by Statistics Canada, based on the Labour Force Survey, 2024 annual average;
- Statistics Canada, 2021 Census, Tables 98-10-0075-01, 98-10-0135-01, 98-10-0264-01, and 98-10-0169-01; and
- Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (2024 annual), Table 14-10-0396-01.

## Data sources for the Parental Leave section

The Canadian chapter in *International Review of Leave Policies and Research 2025* (McKay, L., Mathieu, S., Lero, D. S., Tremblay, D.-G., Doucet, A., Ragued, S., and Thompson, K. [2025] in Dobrotić, I., Blum, S., Kaufmann, G., Koslowski, A., Moss, P., and Valentova, M. [eds]) contributed to the information in this section.

## GLOSSARY

### **Auspice/ownership**

Auspice refers to the ownership and operating model of child care centres or family child care agencies. Across Canada, operators (also referred to as “licence holders”) can be categorized by their legal status, which may be non-profit, for-profit, or publicly owned (by a government entity or education authority). Each of these categories includes multiple subtypes of ownership.

### **Before- and after-school child care (BASC)**

Before- and after-school child care in centres may include children 4 – 12 years who are in kindergarten or school for part or most of the day. For the purposes of this report, BASC also includes licensed centre-based child care programs providing full- or part-day care for school-age children during summer and school holidays. BASC is licensed in most provinces/territories and must comply with child care regulations; however, there are some significant exceptions in which the programs are lightly regulated or “approved” but not licensed, although they may be publicly funded. Other BASC-type programs operate entirely outside child care regulation or funding.

### **Child care centre**

A child care centre is a facility providing early childhood education and care for children in a group setting. Centre-based child care is distinct from home-based child care (here called family child care). Child care centres in Canada, regulated and licensed by provincial/territorial governments, are staffed by multiple people. Most child care centres for 0 – 5 year olds in Canada are now publicly funded and have some parent fees in place. In some jurisdictions, multiple licences may be held at one facility by one or more operators.

For the purposes of this report, if multiple licences are held at a single address, each unique licence holder operating at that address is counted as one centre. For example, if one organization holds two licences located at the same address, it is considered to be one centre. If two separate organizations each hold licences located at the same address, they are considered to be two centres.



## **Enrolment**

In child care, enrolment refers to the actual number of children being cared for at a regulated centre or family child care home.

## **Fee subsidy**

Fee subsidies in licensed, regulated, or approved child care are associated with an individual child and family. The purpose is to replace all or some of the fee for eligible lower-income families. Parents must meet eligibility criteria to qualify. The criteria usually include maximum family income set by the province/territory and/or social eligibility criteria. In Canada, fee subsidy funds are sent to service providers, not parents.

## **For-profit child care**

For-profit child care is a legal entity owned by an individual, a registered partnership, or a corporation. Any surplus funds exceeding the cost of operation are considered profits and may be distributed to the owner(s) or shareholders. For-profit child care operations include single owner-operator sites and small or large chains, including those owned by investors such as private equity firms. Also known as “commercial” child care, these operations are “private,” with decision-making authority and full responsibility resting solely with the individual owner or corporation.

## **Full-day centre**

A full-day child care centre provides early childhood education and care for children from infancy to school-entry age. These centres typically serve children until they start kindergarten, prekindergarten, or Grade 1. Some full-day centres offer care to multiple age groups, while others care for specific age groups. Full-day centres generally operate year-round, with hours from approximately 8:00 am to 6:00 pm, although some provide care outside these times.

## **Indigenous governing body**

An Indigenous governing body is an official entity legally authorized to represent an Indigenous group with rights recognized under Canada’s Constitution Act (1982). An Indigenous governing body acts as a government authority on behalf of an Indigenous group, community, or nation.

## **Kindergarten**

Canadian kindergarten (“Grade Primary” in Nova Scotia and “*maternelle 5 ans*” in Quebec) is an early childhood education and care program usually delivered as part of the school system for all five-year-olds as an entitlement or quasi-entitlement. Depending on the province/territory, attendance in kindergarten may or may not be mandatory for children in the year before Grade 1. In most provinces and territories, kindergarten is full school-day, but it remains predominantly a part-day program in four jurisdictions in 2025. For the purposes of this report, “kindergarten” also includes kindergarten for four-year-olds (also called “prekindergarten,” “pre-primary,” or “*maternelle 4 ans*”), unless otherwise specified.

## **Licensed capacity**

Licensed capacity refers to the legally permitted maximum number of children a child care centre or family child care home may care for at any one time. Defined by the terms of the licence, capacity is determined by factors such as the ages of the children, available physical space, and staff:child ratios.



## **Licensed/regulated/approved/recognized child care**

Licensing is a form of regulation that provides a permit to operate. It applies to the vast majority of centre-based child care and some family child care in Canada. Some forms of organized centre-based child care are not licensed but have specified requirements for operation that may be in legislation, regulations, or guidelines (in some jurisdictions, these are said to be “regulated” or “authorized”). The terms “approved” and “recognized” are applied to family child care in some provinces/territories where the individual family child care home may not be licensed.

## **Municipality/municipal entity**

Canadian municipalities are local-level governments for a defined geographic area. Provinces/territories may delegate the authority to these entities to manage services (such as fire or local roads) for the community or to carry out other functions. Municipal governments are led by elected officials and may encompass large cities, small villages, hamlets, and regional or amalgamated municipalities.

## **Non-profit child care**

Non-profit child care may be delivered by any of three kinds of organizations – non-profit, co-operative, and charitable – all of which are legal entities with specific regulatory requirements. Non-profit child care operations may consist of a single program, multiple locations, or be part of a larger multiservice non-profit entity. They are distinct from for-profit operations in that any surplus funds must be used for the benefit of the service (i.e., they may not be distributed to the board of directors). In contrast to publicly operated child care, these operations are “private” in that their decision-making and governance rest with a board of directors composed of private individuals.

## **One-time funding**

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, and equipment or repair funding if it is one-time and not recurring.

## **Operational funding**

Operational funding includes regularly paid public funding that contributes to the ongoing operation of the child care service. It may include operating grants, formula-based funding, family child care agency operating funds, wage grants or enhancement, disability funding, and other grants or funding paid on a recurring basis.

## **Other ELCC funding**

“Other” early learning and child care (ELCC) funding may include contributions to an early childhood association, research, evaluation, professional development, training, tuition reimbursement and bursaries, funds for unregulated child care, and programs relevant to ELCC that do not fall into another category.

## **Parental leave**

Any leave from work associated with the birth or adoption of a child (including maternity leave) is termed parental leave. Parental leave provision refers to the terms of an individual’s entitlement to job-protected leave from work, such as duration, timing in relation to the birth or adoption, and eligibility for job-protected leave.



## **Parental leave benefits**

A parental leave benefit refers to government-funded financial support for individuals on parental leave to provide paid parental leave.

## **Part-day centre**

A part-day child care centre is often called a nursery school or preschool. It provides early childhood education and care for several hours a day (usually 2.5 – 4 hours), and children may attend every day or two to three days a week. The children are usually toddler- or preschool-age (approximately 2 – 4 or 5 years old.) Part-day centre-based programs are licensed in most provinces/territories.

## **Prekindergarten**

Prekindergarten (also known as junior kindergarten, four-year-old kindergarten, pre-primary, or *maternelle 4 ans*) is an early childhood education and care program usually delivered as part of the school system for four-year-olds. Depending on the province/territory, it may be provided for all children, a selected demographic group or region, include three-year-olds, or not be provided at all. Prekindergarten is not mandatory anywhere in Canada.

## **Public child care**

Public child care refers to services owned and operated by a government entity such as a municipality, school board, or Indigenous governing body, rather than by a private non-profit or private for-profit entity. The public entity holds the licence for the child care service and is legally responsible for overseeing the operation of the child care program.

## **Regulated family child care**

Regulated family child care (sometimes termed home child care or day home) is a child care service usually provided in a caregiver's private home. Regulated by provincial/territorial governments, each jurisdiction follows one of two models: a) an individual licensing model, wherein providers are licensed and inspected by the province/territory, or b) an agency model, wherein providers are approved, monitored, and supported by an agency, which is the responsible body. Regulated family child care may provide care for children from infancy through school-age. Most regulated family child care in Canada is now publicly funded, with some parent fees.

## **Set fee**

Set parent fees are amounts that are fixed by provinces/territories, as opposed to fees that may be determined by the market or by child care operators. Fees may be set for all types of care or by age group.

## **School board/school authority**

School boards, also known as school authorities or boards of education, are usually elected bodies to which provinces/territories have delegated specific responsibilities for education, such as governing and operating publicly funded schools. While traditionally local, some school authorities may now be responsible for larger jurisdictions, potentially spanning an entire province. Some school boards may also be responsible for education for specific demographic groups, such as a French or Catholic school board. School boards are public entities.



### **Unregulated child care**

Care and supervision of children not under public regulation is legal Canada-wide if the provider meets specified minimum provisions outlined in legislation or regulations, namely the number of children cared for. Much, but not all, of the provision of unregulated child care is in providers' private homes. Care in a child's home (a nanny) or care by a relative is, strictly speaking, also unregulated child care. Unregulated child care may be indirectly funded through tax credits and deductions to parents but is not usually directly publicly funded.

### **Wage grid**

A wage grid or wage scale is defined as a stepped scale outlining progressive salary levels based on factors including position, credentials, and experience/length of employment.

# Parental leaves and benefits<sup>1</sup>

In this section, any leave from work associated with the birth or adoption of a child is referred to as parental leave unless otherwise specified. It may include maternity or adoption leave for either parent or two parents.

Parental leave provision refers to the terms of an individual's entitlement to job-protected leave from work, such as duration, timing in relation to the birth or adoption, and eligibility for job-protected leave.

Parental leave benefits refers to government-funded financial support for individuals on parental leave.

## ■ OVERVIEW

Paid maternity leave for birth mothers was originally introduced Canada-wide in 1972, providing access to 15 weeks of benefits. Ten weeks of sharable parental leave benefits for either parent were added in 1989 and extended to 35 weeks in 2000. In 2017, the federal government introduced the option to extend parental leave benefits for either parent over a longer period (up to 61 weeks). Since 2017, parental leave benefits have seen additional changes, including changes to eligibility, benefit levels, and duration.

Since 2006, Quebec has had its own parental leave system. Today, Canada has two parental leave and benefit regimes: one specific to Quebec and another for the remaining 12 provinces/territories and workers across Canada covered by the Canada Labour Code.<sup>2</sup> Parental leave benefits and leave provisions for all provinces/territories except Quebec are divided between federal and provincial/territorial governments. In all provinces/territories with the exception of Quebec, parental leave benefits fall under the federal Employment Insurance Act, while provincial/territorial provisions for job-protected leave are established in each jurisdiction's employment standards legislation.

## ■ CANADA OUTSIDE QUEBEC: BENEFITS AND LEAVE PROVISIONS

### Benefits

All parental leave benefits in Canada outside Quebec are paid under the federal Employment Insurance (EI) program. Employees and employers both contribute to the EI program.

Until parental leave was amended in 2017, it provided 15 weeks of maternity leave benefits and 35 weeks of payment to cover parental leave for either eligible parent (including adoptive parents), for a total of 50 weeks of benefits.

In 2025, all eligible birth parents may claim maternity benefits. This benefit is for the birth parent only, paid at 55% of insurable earnings (up to \$695 per week) for up to 15 weeks. Either eligible new parent, including

<sup>1</sup> The Canada chapter in *International Review of Leave Policies and Research 2025* contributed to the information in this section. (McKay, L., Mathieu, S., Lero, D. S., Tremblay, D.-G., Doucet, A., Ragued, S., and Thompson, K. [2025] 'Canada country note,' in Dobrotić, I., Blum, S., Kaufmann, G., Koslowski, A., Moss, P., and Valentova, M. [eds.] *International review of leave policies and research 2025*. International Network on Leave Policies and Research.)

<sup>2</sup> Workers under the Canada Labour Code are those employed in federally regulated industries including banks, telecommunications, interprovincial/international transportation (air, rail, road, marine), postal/courier services, broadcasting, and federal Crown corporations. The Canada Labour Code sets national standards for employment conditions such as wages, hours of work, and leaves.



the non-birthing parent and adoptive parents, may also claim one of two options: the Standard Parental Benefit or the Extended Parental Benefit.

Standard Parental Benefits for either parent (including adoptive parents) are paid at 55% of insurable earnings (up to \$695 per week) for up to 35 weeks, or 40 weeks if leave is shared between parents.

Extended Parental Benefits for either parent (including adoptive parents) are paid at 33% of insurable earnings (up to \$417 per week) for up to 61 weeks, or 69 weeks if leave is shared between parents.

While there have been a number of changes since 2017, these remain the main maternity and parental leave benefit options in Canada outside Quebec.

### MAIN BENEFIT OPTIONS

Maternity leave benefits can be combined with parental leave benefits to make a total of 50 weeks (standard option) or 76 weeks (extended option).

While the Extended Parental Benefit is paid at a lower weekly rate than the Standard Benefit, the total amount received for both benefits is roughly the same.

In 2025, the maximum insurable earnings are \$65,700 per year, and eligibility requires at least 600 hours of insurable employment within the past 52 weeks.

### PARENTAL SHARING BENEFIT

In 2019, the Parental Sharing Benefit [was introduced](#) to encourage parents, including non-birth (second) parents and adoptive parents, to share parental leave. The standard option is five additional weeks of benefits if both parents share parental leave. The extended option is eight additional weeks of benefits if parents share parental leave.

### SPECIAL BENEFITS

Self-employed Canadians can access EI Special Benefits, including parental leave, by voluntarily registering with the Canada Employment Insurance Commission. An applicant for Special EI Benefits must wait 12 months from the date of confirmed registration before applying for the EI Special Benefits. Parental leave represents two of the six types of EI Special Benefits (maternity, parental, sickness, family caregiver for a child, family caregiver for an adult, and compassionate care).

A minimum net income of \$8,826 in self-employed earnings in 2024 was required for eligibility for EI Special Benefits.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF PARENTAL LEAVE BENEFITS

The maximum amount for EI parental leave benefits is indexed to inflation and increases annually.

Benefits are paid to parents for the allotted periods outlined in the employment legislation for their province or territory of employment.

In 2018, it became possible to receive parental leave benefits while continuing to work. Accordingly, a new parent who is “working while on claim” may earn money while receiving benefits and keep \$0.50 of benefits for every dollar earned, up to 90% of previous weekly earnings. [Working while on claim](#) does not need a



separate application; claimants already receiving maternity and/or parental benefits only need to declare their earnings online.

Benefit payments for maternity leave may begin as early as 12 weeks before the estimated date of birth.

### Leave provisions

Outside Quebec, provinces/territories are responsible for the provisions for maternity and parental leave. Leave provisions vary by province/territory, but they are generally consistent with federal benefit provisions (see “Duration of leave entitlements” table below). Although federal benefit provisions may change, parents must still refer to the provisions of their territory of employment.

Workers in federally regulated workplaces must take leave as specified in the Canada Labour Code.

## ■ QUEBEC: BENEFITS AND LEAVE PROVISIONS

The [Quebec Parental Insurance Plan](#) (QPIP) is also a contributory insurance program. As in the rest of Canada, eligibility for job-protected unpaid leave in Quebec is separate from eligibility for the payment of benefits. Unlike the rest of the country, however, parental leave provisions and payment of benefits both fall under provincial jurisdiction.

In 2020, Quebec made a number of changes to QPIP in new legislation, Bill 51, [An Act Mainly to Improve the Flexibility of the Parental Insurance Plan in Order to Promote Family-Work Balance](#). Additional changes were [introduced in 2021](#).

In Quebec, new parents have two main parental leave options: the Basic Plan and the Special Plan. Each of these main options may include maternity, adoption, and surrogacy benefits as relevant.

Types of benefits:

- Maternity leave benefits: exclusive to the person who is pregnant or has given birth
- Paternity leave benefits: exclusive to the parent who did not give birth
- Parental leave benefits: available to either parent or may be shared by both parents
- Adoption benefits: available to each adoptive parent, plus benefit weeks that may be shared by both parents
- Surrogacy benefits: available to the person who agreed to give birth and each of the parents taking part in the parental project, plus benefit weeks that may be shared by both parents

### Benefit options (2025)

The Basic Plan totals 55 weeks of benefits: 18 weeks of maternity leave at 70% of wages, five weeks of paternity leave at 70%, and 32 weeks of parental leave (seven weeks at 70% and 25 weeks at 55%).

The Special Plan totals 43 weeks of benefits: 15 weeks of maternity leave at 75% of wages, three weeks of paternity leave at 75%, and 25 weeks of parental leave at 75%.

Parents who share parental benefits receive additional benefit weeks under QPIP. Under the Basic Plan, an additional four weeks at 55% of earnings is available once each parent has received at least eight weeks of



sharable parental benefits. Under the Special Plan, an additional three weeks at 75% of earnings is available once six shareable parental benefit weeks have been paid to each parent.

Under QPIC, in 2025, maximum insurable earnings were \$98,000 per year. Eligibility requires at least \$2,000 in insurable income during the qualifying period. The Basic Plan pays a maximum of \$1,319 per week, and the Special Plan pays a maximum of \$1,269 per week.

### **SELF-EMPLOYED PARENTS BENEFIT**

Self-employed new parents in Quebec are eligible for paid parental leave. Self-employed workers are automatically covered in QPIP and are eligible for leave once they have stopped working or have seen a reduction of at least 40% of usual income.

### **ADOPTION AND SURROGACY**

Adoption benefits include weeks reserved for each parent and additional shareable weeks. Under the Basic Plan, each parent is entitled to five weeks paid at 70% of earnings, plus 45 shareable weeks. Of those sharable weeks, 13 “[welcome and support weeks](#)” are paid at 70% of insurable earnings, while the remaining 32 weeks are divided into seven at 70% and 25 at 55%. Under the Special Plan, each parent is entitled to three weeks paid at 75% of insurable earnings, plus 37 sharable weeks, which are divided into 12 “welcome and support weeks” at 75% and 25 weeks at 75%.

Surrogacy benefits include weeks for the person who agreed to give birth, weeks reserved for each parent, as well as additional shareable weeks for the parents. The person who agreed to give birth is entitled to 18 weeks at 70% of earnings under the Basic Plan or 15 weeks at 75% under the Special Plan. Surrogacy benefits for parents are the same as adoption benefits, as described in the paragraph above.

### **MULTIPLE BIRTHS OR ADOPTIONS BENEFIT**

Since 2021, QPIP has offered a benefit for multiple births or adoptions. Each parent is entitled to additional weeks of parental or adoption benefits, adding five weeks at 70% of earnings for the Basic Plan or three weeks at 75% for the Special Plan.

### **SINGLE-PARENT BENEFIT**

An increased benefit is available for single parents, including single birth parents and single parents in cases of adoption or surrogacy. Single parents are entitled to five additional weeks paid at 70% of earnings under the Basic Plan or three additional weeks at 75% under the Special Plan.

### **LOW-INCOME SUPPLEMENT**

A family supplement is available for families with net income up to \$25,921 and at least one child under 18. The supplement is added to weekly benefit payments, with the total not to exceed \$695 monthly.

### **OTHER ASPECTS OF QUEBEC PARENTAL LEAVE AND BENEFITS**

There is no waiting period for benefits in Quebec.

Since September 2021, Quebec parents can combine work income and benefits, up to 100% of the weekly income recognized for the calculation benefits, regardless of the type of benefits. This is similar to the working while on claim option available in Canada outside Quebec.

## DURATION OF LEAVE ENTITLEMENTS

### Maximum duration of leave entitlements (unpaid) by province/territory (2025)

PT	Maternity leave (weeks)	Paternity leave (weeks)	Parental leave (weeks)	Adoption leave and surrogacy (weeks)
<b>Federal</b>	17	-	63 <sup>1</sup>	63 <sup>1</sup>
<b>NL</b>	17	-	61	78 <sup>2</sup>
<b>PE</b>	17	-	62	62
<b>NS</b>	16	-	77	77
<b>NB</b>	17	-	78 <sup>3</sup>	78 <sup>3</sup>
<b>QC</b>	18	5	65	65
<b>ON</b>	17	-	61–63 <sup>4</sup>	63
<b>MB</b>	17	-	63	63
<b>SK</b>	19	-	59–71 <sup>5</sup>	19 <sup>5</sup>
<b>AB</b>	16	-	62	62
<b>BC</b>	17	-	61–69 <sup>6</sup>	61–69 <sup>6</sup>
<b>YT</b>	17	-	63 <sup>1</sup>	63 <sup>1</sup>
<b>NT</b>	17	-	61 <sup>7</sup>	61 <sup>7</sup>
<b>NU</b>	17	-	37	37

Source: McKay, L., Mathieu, S., Lero, D. S., Tremblay, D.-G., Doucet, A., Ragued, S., and Thompson, K. (2025) 'Canada country note,' in Dobrotić, I., Blum, S., Kaufmann, G., Koslowski, A., Moss, P., and Valentova, M. (eds.) *21st international review of leave policies and research 2025*, pp. 126–151. [International Network on Leave Policies and Research](#). Used with permission.

<sup>1</sup> 71 if shared.

<sup>2</sup> In Newfoundland and Labrador, adoptive parents can also take 17 weeks of unpaid adoption leave, in addition to 61 weeks of parental leave, for a total of 78 weeks.

<sup>3</sup> In New Brunswick, parents may take a maximum of 78 weeks leave, including maternity leave and child care (parental) leave.

<sup>4</sup> In Ontario, 61 weeks are available for birth parents who have taken maternity leave; otherwise, 63 are available.

<sup>5</sup> In Saskatchewan, 59 weeks are available to the primary parent who took full maternity or adoption leave; 71 weeks are available for the parent who did not.

<sup>6</sup> In British Columbia, both standard and extended leaves are available. If both parents share standard parental leave, they can receive

up to 40 weeks, but one parent cannot receive more than 35 weeks of standard benefits; if both parents share extended parental leave, they can receive up to 69 weeks, but one parent cannot receive more than 61 weeks of extended benefits.

<sup>7</sup> In the Northwest Territories, an additional eight weeks are available if leave is shared.



# Federal early learning and child care programs

## ■ CHILD CARE EXPENSE DEDUCTION

The federal government introduced the [Child Care Expense Deduction](#) (CCED) in 1972. Initially, it was only available to single-parent families, but in 1983 it became available to two-earner families. In 2021, 1.3 million individuals claimed the CCED.

The CCED, which falls under Section 63 of the *Income Tax Act* and is administered by the Canada Revenue Agency, is a tax deduction earmarked for parents' employment-related child care expenses in licensed or unlicensed care arrangements. According to the [Canada Revenue Agency](#), it "provides some relief for taxpayers who incur child care expenses in order to work, carry on a business or undertake certain educational activities." In two-parent families (married or common-law), the taxpayer with the lower income must make the claim for child care expenses incurred in the tax year.

The annual child care expense amount allowed for an eligible child (2025) is:

- \$8,000 for a child under seven years at the end of the year;
- \$5,000 for a child aged seven to 16 years; and
- \$11,000 for a child with a disability eligible for the Disability Tax Credit.

An eligible child of a taxpayer for a tax year [is defined as](#):

- A child of the taxpayer or of the taxpayer's spouse or common-law partner; or
- A child who is dependent on the taxpayer or on the taxpayer's spouse or common-law partner for support and whose income for the year does not exceed the basic personal amount for that year.

In addition, the child must be:

- Under 16 years of age at some time in the year; or
- Dependent on the taxpayer or on the taxpayer's spouse or common-law partner and have a mental or physical infirmity.

The CCED [cannot be deducted for](#):

- Medical expenses;
- Clothing, transportation, or education costs; and
- Board and lodging expenses.

For more detailed information, see [Child Care Expense Deduction](#) and [Heidinger, Findlay, and Guèvremont \(2020\)](#).

### Child care expense deduction cost information (millions of dollars)

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 (P)	2023 (P)	2024 (P)	2025 (P)
<b>Personal income tax</b>	1,270	1,325	975	1,210	1,260	1,100	1,000	950

Note: The annual amounts in this table represent the total amount claimed for the Child Care Expense Deduction. The figures for 2022 – 2025 are projections (“P”).

Source: [Report on Federal Tax Expenditures – Concepts, Estimates, and Evaluations 2024: Part 4](#)

## CARE FOR NEWCOMER CHILDREN

### Description

Care for Newcomer Children (CNC) is a program funded by Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) that enables parents – particularly mothers – to access programs that support their social and economic integration, including language instruction, employment services, and community connections.

An estimated 20,000 newcomer children under the age of five arrive in Canada each year. Through CNC, some of these children participate in free, on-site child care while their parents attend federally funded settlement and language programs at agencies across the country.

Located in every province except Quebec, CNC is delivered at more than 250 IRCC-funded sites across Canada, collectively caring for over 6,000 children each year. CNC structure and operations vary by province and territory. While some programs are licensed under local child care regulations, most operate under the Care for Newcomer Children Requirements, which ensures a consistent national standard of health, safety, and quality.

Under the [Canada–Quebec Accord relating to Immigration and Temporary Admission of Aliens](#), Quebec has exclusive responsibility for selecting and settling immigrants, and manages its own newcomer services and supports.

### History

Since the 1990s, the federal government has funded on-site child care for participants in [Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada](#) (LINC) programs. By 2001, approximately 200 such programs existed nationwide.

In 2000, [CMAS](#) (formerly Childminding Monitoring, Advisory, and Support) was established with IRCC funding to monitor and support these early child care services. Working with IRCC and community stakeholders, CMAS developed a national framework to ensure consistent quality and safety.

This effort culminated in the [Care for Newcomer Children Requirements](#) (CNCR), implemented in 2013. These requirements replaced earlier “childminding” standards and created a flexible system that allows organizations to provide safe, high-quality care tailored to the needs of newcomer families, while managing risk and supporting healthy child development.



## Types of CNC programs

Three types of child care are offered under the CNCR: long-term, short-term, and combined. These are offered individually or in combination, depending on client needs.

## Eligibility requirements

All permanent residents and accepted refugees to Canada have access to free settlement services, including CNC programs, prior to obtaining citizenship. Non-permanent residents or immigrants who have already become Canadian citizens are not eligible.

## Funding for CNC

CNC services are funded through IRCC grants and contribution agreements with community organizations that deliver settlement services. Non-governmental organizations submit proposals to IRCC that may include CNC as a complementary support to programs such as Needs Assessment and Referral, Information and Orientation, Language Assessment and Training, Employment-Related Services, Community Connections, and Refugee Assistance Programs. Funding is in place to operate English and French CNC programs in urban and rural areas, but there can be wait times to access them. Fewer programs offer infant care, so wait times for these services tend to be longer.

This integrated funding model ensures that parents can fully participate in settlement activities while their children are cared for in a safe and supportive environment.

A 2017 federal government [evaluation](#) of settlement services noted, “Women are adversely affected in terms of accessing settlement services when Care for Newcomer Children is unavailable, as in most cases, women will stay home to take care of children while men either access settlement services or seek employment opportunities.” (Section 7.5, Gender differences)

## CMAS support for and monitoring of CNC programs

CMAS works with CNC programs using research-backed standards development, quality enhancement, assessments, resources, and professional development. CMAS conducts an annual review of all CNC programs to ensure they meet health, safety, and program quality standards. The review includes program observations, interviews with staff members, and review of documentation such as fire safety plans, enrolment forms, policies, and procedures. The CMAS process uses an 80-point checklist to review all aspects of care. If a site fails to meet a requirement, the CMAS consultant works with program staff to develop an action plan to address the requirement.

To help community settlement programs meet the unique needs of newcomer children and families, CMAS also develops resources and training, including:

- Multilingual tip sheets for CNC staff and newcomer parents;
- Program guides on caring for refugee children and managing trauma;
- Workshops, webinars, tutorials, and courses for the newcomer child care sector with both in-person and online options;



- Training that covers a wide range of topics, including creating inclusive environments, supporting the use of home languages, managing life-threatening allergies, and helping prevent child abuse; and
- Annual CNC professional development conferences for caregivers and administrators where attendees learn about subjects related to the support of young immigrant and refugee children.

The [CMAS website](#) provides resources related to supporting newcomer children and families. These range from current news from the early years and newcomer sectors to CMAS-developed resources such as articles, interviews, and online tutorials, many of which are translated into French. Some resources are available in over 40 languages.

CMAS consultants are available for on-site support across the country to help programs with any specific issues they encounter. A special needs consultant offers guidance, site visits, and lunch-and-learn sessions to assist in supporting children who have or are suspected of having an identified special need.



# First Nations, Inuit, and Métis early learning and child care

## ■ FIRST NATIONS, INUIT, AND MÉTIS PEOPLES

In the 2021 Canadian Census, people who self-identify as Indigenous numbered 1,807,250,<sup>3</sup> up 9.4% from the 2016 Census. Accounting for 5% of the Canadian population, the Indigenous population includes First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples – all constitutionally recognized Indigenous Peoples in Canada.

According to the 2021 Census, 801,045 Indigenous people – representing 44.3% of the total Indigenous population – lived in a large urban centre of at least 100,000 people. Thus, early learning and child care (ELCC) is of interest for Indigenous children and families in all types of communities – Indigenous lands and communities; rural, remote, and northern communities; and towns, suburbs, and large cities.

The First Nations population was reported to be 1,048,045 in 2022. This represents people from more than 50 Nations and languages living on one of more than 3,000 reserves and lands across Canada, as well as those living off reserve.

The 70,540 Inuit in Canada live mostly in Inuit Nunangat's<sup>4</sup> four regions: the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (northern Northwest Territories), Nunavut, Nunavik (northern Quebec), and Nunatsiavut (northern Labrador).

Inuit Nunangat, which encompasses roughly 35% of Canada's land mass and 50% of its coastline, includes 53 communities. More than a third of these communities have populations under 500 people, and most can only be reached by air and sea during the summer and only by air the rest of the year. About one in four Inuit live outside Nunangat; of those, about half live in towns or cities.

The Métis emerged as a distinct Indigenous People in the Northwest during the late 18th century. The historic Métis Nation Homeland encompasses the prairie provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta and extends into contiguous parts of Ontario, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories, and the northern United States. In 2021, the Métis population in Canada was 624,220.

## ■ THE CONTEXT OF FIRST NATIONS, INUIT, AND MÉTIS ELCC

### Truth and Reconciliation

The 1996 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (volume 5) recommended that federal, provincial, and territorial governments cooperate to:

- Extend early childhood education to all Indigenous children, regardless of residence;
- Encourage programs that foster the physical, social, intellectual, and spiritual development of children, reducing distinctions between child care and education;

---

<sup>3</sup> The most recent data are from the 2021 Census. The next long-form census is scheduled for 2026.

<sup>4</sup> Inuit Nunangat is an Inuktitut term meaning “the place where Inuit live.” It includes land, water, and ice.



- Maximize Indigenous control over service design and administration;
- Offer one-stop accessible funding; and
- Promote parental involvement and choice in early childhood education options.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established in 2008 as a requirement of the 2007 Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. This agreement was, at the time,<sup>5</sup> the largest class action settlement in Canadian history. It was made between the federal government, four national churches, and Indigenous persons who had been removed from their families as children to live at residential schools. Citing the Canadian history of forced separation of children from their families, abuse, cultural assimilation, and appropriation of Indigenous lands, the TRC [called for action in 94 areas](#), including Call to Action 12: “We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.”

Following the release of the Truth and Reconciliation report, the Liberal government led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, first elected in 2015, committed to addressing the historical wrongs to Indigenous Peoples. Building on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and Canadian endorsement of it, Canada passed the [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act \(UNDRIP Act\)](#) in 2021. It obligates Canada to “take all measures necessary to ensure that the laws of Canada are consistent with the Declaration,” and to “prepare and implement an action plan to achieve the objectives of the Declaration.”

In 2021, as Canada embarked on building a Canada-wide child care system, these commitments to Indigenous Peoples set the stage for specific action on Indigenous early learning and child care.

### ***Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework***

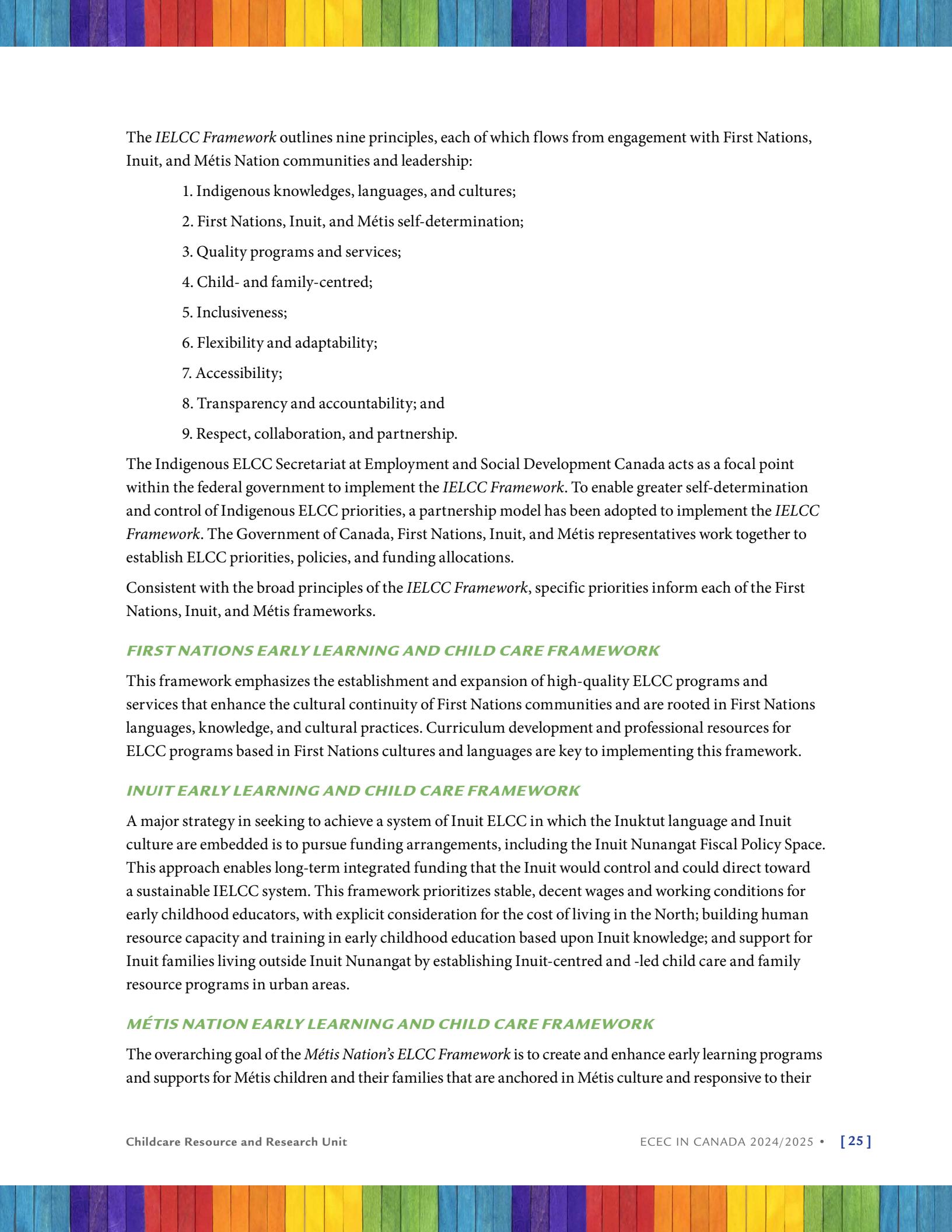
In 2018, following substantive engagement with Indigenous partners, the Government of Canada and National Indigenous Organizations (the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and the Métis National Council) endorsed the co-developed [Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care \(IELCC\) Framework](#). The *IELCC Framework* (2018) is an overarching conceptual structure that sets the stage for the three distinct frameworks for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis ELCC policies, programs, and services. Recognition of these needs and appropriate responses to them are essential components of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and compliance with the Canadian *UNDRIP Act*.

The *IELCC Framework*:

...envision First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children and families as happy and safe, imbued with a strong cultural identity. It sees children and families supported by a comprehensive and coordinated system of ELCC policies, programs, and services led by Indigenous Peoples, rooted in Indigenous knowledges, cultures, and languages, and supported by strong partnerships of holistic, accessible, and flexible programming that is inclusive of the needs and aspirations of Indigenous children and families. (p. 5)

---

<sup>5</sup> The *First Nations Child and Family Services, Jordan’s Principle, and Trout Class Settlement Agreement*, approved in 2023, has since surpassed it as the largest class action settlement in Canadian history.



The *IELCC Framework* outlines nine principles, each of which flows from engagement with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation communities and leadership:

1. Indigenous knowledges, languages, and cultures;
2. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis self-determination;
3. Quality programs and services;
4. Child- and family-centred;
5. Inclusiveness;
6. Flexibility and adaptability;
7. Accessibility;
8. Transparency and accountability; and
9. Respect, collaboration, and partnership.

The Indigenous ELCC Secretariat at Employment and Social Development Canada acts as a focal point within the federal government to implement the *IELCC Framework*. To enable greater self-determination and control of Indigenous ELCC priorities, a partnership model has been adopted to implement the *IELCC Framework*. The Government of Canada, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis representatives work together to establish ELCC priorities, policies, and funding allocations.

Consistent with the broad principles of the *IELCC Framework*, specific priorities inform each of the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis frameworks.

### ***FIRST NATIONS EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE FRAMEWORK***

This framework emphasizes the establishment and expansion of high-quality ELCC programs and services that enhance the cultural continuity of First Nations communities and are rooted in First Nations languages, knowledge, and cultural practices. Curriculum development and professional resources for ELCC programs based in First Nations cultures and languages are key to implementing this framework.

### ***INUIT EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE FRAMEWORK***

A major strategy in seeking to achieve a system of Inuit ELCC in which the Inuktitut language and Inuit culture are embedded is to pursue funding arrangements, including the Inuit Nunangat Fiscal Policy Space. This approach enables long-term integrated funding that the Inuit would control and could direct toward a sustainable IELCC system. This framework prioritizes stable, decent wages and working conditions for early childhood educators, with explicit consideration for the cost of living in the North; building human resource capacity and training in early childhood education based upon Inuit knowledge; and support for Inuit families living outside Inuit Nunangat by establishing Inuit-centred and -led child care and family resource programs in urban areas.

### ***MÉTIS NATION EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE FRAMEWORK***

The overarching goal of the *Métis Nation's ELCC Framework* is to create and enhance early learning programs and supports for Métis children and their families that are anchored in Métis culture and responsive to their



unique needs. One key strategy is to support “ELCC providers, from inside and outside the Métis Nation, to be trained and educated in early childhood education and the cultural ways of the Métis Nation, thereby enhancing their competency in working with Métis Nation children and their families.”

## ■ **TRANSFORMING FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT ELCC**

The federal government’s Indigenous ELCC Transformation Initiative supports implementation of the *IELCC Framework*. The initiative recognizes the importance of a distinctions-based approach in ensuring that the rights, interests, and circumstances of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation are acknowledged, affirmed, and implemented through specific frameworks representing their respective visions, goals, and priorities. It also embodies the spirit and substance of the *UNDRIP Act* by enabling Indigenous control through co-development of Indigenous ELCC.

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples are committed to maintaining their culture and cultural identity through self-determination. Thus, the main areas of focus are culturally sensitive early childhood education designed to reflect the unique needs, history, cultures, languages, and traditions of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples, and the implications for staff training and service delivery. These elements are reflected in the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis ELCC frameworks.

### **The Indigenous ELCC Transformation Initiative**

The Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Transformation Initiative supports implementation of the IELCC and the distinct First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation frameworks within it that reflect the three groups’ unique cultures and priorities. The Initiative enables greater Indigenous control in IELCC through a partnership model to facilitate Indigenous-led decision-making to advance national and regional priorities. The goal is for Indigenous children and families to have greater access to ELCC programs and services that are holistic, accessible, inclusive, flexible, and culturally appropriate, and to improve children’s outcomes.

Employment and Social Development Canada is the federal focal point for this initiative, with Indigenous Services Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada as co-signatories to the horizontal [terms and conditions](#) of the IELCC Transformation Initiative.

### **ELCC program provision and financing (2018 – 2026)**

Budget 2017 built upon the three federal “legacy” IELCC programs (described below) and committed \$1.7 billion over 10 years (starting in 2018 – 2019) to advance the goals of the *IELCC Framework*. The 2020 Fall Economic Statement (FES) committed an additional \$145 million over five years (starting in 2021 – 2022) for IELCC and a total of \$225 million ongoing. The 2020 FES also made the funding for IELCC under Budget 2017 permanent and ongoing at 2027 – 2028 levels.

The 2021 federal budget provided a historic commitment to early learning and child care, with significant implications for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous children and families. The \$27.2 billion over five years (through 2026) and commitment to build a “Canada-wide, community-based system of quality child care” represented the most significant federal financial and policy commitment to child care to date. As a



component of this commitment, Budget 2021 built on the *IELCC Framework*'s distinctions-based approach, with an investment of \$2.5 billion over five years for Indigenous ELCC to support programs and services, infrastructure, and governance and partnership building.

The \$2.5 billion earmarked for IELCC in Budget 2021 included:

- \$1.3 billion over five years and \$369 million ongoing to enhance distinctions-based funding envelopes for IELCC;
- \$515 million over five years and \$112 million ongoing to support before- and after-school care for First Nations children on reserve;
- \$264 million over four years and \$24 million ongoing to repair and renovate existing Indigenous ELCC centres;
- \$420 million over three years and \$21 million ongoing to build and maintain new centres in additional communities (Budget 2023 re-profiled this investment over four years, providing further time to ramp up and plan for investments);
- \$59.8 million over five years beginning in 2021 – 2022 and \$16 million ongoing starting in 2026 – 2027 for additional investments in the Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) program; and
- \$10 million a year starting in 2023 – 2024 and ongoing in additional investment for the expansion of the IELCC Quality Improvement Projects funding envelope.

The government also committed an annual increase of 3% for Indigenous ELCC program funding starting in 2027 – 2028, although this increase is not applicable to before- and after-school care on reserve.

The *IELCC Framework* and associated investments to support its implementation form a distinct yet integral part of the Canada-wide ELCC system. Funding to support IELCC is intended to complement, not replace, provincial/territorial funding for ELCC, in recognition of the significant needs in Indigenous communities. It is also meant to ensure that Indigenous governments can participate alongside federal, provincial, and territorial governments in the design and implementation of the Canada-wide system.

The Indigenous ELCC Transformation Initiative enables horizontal coordination of federal investments in IELCC through flexible, Indigenous-led approaches. [Horizontal terms and conditions](#) provide a single-window approach to federal IELCC funding. Employment and Social Development Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada are the federal partners that use these terms and conditions to participate in the Indigenous ELCC Initiative.

## INDIGENOUS ELCC LEGACY PROGRAMS

### **Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities**

In 1995, the Government of Canada established the [Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities](#) (AHSUNC) program through the Public Health Agency of Canada as part of a commitment to create early intervention programs that promote the healthy development of Indigenous children. As



a national early intervention initiative, AHSUNC supports First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children and families living off reserve or in northern communities.

Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada, the program enables local Indigenous organizations and governance bodies to design and deliver culturally grounded, community-driven programming that reflects local needs and priorities. AHSUNC sites typically offer part-day, centre-based programming for multiple cohorts of children, allowing for broad participation and community reach. Each site is guided by six interrelated components – education, health promotion, culture and language, nutrition, social support, and parental/family involvement – which together foster the holistic wellbeing of children and strengthen connections among families, communities, and culture.

A 2022 [evaluation of AHSUNC](#) confirmed that families strongly support the cultural programming and inclusion of Indigenous languages in AHSUNC programs. At the same time, additional AHSUNC services are increasingly needed in unserved and underserved areas, specifically more resources to enable AHSUNC programs to support children with disabilities and their families. Limited financial capacity exacerbates difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff. The evaluation notes that new funding committed to the IELCC Initiative in the 2021 federal budget provides incremental funding increases for AHSUNC over five years beginning in 2022 – 2023 (totalling \$122.9 million), which will hopefully help address these ongoing challenges and strengthen program capacity across communities.

The AHSUNC program in British Columbia presents a unique landscape compared to other jurisdictions. While the AHSUNC program was initiated as, and largely remains, a centre-based early learning program, a number of AHSUNC sites in British Columbia operate within a more integrated early learning environment, often in collaboration with provincially licensed child care centres or other Indigenous-led early learning programs.

Across British Columbia, all AHSUNC sites operate within this broader provincial early learning context, navigating varying degrees of integration, collaboration, and alignment with provincial standards and priorities. While approaches differ from community to community, all sites maintain a focus on cultural continuity, flexibility, and community governance – ensuring that programming remains responsive to local priorities.

Canada-wide, the structure of AHSUNC delivery varies; some provinces and territories license AHSUNC programs (typically by invitation of the community or program), while others do not.

In 2025, at least 136 AHSUNC sites in urban and northern communities reach 4,500 children outside British Columbia. There were 43 AHSUNC sites in British Columbia in 2025.

### **Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve**

The [Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve](#) (AHSOR) program through Indigenous Services Canada, which builds on AHSUNC, was initiated in 1998. AHSOR funds activities that support the physical, developmental, emotional, social, cultural, and spiritual wellbeing of young children living on First Nations reserves through flexible, Indigenous-led approaches. Like AHSUNC, AHSOR is centred on six components: education, health promotion, culture and language, nutrition, social support, and



parental/family involvement. Programming is typically half-day and can be delivered in a centre-based environment, through outreach services, or through home visits.

A 2024 [Evaluation of the Healthy Child Development Program](#), which includes AHSOR, found:

AHSOR programs are operating with a holistic approach to supporting child development – including integration of Nation-based culture and language activities, play-based learning, health promotion, nutritious food access, and involvement of parents and Elders. The key accomplishments within the AHSOR program as described by community representatives include strengthened connection to culture and positive identity, improved school readiness, the development of trusting relationships with children and families, and achievement of emotional and developmental milestones. (p. 28)

Canada-wide, some provinces and territories license AHSOR centre-based programs (usually by invitation of the community or program), and some do not.

According to the most recent available reporting (2022 – 2023), 364 AHSOR programs reach over 11,063 children through centre-based and outreach programming on reserves across all provinces except British Columbia.

Since 2013, funding for AHSOR for First Nations in British Columbia has been administered by the First Nations Health Authority under the British Columbia Tripartite Framework Agreement on Health Governance. The 156 AHSOR programs in British Columbia are administered through the First Nations Health Authority.

AHSOR does not serve the Yukon or Nunavut. There is one AHSOR program in the Northwest Territories on the K'atl'odeeche First Nation Reserve.

### **First Nations and Inuit Child Care Initiative**

The First Nations and Inuit Child Care Initiative (FNICCI) was first established in 1995 through Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (a predecessor of Employment and Social Development Canada) to provide Indigenous children with similar access to affordable, quality child care as non-Indigenous children. According to a 2018 federal government report, [An Audit of Social Infrastructure Funding](#), the FNICCI:

...began in 1995 with the goal of creating 6,000 child care spaces on First Nations reserves and in the Territories based on a government commitment from 1993. Additionally, FNICCI was intended to provide culturally appropriate, affordable, quality child care services comparable to what is available to other Canadian children. In 1999, FNICCI was bundled into the Aboriginal human resource development agreements with First Nations and with service providers in the Territories to take advantage of the agreement holders' delivery networks. (p. 1)

Originally funded through one of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada's 12 labour market development programs, FNICCI was developed to ensure First Nations and Inuit children whose parents were in employment training or starting a new job could access quality child care services that met their development needs. In 1999, FNICCI was integrated with the Aboriginal Human Resource Development Strategy, and in 2004 it transitioned to the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy,



now Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program (transition in 2019) under the mandate of Employment and Social Development Canada.

In 2025, approximately 463 child care sites providing approximately 11,563 spaces in First Nations and Inuit communities across Canada were receiving [FNICCI funding](#). FNICCI-funded child care centres also use other funds, both federal and provincial/territorial. Table 10 provides provincial/territorial numbers of child care centres on First Nations reserves and Inuit lands.

Bill C-35, *An Act respecting Early Learning and Child Care in Canada*, which received royal assent in 2024, includes clear and explicit identification of Indigenous rights and specifically references UNDRIP in a rights-based framework.



# Provinces and Territories

Newfoundland and Labrador	32
Prince Edward Island	63
Nova Scotia	91
New Brunswick	119
Quebec	148
Ontario	180
Manitoba	212
Saskatchewan	243
Alberta	273
British Columbia	303
The Yukon	336
Northwest Territories	362
Nunavut	388



# Newfoundland and Labrador

Overview	33	<b>CHILD CARE FUNDING</b>	<b>56</b>
Provincial context	34	Eligibility for CWELCC funding	56
		Child care services' eligibility for funding	56
		Types of funding	56
<b>KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA</b>	<b>37</b>	Funding for regulated child care (fiscal year 2023 – 2024)	61
Kindergarten for five-year-olds	37		
Kindergarten for four-year-olds (prekindergarten)	37		
Curriculum framework	38		
Enrolment	38		
<b>CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>39</b>		
Administration	39		
Curriculum framework	40		
Children with disabilities	40		
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care	41		
Parent fees	41		
Workforce	43		
Standards and regulations	46		
Of interest	50		
<b>CHILD CARE DATA</b>	<b>51</b>		
Regulated child care space statistics	51		
Regulated child care enrolment statistics	54		



## Newfoundland and Labrador

## ■ OVERVIEW

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Department of Education is responsible for regulated child care centres, family child care, kindergarten, and prekindergarten.

Licensed child care includes child care centres, family child care, prekindergarten, and before- and after-school programs.

Centre-based child care is delivered by non-profit and for-profit operators, with a majority of full-day centre spaces operated by for-profit entities. There are also a small number of public operators.

Family child care is agency-based; there is one province-wide non-profit family child care agency.

Prekindergarten is delivered in selected schools as licensed child care for four-year-olds. Launched in 2022, prekindergarten is a non-profit, year-round, full-day, fee-based program being phased in across the province. Newfoundland and Labrador offers full school-day kindergarten for all five-year-olds as part of the K – 12 education system. It is not compulsory.

On January 1, 2023, parent fees for all full-day regulated child care services participating in the Operating Grant Program were reduced to \$10/day. The Child Care Subsidy Program is an income-tested program that covers all of the parent fee for eligible families using regulated child care services.

On April 1, 2023, Newfoundland and Labrador introduced a wage grid for child care centres.

Newfoundland and Labrador signed the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement in July 2021. It allocated \$306 million over five years to the province.

In March 2025, Newfoundland and Labrador accepted the federal offer to extend its bilateral agreement until 2031.

### Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)

	2021	2025	Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025
Non-profit and public	1,189	2,243	+1,054
For-profit	3,438	4,181	+743
<b>Total full-day spaces</b>	<b>4,627</b>	<b>6,424</b>	<b>+1,797</b>
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	74%	65%	-9%
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit	-	-	41%

## PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded; however, the totals are based on exact figures. Therefore, totals may not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

### Number of children 0 – 12 years (2024 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	3,200
1	3,500
2	3,400
3	4,000
4	3,500
5	3,500
6	4,600
7	5,200
8	4,900
9	5,100
10	5,200
11	4,700
12	5,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,000</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	10,100
3 – 5	11,000
6 – 12	34,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,000</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0	2,500
1	2,500
2	2,600
3	2,900
4	2,600
5	2,900
6	3,200
7	3,700
8	3,700
9	3,700
10	3,800
11	3,400
12	3,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,900</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	7,600
3 – 5	8,400
6 – 12	24,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>40,900</b>

---

### 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	1,480	310	450	80	70
5 – 9	1,695	445	480	50	145
10 – 14	2,065	615	590	70	190
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,240</b>	<b>1,370</b>	<b>1,520</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>405</b>

### Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age of youngest child</i>	<i>Number of mothers</i>	<i>Participation rate (%)</i>
0 – 3	9,400	83.9
4 – 5	3,800	90.5
0 – 5	13,200	85.7
6 – 12	15,100	87.8

### Living arrangements by age of child (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Living with two parents</i>	<i>Living with one parent</i>			<i>Total</i>
		<i>Lone mother</i>	<i>Lone father</i>		
0 – 4	14,425	3,660	595		4,255
5 – 9	16,615	4,755	1,125		5,880
10 – 14	18,505	5,525	1,420		6,945

### Languages spoken most often at home (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Non-official</i>	<i>Multiple</i>
0 – 4	18,200	55	530	200
5 – 9	22,310	60	400	255
10 – 14	25,455	60	445	190
<b>Total</b>	<b>65,965</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>1,370</b>	<b>655</b>

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

<i>Two-parent families</i>	<i>Male lone parent</i>	<i>Female lone parent</i>
\$101,000	\$43,200	\$41,200

## KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA

### KINDERGARTEN FOR FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

#### Provincial responsibility

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development  
Programs and Services Division  
Phone: 709-729-1840  
Email: [education@gov.nl.ca](mailto:education@gov.nl.ca)  
Website: [gov.nl.ca/education/](http://gov.nl.ca/education/)

#### Legislation

Newfoundland and Labrador. House of Assembly.  
*Schools Act*. SNL1997 CHAPTER S-12.2. Amended 2021 c21.

#### Provision

##### Kindergarten provision

**Definition** Full school-day program that is part of the K – 12 education system for all five-year-olds.

**Eligibility** Five years old by December 31.

**Compulsory schooling** Not compulsory.

**Entitlement** All eligible children have access.

**Instructional hours per day** Five hours (full school-day).

**Class size** Maximum 20 children.

### Teacher qualifications and certification

To be a qualified teacher in Newfoundland and Labrador, a four-year academic degree with a major in a teachable subject area and a one- or two-year education degree are required. Alternatively, teachers may have a four- or five-year education degree with a concentration in primary or elementary education.

Kindergarten teachers are not required to have an early childhood qualification.

### KINDERGARTEN FOR FOUR-YEAR-OLDS (PREKINDERGARTEN)

#### Provincial responsibility

Department of Education  
Early Learning and Child Development Branch  
Phone: 1-709-729-5097  
Email: [education@gov.nl.ca](mailto:education@gov.nl.ca)  
Website: [gov.nl.ca/education/pre-kindergarten/](http://gov.nl.ca/education/pre-kindergarten/)

#### Legislation

Newfoundland and Labrador. House of Assembly.  
*Child Care Act*. SNL 2014, c. C-11.01.  
Newfoundland and Labrador. House of Assembly.  
*Child Care Regulations*. NLR 39/17.

## Provision

### Prekindergarten provision

<b>Definition</b>	Full-day, year-round program for four-year-olds that began in 2022 and is being phased in across the province, licensed as non-profit child care. The programs are located in selected schools but are not part of the school system. There is a \$10/day fee (same as full-day child care).
<b>Eligibility</b>	Four years old by December 31.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Not compulsory.
<b>Entitlement</b>	No entitlement.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Full-day, year-round.
<b>Class size</b>	Maximum 20 children. Staff:child ratio of 1:10.

### Teacher qualifications and certification

Child care staff must be certified to work in the regulated child care sector. See Newfoundland and Labrador's "[Workforce](#)" section for more information.

## ENROLMENT

### Kindergarten enrolment (2024 – 2025 school year)

#### *Enrolment in public schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	4,054
------------------------------	-------

#### *Enrolment in private/independent schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	91
------------------------------	----

<b>Total kindergarten enrolment</b>	<b>4,145</b>
-------------------------------------	--------------

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

[Completely Kindergarten: Kindergarten Curriculum Guide](#) (2010) is a mandatory curriculum framework for kindergarten in all public schools in Newfoundland and Labrador.

[Navigating the Early Years: An Early Childhood Learning Framework](#) (2019) became a mandatory curriculum framework for child care services (including prekindergarten) in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2022. It focuses on children 0 – 8 years. A prekindergarten curriculum is being developed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

# CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

## ■ ADMINISTRATION

### Provincial responsibility

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development  
Early Learning and Child Development Branch  
Phone: 709-729-5097  
Email: [education@gov.nl.ca](mailto:education@gov.nl.ca)  
Website: [childcare.gov.nl.ca/](http://childcare.gov.nl.ca/)

### Legislation

Newfoundland and Labrador. House of Assembly. [Child Care Act](#). SNL 2014, c. C-11.01.  
Newfoundland and Labrador. House of Assembly. [Child Care Regulations](#). NLR 39/17.

### Service descriptions

#### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

There are no health, safety, or training requirements or provision for public oversight in unregulated child care. There may be attention by public officials on a complaint basis.

A child care provider is not required to be licensed if they offer child care for less than 10 hours a week or care for a maximum of four children under age 13, with no more than two of these children being under age two. When all of the children are younger than age two, a maximum of three children can be cared for. These numbers include the provider's own children.

See sections 2(f) and 2(g) of the [Child Care Act](#) for more information.

#### REGULATED CHILD CARE

All regulated child care can provide services to children 0 – 13 years and may operate between the hours of 6:30 am and 8:30 pm. Care may be

offered outside these standard hours with written ministerial approval.

### Child care centre

A child care centre is a facility in which a child care service is operated (not including a licensed or approved family child care home). Centres may operate on a full-day or part-day basis and are required to hold a child care licence as determined by the *Child Care Act* and regulations.

### Prekindergarten

Prekindergarten is delivered in selected schools as licensed child care for four-year-olds. Launched in 2022, prekindergarten is a non-profit, year-round, full-day, fee-based program being phased in across the province. See Newfoundland and Labrador's "[Kindergarten policy, programs, and data](#)" section for more information.

### School-age child care

A school-age child care centre provides care outside school hours for school-age children under 13 years of age. School-age care has two age categories: Younger school-age range includes children 4 years 9 months – 7 years, and older school-age range includes children 6 years 9 months – 13 years.

### Family child care

A family child care home is a facility in which a child care provider lives and operates the child care service. Providers are permitted to care for a maximum of seven children. Depending on the location, family child care homes have been either individually licensed by the Department of Education or approved through a licensed family child care agency. Effective April 1, 2024, all providers are required to be approved through a family child care agency.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

*Navigating the Early Years: An Early Childhood Learning Framework* (2019) became a mandatory curriculum framework for child care services in Newfoundland and Labrador in 2022. It focuses on children 0 – 8 years.

## CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

### Terminology and approach

Newfoundland and Labrador uses the term “children with support needs” to refer to children with patterns of strengths and needs that are outside those common to groups of children their age (diagnosed or undiagnosed). The strengths and needs may fall within one or more of the following domains: developmental, cognitive, social-emotional, behavioural, sensory, physical, or medical. A child’s individual needs, chronological age, and stage of development are taken into consideration.

All types of regulated child care programs (centres and family child care) are eligible to receive supports from the Child Care Inclusion Program.

The Child Care Inclusion Program provides inclusion funding to the whole centre, not to support inclusion of an individual child.

### Programs supporting inclusion in ELCC

The [Child Care Inclusion Program](#) provides support upon the request of a child care service to support and fully include children with support needs in a regular program. Supports such as consultation, training, and grants are available where the need has been assessed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Eligible applicants are assessed by a regional inclusion consultant or designate to determine the specific needs of the child care

service and make a recommendation regarding the type of inclusion support to be implemented.

The Child Care Inclusion Program provides consultative support and financial grants to regulated child care programs. Consultative support refers to the provision of guidance and information to assist child care services in identifying and accessing resources to plan to meet a child’s needs. Consultative support includes providing hands-on techniques and interventions, providing professional learning opportunities, supporting the transfer of knowledge and skills to educators in a homeroom, assisting with transitional planning, and developing action plans.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, there is no child care service solely or primarily for children with disabilities. The Daybreak Child and Family Centre places an emphasis on meeting the needs of vulnerable children and families.

### Access to inclusive ELCC

Early learning and child care (ELCC) programs enrolled in the Operating Grant Program are required to participate in the Child Care Inclusion Program and the Early Learning and Child Care Quality Enhancement Program. The supports available through the inclusion and quality programs are not mandated.

A diagnosis is not required for a child to receive support through the Child Care Inclusion Program.

Newly constructed or renovated facilities are required to meet the accessibility standards in the [National Building Code](#). Service NL is the government department that ensures adherence to building codes and requirements during the licensing process.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, there are no delays or administrative barriers for receiving inclusion funding. Funding is not limited by financial constraints.

## ■ FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE

In Newfoundland and Labrador, 9.3% of the total population identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in the most recent census (2021). There are three First Nations reserves in the province, as well as the autonomous Inuit area of Nunatsiavut in northern coastal Labrador. Almost 90% of Indigenous people in Newfoundland and Labrador do not live on reserve or in Nunatsiavut.

### First Nations and Inuit child care on reserves and Inuit lands

The province of Newfoundland and Labrador licenses child care on First Nations reserves and in Nunatsiavut. These centres receive the same funding as other provincially licensed centres, including wage supplements, funding for children with disabilities, and parent fee subsidies.

In 2025, one licensed full-day child care centre that served 28 children was located on the Samiajij Miawpukek Reserve (formerly known as Conne River). The centre was operated by the Miawpukek First Nation. One full-day centre serving 14 children was located on the Sheshatshiu Reserve, operated by the Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation.

Four licensed full-day centres were located in Nunatsiavut, offering a total of 71 spaces. These centres were in the communities of Nain, Hopedale, Rigolet, and Makovik and were operated by the Nunatsiavut government.

One licensed family child care provider was located on reserve, at the Samiajij Miawpukek Reserve.

In 2025, two unlicensed Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (AHSOR) programs were operating in the province.

### Indigenous child care other than on reserve or Inuit lands

In 2025, one Indigenous-led child care centre not on reserve or Inuit lands was operating, with 35 full-day spaces.

In 2025, three Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) programs were operating. Newfoundland and Labrador does not license AHSUNC programs.

### Indigenous-specific resources/initiatives

The Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador provides free professional learning opportunities including Indigenous Cultural Diversity Training webinars facilitated by First Light, an Indigenous organization located in St. John's.

In addition, Indigenous organizations operate Family Resource Centres that support culturally responsive programming. Eight Family Resource Centres either work in Indigenous communities or with Indigenous populations.

## ■ PARENT FEES

On January 1, 2023, parent fees for all full-day regulated child care services participating in the Operating Grant Program (OGP) were reduced to \$10/day as part of the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador CWELCC Agreement.

### Provincially set fees for centres and family child care homes participating in the OGP

Age group	Daily fee (2024)
Infant, toddler, preschool-age, prekindergarten, and school-age (full-day)	\$10
School-age (after-school)	\$4
School-age (before- and after-school)	\$5

In 2024, 97% of child care centres and family child care homes participated in the OGP. Centres and family child care homes not participating in the OGP may set their own fees. Information on average fees for centres and homes not participating in the OGP is not available.

## Additional fees

Operators are not permitted to charge waitlist fees or additional fees for food, extended hours, or field trips, unless they have an exemption for meals and snacks. Operators are permitted to charge additional fees for transportation with parental agreement. See the [Child Care Centre Operating Grant Program Policy and Standards Manual](#) for more information.

## Parent fee subsidies

The [Child Care Subsidy Program](#) is an income-tested program that covers all of the parent fee for eligible families using regulated child care services. All regulated child care services are eligible to enrol children receiving fee subsidies. As fees have been reduced substantially with the implementation of CWELCC, fee subsidies play a reduced role in child care affordability. Fee subsidies are paid to the centre or family child care provider on behalf of a fully subsidized parent.

Subsidy eligibility is based on net household income, service eligibility, and the need for care. All eligible families are entitled to a fee subsidy. There is no waitlist.

Eligible families who attend non-OGP services are responsible for child care fees charged by their child care service provider over and above the maximum subsidy rate.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for a fee subsidy, a family must demonstrate a need for child care services for one or more of the following reasons:

- Employment;
- Education or training;
- Injury/illness/disability/rehabilitation; or
- Referral from the Department of Children, Seniors, and Social Development.

## FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

Financial eligibility for a fee subsidy is based on net family monthly income and the number of children attending regulated child care.

A family (one or two parent[s]/guardian[s]) is entitled to a full Child Care Subsidy Program if they meet the yearly net income thresholds based on the number of children in the family who attend a regulated child care service.

### Financial eligibility for Child Care Subsidy Program (2024)

<i>Household size</i>	<i>Maximum annual net household income for fee subsidy</i>
Family with one child in regulated child care	\$41,000
Family with two children in regulated child care	\$47,000
Family with three children in regulated child care	\$53,000
Family with four children in regulated child care	\$59,000
Family with five children in regulated child care	\$65,000
Family with six children in regulated child care	\$71,000
Family with seven children in regulated child care	\$77,000

See the [Subsidy Policy Manual](#) for further information.

Child Care Subsidy Program staff determine the maximum number of days/hours per week of child care the program will fund. Subsidies are not paid for attendance exceeding approved hours and days of service.

## SUBSIDY RATES

The subsidy rate is the maximum amount the provincial government pays to the service on behalf of a fully subsidized parent to cover all or part of the parent fee. Child Care Subsidy Program amounts may be approved up to the \$10/day set fee for children enrolled in a centre or home participating in the OGP.

### Maximum daily subsidy rates in licensed child care centres and family child care homes not participating in the OGP (2025)

Age group	Full-time (4.5 – 8.5 hours)	Part-time (<4.5 hours)
Infant (0 – 2 years)	\$44.00	\$23.00
Toddler (18 months – 3 years)	\$33.00	\$17.50
Preschool-age (33 months – 13 years)	\$30.00	\$16.00
School-age (after-school)	-	\$14.00
School-age (before- and after-school)	-	\$16.00

## WORKFORCE

### Child care staff wages

#### PROVINCIAL WAGE DATA

Prior to April 1, 2023, each employer set the wages and benefits for their child care staff, and eligible early childhood educators (ECEs) could apply for

the [Early Learning and Child Care Supplement](#).

The supplement provided \$12,900 to \$16,900 per year to eligible ECEs (centre staff, administrators, and family child care agency monitors), depending on their level of certification and position. Quarterly payments were made directly to eligible ECEs. The supplement ended for sites funded by the OGP when the wage grid was introduced on April 1, 2023.

## WAGE ENHANCEMENT

### Annual Early Learning and Child Care Supplement amounts for child care centre and family child care agency staff (2019 – 2023)

Position	Certification level	Full annual supplement amounts
ECE	Level I	\$12,900
	Level II	\$14,400
	Level III	\$14,900
	Level IV	\$15,400
Child care centre administrators and family child care agency monitors	Level II	\$15,900
	Level III	\$16,400
	Level IV	\$16,900

## PROVINCIAL WAGE GRID

On April 1, 2023, Newfoundland and Labrador introduced a wage grid for child care centres. It applies to ECEs with active certification working in regulated child care centres participating in the OGP or as family child care monitors (home visitors). The wage grid has a base rate of \$25/hour for Level II ECEs with a two-year diploma.

## ECE wage grid (2023 – 2026)

	Hourly rate				Annual salary			
	Base	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Base	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
<b>Level I ECE</b>	\$21.25	\$21.68	\$22.11	\$22.55	\$41,597	\$42,429	\$43,277	\$44,143
<b>Level II ECE</b>	\$25.00	\$25.50	\$26.01	\$26.53	\$48,938	\$49,916	\$50,915	\$51,933
<b>Level III ECE</b>	\$28.75	\$29.33	\$29.91	\$30.51	\$56,278	\$57,404	\$58,552	\$59,723
<b>Level IV ECE</b>	\$33.06	\$33.72	\$34.40	\$35.09	\$64,720	\$66,014	\$67,335	\$68,681
<b>Trainee</b>	\$18.06	\$18.42	\$18.79	-	\$35,357	\$36,064	\$36,786	-
<b>Labrador Allowance</b>	-	-	-	-	\$5,178	\$5,178	\$5,178	\$5,178
<b>Administrator bonus</b>	-	-	-	-	\$4,894	\$4,992	\$5,091	\$5,193
<b>Francophone bonus</b>	-	-	-	-	\$5,178	\$5,178	\$5,178	\$5,178

*Note: Data in this table are based on working 7.5 hours per day for 261 days per year.*

## FAMILY CHILD CARE REMUNERATION

The provincial wage grid does not apply to family child care providers. Providers continued to receive the Early Learning and Child Care Supplement until October 2024, when it was replaced by the Family Home Certification Incentive. To be eligible for the Incentive, regulated providers must hold active certification and participate in the Family Child Care OGP.

### Family Home Certification Incentive amounts (2024)

Level	Maximum annual payment
Trainee	\$2,470.59
Level I	\$24,434.12
Level II	\$27,275.29
Level III	\$28,222.35
Level IV	\$29,169.41

*Note: Amount reimbursed is based on hours of operation as per the approval certificate.*

*Note: Maximum annual payment is based on 14-hour work days, and 261 days worked. The amount providers receive is prorated based on their actual hours of work.*

## Staff benefits

In 2024, Newfoundland and Labrador introduced a group medical benefits program for ECEs, other ELCC employees, and family child care providers in regulated services. The program is managed by the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Dougan Insurance Group.

## Other workforce measures

In 2023 – 2024, an initiative was mounted to recruit ECEs from South Korea. In 2024 – 2025, a five-year Memorandum of Understanding between the Newfoundland and Labrador Ministry of Education, the South Korean Ministry of Education, and the College of the North Atlantic was signed to allow eligible South Korean students to participate in placement programs in Newfoundland and Labrador.

## Early childhood certification

Child care staff must be certified to work in the regulated child care sector. The provincial government funds the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador to administer the province's Child Care Services (CCS) [certification process](#).

Certification consists of both levels and classifications. The five levels of certification are based on post-secondary education credentials. The classifications of CCS certification are based on age groups and child care setting (child care centre or family child care home). To work in regulated child care, individuals must hold both the required certification level and classification for the applicable age group and setting. Individuals may hold multiple levels and classifications of certification. To change the level or classification of certification, the individual must apply for a

reissued certificate. Individuals must renew their certification every three years.

## ECE certification levels (2025)

<i>Certification level</i>	<i>Description</i>
Trainee level	Complete orientation course and proof of registration in an ECE program.
Level I	One-year ECE certificate.
Level II	Two-year ECE diploma.
Level III	Three-year ECE diploma, two-year ECE diploma and one-year post-diploma ECE specialization, or one-year ECE certificate and a university degree.
Level IV	University degree in ECE or two-year ECE diploma and a university degree.

## Certification renewal requirements

<i>Certification level</i>	<i>Description</i>
Renewal of requirements for Level I certification and above	30 hours of professional learning if renewing prior to the expiry date, or 36 hours of professional learning plus one hour for each month lapsed. If an individual holds a combination of certification levels (e.g., Centre Level III School-age with Trainee level Preschool), renewal requirements are based on the lowest level of certification held.
Renewal requirements for Trainee level	Renewal requirements for Trainee level vary by type of classification and may or may not involve upgrading. Newfoundland and Labrador's Trainee level replaced the province's Entry level certification in 2017. A review of the certification process and development of a model for competency-based certification will be completed in 2025 – 2026.

## CLASSIFICATION

Classification is based on the type of child care setting and the age group with which the individual staff is certified to work.



Child care centre:

- Infant classification
- Preschool classification
- School classification
- Prekindergarten classification

Family child care home:

- Mixed-age classification
- Infant classification

To hold the Infant classification, individuals must have at least Level I certification. A family child care provider providing infant care must also take an infant care course from a recognized post-secondary institution or the infant orientation course from the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador.

regarding staffing requirements, grouping of children, and licensing. Some additional key elements of child care standards and regulations, such as physical environments and food provision, are covered in the comparative tables in this publication, while others may be found in the *Child Care Act* and *Child Care Regulations*.

### **Regulated child care centres**

Child care centres are licensed under the *Child Care Act* and *Child Care Regulations*. The Act was most recently amended in 2018, and the regulations in 2022.

### **STAFF:CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZE**

Newfoundland and Labrador does not specify a maximum number of children permitted in a child care centre.

## **■ STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS**

Child care centres and family child care homes must adhere to standards and regulations

## Staff:child ratio and maximum group size

Age group	Conditions for mixed age groups	Staff:child ratio	Maximum group size
Infant (0 – 24 months)	-	1:3	6
Infant and toddler (13 – 36 months)	No more than 3 children are 24 months or younger. No children are 12 months or younger, unless the centre is in a school under the Schools Act, 1997, and the child's parent is enrolled in and attending the school.	1:3	6
Toddler (18 – 36 months)	-	1:5	10
Toddler and preschool-age (2 years – 5 years 9 months, not yet in kindergarten or school)	No children are 24 months or younger. No more than 5 children are 3 years old or younger.	1:7	14
Preschool-age (2 years 9 months – 5 years 9 months, not yet in kindergarten or school)	-	1:8	16
Preschool-age and school-age (3 – 7 years)	No children are 3 years old or younger. No children are 7 years or older.	1:8	16
Prekindergarten (3 years 8 months – 5 years 9 months)	-	1:10	20
School-age (4 years 8 months – 13 years)	-	1:15	30

## STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRES

### Qualification requirements for staffing a centre

In Newfoundland and Labrador, staff qualification requirements are specified at room level and by age group.

In addition to the room-level requirements, staff must also have the applicable classification for the age range of children in that room.

Each room must be staffed according to specific qualification requirements. At least one staff member in every infant, toddler, preschool-age, and school-age room must have at least Level I certification. In prekindergarten rooms, at least one staff member must have at least Level III certification, and all staff who are considered to be

part of the ratio in these rooms must also complete an orientation course regarding the provincial early learning framework.

Where more than one staff member is required to ensure the staff:child ratio, the second and subsequent staff members must have at least Trainee certification. If there are more than three children under two years old in a given room, the second and subsequent staff members must hold at least a Level I certification.

---

## Minimum staff certification requirements by age group (2024)

---

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Minimum staff certification</b>	
Infant (0 – 24 months)	Level I – Infant classification (all staff)	No Trainee level certification permitted for staff working with this age group.
Infant and toddler (13 – 36 months)	Level I – Infant and Preschool classification	Where one or more children in the room are two years old or younger, one caregiver must hold Level I – Infant classification in addition to Level I – Preschool classification. Where the group size exceeds three, the second caregiver may hold Trainee level – Preschool classification.
Toddler (18 – 36 months)	Level I – Preschool classification	Where one or more children in the homeroom are two years old or younger, one caregiver must hold Level I – Infant classification in addition to Level I – Preschool classification. Where more than three children are two years or younger, the second caregiver must hold a Level I certification. The second caregiver may hold Trainee level – Preschool where the group size exceeds five, and no more than three children are two years or younger.
Toddler and preschool-age (2 years – 5 years 9 months, not yet in kindergarten or school)	Level I – Preschool classification	Where the group size exceeds seven, the second caregiver may hold Trainee level – Preschool classification.
Preschool-age (2 years 9 months – 5 years 9 months, not yet in kindergarten or school)	Level I – Preschool classification	Where the group size exceeds eight, the second caregiver may hold Trainee level – Preschool classification.
Preschool-age and school-age (3 – 7 years)	Level I – Preschool and School classification	Where the group size exceeds eight, the second caregiver may hold Trainee level – Preschool and School classification
Prekindergarten (3 years 8 months – 5 years 9 months)	Level III – Prekindergarten classification	Where the group size exceeds 10, the second caregiver may hold Trainee level – Preschool and Prekindergarten classification.
School-age (4 years 8 months – 13 years)	Level I – School classification	Where the group size exceeds 15, the second caregiver may hold Trainee level – School classification.

*Note: "Caregiver" refers to a person who provides care or supervision or both to children and does not include a student or volunteer.*

---

### Qualification requirements for on-site centre directors/supervisors

Administrators are responsible for the strategic planning and day-to-day operation of child care centres. There must be at least one designated administrator in every centre, and one for every five rooms. At least one administrator must be present during the main programming hours to provide direct mentoring, professional support,

and direction to the employees, students, and volunteers who assist or provide services in the centre.

Centre administrators must have at least Level II certification in the age groups of the children registered at the centre, as well as at least two years of experience working in a licensed child care centre serving at least eight children. If the centre operates a prekindergarten program, the



administrator must also hold at least a Level III certification with a prekindergarten classification.

### **Other requirements**

Centre staff must be at least 18 years of age.

All staff, students, and volunteers must have a criminal record check or criminal records screening certificate, a vulnerable sector records check, and a diploma in first aid, all of which must be no more than three years old, as well as a current record of immunization.

Volunteers completing an educational placement who are under the supervision of a staff member and are not part of the staff:child ratio are required to hold a diploma in first aid.

A first aid diploma must include first aid and CPR for children. Administrators must have a two-day standard first aid course. Other employees, students, or volunteers must have at least a one-day emergency first aid course. Where a first aid certificate has expired and the person is awaiting renewal, the person is not permitted to be a single staff member in the staff:child ratio and must renew the certificate within 30 days in order to continue to be included in the ratio.

### **LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES**

A licence to operate a child care centre is valid for a maximum of three years.

One pre-licensing on-site inspection and at least one comprehensive inspection per year must be conducted for each centre.

See the [Child Care Policy and Standards Manual](#) for more information.

### **Regulated family child care**

Family child care is regulated under the [Child Care Act](#) and [Child Care Regulations](#).

Family child care must be provided in the provider's personal residence.

### **MODEL OF ORGANIZATION**

Before April 1, 2024, Newfoundland and Labrador had two types of regulated family child care.

Providers in metro St. John's and many in Corner Brook and the surrounding area were approved under the licence of Family and Child Care Connections, the only child care agency in the province. Providers located in other areas of the province were individually licensed by the Early Learning and Child Development Division of the Department of Education.

Effective April 1, 2024, all providers in Newfoundland and Labrador are required to be approved by the [Family and Child Care Connections](#) agency, which is licensed by the Early Learning and Child Development Division. The agency issues approval certificates to all affiliated family child care providers.

Family and Child Care Connections:

- Approves family child care providers in accordance with legislation;
- Monitors the approved family child care providers in accordance with legislation;
- Provides supports to the approved family child care providers; and
- Appoints monitors (home visitors) to exercise the powers and perform the duties and functions conferred to them by the legislation.

## MAXIMUM CAPACITY

A family child care provider can care for up to seven children, depending on their ages. There can be no more than:

- Three children if the children are in the infant age range;
- Five children if two are in the infant age range and three are in the toddler age range;
- Six children if two are in the infant age range and two are in the toddler age range; and
- Seven children if none of the children are in the infant or toddler age range.

In all these variations, the provider's own children in the infant, toddler, and preschool-age ranges count toward the number of children. Up to two of the child care service provider's own children in the younger or older school-age range can be exempt from the number of children participating in the child care service.

## FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

Family child care providers must hold at least Trainee level certification. Family child care providers in a home in which all children are infants are required to have Level I certification with Infant classification.

In addition, family child care providers must be at least 18 years old and hold a valid first aid certificate, a current record of immunization, a criminal record check or criminal records screening certificate, and a vulnerable sector records check.

Every person who is 18 years old or older and lives in the family child care home must have a current record of immunization, a criminal records check or criminal records screening certificate, and a vulnerable sector records check.

Family child care providers are required to have a certificate of approval from Family and Child Care Connections, which must be displayed in their home.

## LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

Family and Child Care Connections monitors (home visitors) are assigned to each approved family child care home.

Monitors must visit each family child care home at least once a month.

Regional staff from the Early Learning and Child Care Division inspect a specified number of approved family child care homes at least once a year.

See the [Child Care Policy and Standards Manual](#) for more information.

## ■ OF INTEREST

### Municipal role

In Newfoundland and Labrador, municipalities do not have a direct role in funding, delivering, or managing child care. However, municipalities are eligible for Child Care Capacity Initiative funding, and some municipalities have provided land for child care facilities.

### Family Resource Centres

[Family Resource Centres](#) (FRCs) have been publicly funded in Newfoundland and Labrador since 1999. Now funded by the Ministry of Education and Child Development, FRCs are operated by non-profit community-based organizations and provide support for families with children aged 0 – 6. They offer a range of services, including drop-in programs focused on parent-child engagement, parent support groups, and access to parenting resources. There are 31 hubs and more than 120 satellite programs across the island.

## CHILD CARE DATA

### ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

#### Number of spaces (2024, 2025)

Category	2024	2025
<b>Full-day centre spaces</b>		
Infant (0 – 24 months)	135	147
Toddler (18 – 36 months)	1,403	1,579
Preschool-age (2 years 9 months – 5 years 9 months, not yet in kindergarten or school)	3,771	4,059
Prekindergarten (3 years 8 months – 5 years 9 months)	477	639
<b>Total full-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>5,786</b>	<b>6,424</b>
<b>Part-day centre spaces</b>		
Toddler (18 – 36 months)	0	5
Preschool-age (2 years 9 months – 5 years 9 months, not yet in kindergarten or school)	113	96
<b>Total part-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>5,899</b>	<b>6,525</b>
<b>Before- and after-school care centre spaces (licensed or regulated)</b>		
Kindergarten and Grades 1 – 6	2,681	3,861
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>8,580</b>	<b>10,386</b>
<b>Family child care licensed capacity</b>		
<b>Total family child care spaces</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>846</b>
<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)</b>	<b>9,372</b>	<b>11,232</b>

## Number of child care centres and family child care homes (2024)

---

### Centre-based child care

<b>Total number of centres</b>	<b>218</b>
--------------------------------	------------

### Centre-based programs

Centres providing a full-day program	169
Centres providing a part-day (nursery or preschool) program (licensed as a part-day program)	4
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 4 – 12 years)	98
Centres providing infant care (0 – 24 months)	23
Centres providing toddler care (18 – 36 months)	122
Centres providing preschool-age care (2 years 9 months – 5 years 9 months, not yet in kindergarten or school)	141
Centres providing a prekindergarten program (3 years 8 months – 5 years 9 months)	24
Centres providing a Francophone child care program	1
Centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – Grade 12)	49

### Regulated family child care

Individually licensed family child care homes (active)	0
Agency-based family child care homes (active)	126
Family child care agencies	1

### Participation in CWELCC

<b>Total number of child care centres receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>213</b>
--	------------

<b>Total number of agency-based family child care homes receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>126</b>
--	------------

## Auspice (2024)

### Centres by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit	118
Non-profit	93
Public	7

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>Part-day<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>BASC<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	3,836	70	1,604	5,510
Non-profit and public	1,950	43	1,077	3,070

<sup>1</sup> Nursery/preschool.

<sup>2</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

## Auspice (2025)

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>Part-day<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>BASC<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	4,181	58	2,662	6,901
Non-profit and public	2,243	43	1,199	3,485

<sup>1</sup> Nursery/preschool.

<sup>2</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

## Publicly operated child care (2024)

### Publicly operated child care

<i>Licence holder entity type</i>	<i>Centres</i>	<i>Full-day spaces</i>
School authority	2	17
Indigenous governing body	5	104
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>121</b>

*Note: The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District, Conseil scolaire francophone provincial de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador, Nunatsiavut government, Miawpukek First Nation, and Sheshatshiu Innu First Nation all operate child care centres.*

## Fee subsidies (2024)

---

### Number of children receiving fee subsidies

Child Care Subsidy Program – full subsidy	767
---	-----

## Disability support (2024)

---

### Number of children receiving disability support

Children in licensed or approved child care receiving disability support funding	428
--	-----

## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

### Number of children enrolled (2024)

---

#### Full-day centre enrolment

Infant (0 – 24 months)	131
Toddler (18 – 36 months)	1,230
Preschool-age (2 years 9 months – 5 years 9 months, not yet in kindergarten or school)	3,408
Prekindergarten (3 years 8 months – 5 years 9 months and attending a prekindergarten program)	356
<b>Total full-day centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>5,125</b>

#### Part-day centre enrolment

Preschool-age (2 years 9 months – 5 years 9 months, not yet in kindergarten or school)	195
--	-----

*Note: Part-day centre enrolment for 2024 includes children enrolled part-day in full-day centres. In previous editions of ECEC in Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador only included enrolment in part-day centres. The 2024 figure is, therefore, not comparable to previous years.*

<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>5,320</b>
--	--------------

#### Before- and after-school care enrolment (licensed or regulated)

Kindergarten and Grades 1 – 6	2,390
-------------------------------	-------

<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>7,710</b>
---	--------------

*Note: Enrolment data for five of Newfoundland and Labrador's 218 centres were not available in 2023 or 2024. As such, this total does not include enrolment in those centres.*

---

**Full-day family child care enrolment**

Not attending kindergarten or school	645
--------------------------------------	-----

---

**Part-day family child care enrolment**

Kindergarten and Grades 1 – 6	62
-------------------------------	----

---

<b><i>Total family child care enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</i></b>	<b>707</b>
---	------------

---

<b>TOTAL REGULATED ENROLMENT (centre and family child care enrolment)</b>	<b>8,417</b>
---	--------------

---



## CHILD CARE FUNDING

The types of funding available for child care services in Newfoundland and Labrador include operational funding, one-time funding, fee subsidies, and other ELCC funding programs.

### ■ ELIGIBILITY FOR CWELCC FUNDING

The CWELCC plan provides federal funds to provinces and territories for early learning and child care operational and one-time funding and fee subsidies for licensed child care for children aged 0 – 5. Funded new child care expansion is to be public and non-profit unless otherwise specified in the jurisdiction's agreement. Provinces and territories contribute their own funds and design their own policies and provision within this framework.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the following are eligible for operational funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools);
- Licensed prekindergarten centres;
- Licensed before- and after-school centres that enrol children under age six; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit child care centres are eligible for operational funding. After a service becomes regulated, it may enrol in the Operating Grant Program, a portion of which is funded by CWELCC.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the following are eligible for capital funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools);
- Licensed prekindergarten centres;
- Licensed before- and after-school centres that enrol children under age six; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres are not eligible for capital funding.

### ■ CHILD CARE SERVICES' ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

All non-profit and for-profit child care centres and family child care services are eligible for most funding with some exceptions. The Child Care Capacity Initiative funding is available to not-for-profit community-based organizations, municipalities, cooperatives, employer-sponsored non-profit groups, and family child care providers. Capital funding is not available for for-profit centres.

### ■ TYPES OF FUNDING

#### **Operational funding**

##### **OPERATING GRANT PROGRAM**

The [Operating Grant Program](#) (OGP) covers most of the costs of operating eligible child care services. The child care program uses this and other public funding plus the set parent fee revenues to deliver child care services. Participation in the OGP is voluntary and available to providers regardless

of auspice. As of April 2024, more than 97% of all regulated child care services (approximately 96% of child care centres and approximately 99% of family child care homes) participate in the program. To be eligible for OGP funding, centres must have a minimum enrolment of 90%, increased from 70%

on April 1, 2024. Services that demonstrate higher operational expenses due to their location, higher staffing costs, or other factors may be eligible for an enhanced rate up to the maximum amount.

Effective April 1, 2024, base rates were eliminated, and all services received the enhanced rates.

---

#### Daily OGP amounts (January 2023 – April 2024)

Age range	Standard/base rates per space per day		Enhanced/supplemental rate per space per day	
	Child care centres	Family child care homes	Child care centres	Family child care homes
Infant-only service <sup>1</sup>	\$53.50	\$50.50	\$59.00	\$59.00
Infant (full-time)	\$53.50	\$38.50	\$59.00	\$44.50
Toddler (full-time)	\$35.50	\$38.50	\$39.00	\$44.50
Preschool-age (full-time)	\$32.00	\$38.50	\$35.50	\$44.50
Prekindergarten (full-time)	\$32.00	-	\$35.50	-
School-age (full-day)	\$32.00	\$38.50	\$35.50	\$44.50
School-age (after school)	\$15.50	\$14.50	\$19.00	\$19.00
School-age (before-and after-school)	\$16.50	\$14.50	\$20.00	\$19.00
Infant (part-time)	\$29.25	\$19.25	\$32.00	\$22.25
Toddler (part-time)	\$20.25	\$19.25	\$22.00	\$22.25
Preschool-age (part-time)	\$18.50	\$19.25	\$20.25	\$22.25
Prekindergarten (part-time)	\$18.50	-	\$20.25	-

<sup>1</sup> Maximum 3 infants for family child care homes.

---

---

## OGP rates for family child care and child care centres based on part- or full-time equivalences (2024, 2025)

---

<i>Age range</i>	<i>Rate per space per day for family child care (effective April 1, 2024)</i>	<i>Rate per space per day for child care centres (effective April 1, 2025)</i>
Infant-only service	\$61.00	-
Infant (full-time)	\$46.50	\$61.00
Toddler (full-time)	\$46.50	\$41.00
Preschool-age (full-time)	\$46.50	\$37.50
Prekindergarten (full-time)	-	\$37.50
School-age (full-day)	\$46.50	\$37.50
School-age (after-school)	\$19.50	\$20.75
School-age (before- and after-school)	\$19.50	\$20.75
Infant (part-time)	\$22.75	\$32.50
Toddler (part-time)	\$22.75	\$22.50
Preschool-age (part-time)	\$22.75	\$20.75
Prekindergarten (part-time)	-	\$20.75

*Note: Rates include meals and snacks.*

*Note: For the infant-only service, family child care homes have a maximum of three infants. The infant-only service amount does not include the additional \$30 per enrolled infant for verified operational days (not applicable to voluntary closures).*

---

### RURAL AND REMOTE ALLOWANCE

The Rural and Remote Allowance came into effect April 1, 2024, to provide rural and remote service providers facing unique challenges with an additional 10% of their OGP funding to help offset the impact of the increased enrolment threshold. Eligible providers include centres, family child care homes, and prekindergarten programs.

### FAMILY CHILD CARE AGENCY FUNDING

Family and Child Care Connections receives operating funding to operate as the province's sole family child care agency. It recruits, supports, and monitors affiliated family child care providers. It offers professional development, information on grants, and a resource lending library. It also

provides a directory of approved providers for parents looking for child care.

### EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

On July 1, 2021, the Early Learning and Child Development Division introduced the Early Learning and Child Care Quality Enhancement program. The program is aimed at enhancing quality in regulated child care services through consultation on program design, learning processes, interactions with children and their families, and enhancements to physical environments. It provides a child care consultant to work with, and provide consultation to, all child care services that wish to participate. Consultation includes support related to access



to tools for self-reflection, planning, program quality, child development, learning processes, facilitating access to services, and mentorship. Other areas for consideration are professional learning opportunities and structural aspects of the learning environment that enhance the quality of the learning and child care.

### CHILD CARE INCLUSION PROGRAM

The Child Care Inclusion Program is available to all regulated child care programs to provide assistance to support and fully include children with support needs in a regular program. See Newfoundland and Labrador's "[Children with disabilities](#)" section for more information.

### EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE SUPPLEMENT

The [Early Learning and Child Care Supplement](#) provided \$12,900 to \$16,900 per year to eligible ECEs (centre staff, administrators, and family child care agency monitors), depending on their level of certification and position. Quarterly payments were made directly to eligible ECEs. The supplement ended for sites funded by the OGP when the wage grid was introduced on April 1, 2023. Family child care providers continued to receive the supplement until October 2024, when it was replaced by the Family Home Certification Incentive. To be eligible for the Incentive, regulated providers must hold active certification and participate in the Family Child Care OGP.

### One-time funding

#### CHILD CARE CAPACITY INITIATIVE

The Child Care Capacity Initiative for non-profit centres and family child care homes supports the creation of new regulated child care spaces and the expansion of existing ones, especially in rural, linguistic minority, and Indigenous communities. It aims to enhance access to quality affordable child

care for young children and families. Funding is available to assist with the cost of renovations to modify and/or expand an existing facility creating or increasing child care spaces to meet licensing requirements under the *Child Care Act* and regulations. Funding is also available for start-up program materials, equipment, and furnishings to meet licensing requirements.

See [Child Care Capacity Initiative Program for Centre-based Child Care](#) for more information about eligible expenses and maximum grant amounts for centre-based programs.

Family child care providers can receive up to \$15,000. Providers must commit to participating in the OGP for five years, after which the grant is non-repayable. For providers participating for shorter periods of time, the amount of the grant is reduced on a prorated basis.

---

#### Child Care Capacity Initiative grant repayment for family child care providers

Length of participation in the OGP	Amount of grant retained
1 year	\$3,000
2 years	\$6,000
3 years	\$9,000
4 years	\$12,000
5 years	\$15,000

### INFANT INCENTIVE

The Infant Incentive provides financial support for child care providers to create more infant spaces. It includes an additional \$30 per day per infant space for child care centres and family child care providers on the OGP, and a \$7,500 start-up grant and \$200 monthly stimulus grant for new infant-only family child care homes.

## WAGE GRID DELAYED PAYMENT

The Wage Grid Delayed Payment program was in effect from January 1, 2023, to March 31, 2023, for individuals with active Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador certification working in ECE roles at regulated child care centres participating in the OGP. The payment amount depended on the individual's placement on the ECE wage grid. It was calculated by taking the annual salary according to the wage grid, subtracting the previous annual salary plus any supplement, and dividing the difference by four to determine the quarterly payment. The Department of Education issued this amount directly to individuals.

## Fee subsidies

The Child Care Subsidy Program is an income-tested program that covers all of the parent fee for eligible families using regulated child care services. See Newfoundland and Labrador's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

## Other ELCC funding

### ASSOCIATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

The [Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador](#) (AECENL) is a professional organization that supports and advocates for ECEs in the province. It offers membership to ECEs, trainees, and other child care staff. AECENL receives funding to certify and classify ECEs and deliver early childhood orientation courses. It is also funded to administer a number of government programs, including post-secondary bursaries and grants, and the medical benefits program for eligible child care staff and family child care providers.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION NEEDS-BASED INCENTIVE GRANT

As of June 1, 2022, students who apply and qualify for the Canada-Newfoundland and Labrador Student Financial Assistance Program and who have assessed unmet financial need of at least \$100 under that program automatically qualify for the grant. The grant ranges from \$100 to \$10,000, depending on the student's assessed need.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION GRADUATE BURSARY PROGRAM

The Early Childhood Education Graduate Bursary Program ended on June 30, 2024. It was aimed at improving recruitment and retention of qualified ECEs in regulated child care services by reducing student debt. Bursaries of \$7,500 were available to graduates who met the criteria set by the Department of Education. In return, bursary recipients were required to commit to working in a regulated child care service in Newfoundland and Labrador for three years after graduation.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TRAINEE BURSARY

The [Early Childhood Education Trainee Bursary](#) was established in 2006 and revised in 2015 to provide support to Trainee level caregivers who are taking required ECE courses to upgrade their certification to Level I. Eligible applicants must hold Trainee level certification and be working in a regulated child care service. The bursary is not available for students attending classes in person. The bursary amount is \$250 per completed course.

## ON-CAMPUS FIELD PLACEMENT BURSARY

The [On-Campus Field Placement Bursary](#) is available for students who have successfully completed a required on-campus field placement at a College of the North Atlantic campus as

part of the ECE distance program. The bursary amount is \$835 per week, up to \$2,500 in total. It is administered by the AECENL.

### **ECE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION GRANT**

Introduced in September 2023, the ECE Recruitment and Retention Grant provides eligible applicants a maximum of \$2,000 for initial renewal and each three-year renewal of AECENL Level I to IV certification, up to a total of \$7,500. Applicants must have previously held AECENL Level I to IV certification that has lapsed for at least one year and must not have worked in regulated child care for one or more years.

### **CREATION OF SEATS IN ECE POST-SECONDARY PROGRAMS**

The provincial government, in partnership with the Government of Canada, provides funding to expand the number of seats available in ECE post-secondary programs in Newfoundland and Labrador.

## **■ FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024)**

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

### **Operational funding**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Child Care Centre Operating Grant Program	\$91,052,146
Family Child Care Operating Grant Program	\$6,582,130
Child Care Inclusion Program	\$4,279,208
Early Learning and Child Care Supplement	\$2,221,587
Family and Child Care Connections	\$1,202,431
Daybreak Child and Family Centre	\$1,038,828
Early Learning and Child Care Quality Enhancement Program	\$205,314
<b>Total operational funding</b>	<b>\$106,581,643</b>

*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, disability funding, and other grants/funding paid on a recurring basis.*

### **One-time funding – capital (major and minor)**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Child Care Capacity Initiative	\$1,660,362
Family Child Care Capital Funding	\$384,131
Child Care Capacity Prekindergarten	\$865,946
Create a Space Incentive	\$2,070,000

### **One-time funding – other**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
One-time ECE Payment	\$4,000
Wage Grid Delayed Payment	\$1,590,344
Operating Grant Program Review	\$149,500
Family Resource Program Review	\$123,675
Wellbeing Week	\$6,578
<b>Total one-time funding</b>	<b>\$6,854,536</b>

*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.*

## Fee subsidies

Program	Amount
Child Care Subsidy Program	\$1,509,851
<b>TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, and fee subsidies)</b>	<b>\$114,946,030</b>

## Other ELCC funding

Program	Amount
Family Resource Centres (unregulated)	\$7,216,400
KinderStart and Parent Resource Kits	\$676,982
Mother Goose Program	\$247,702
Roots of Empathy	\$50,000
Early Childhood Education bursaries	\$1,231,954
Association of Early Childhood Educators of Newfoundland and Labrador	\$218,802
Newfoundland and Labrador Public Libraries	\$100,000
Creation of seats in ECE post-secondary programs	\$664,093
Promotion of the ECE workforce sector	\$1,054,602
Child Care Human Resources Sector Council	\$160,252
Integration of Brain Science into Practice	\$60,000
Newfoundland and Labrador Association of the Deaf	\$171,500
<b>Total other ELCC funding</b>	<b>\$11,852,288</b>

## Federal transfers to Newfoundland and Labrador

Federal transfer	Amount
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$9,251,394
Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care	\$61,957,430
Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$2,535,243

*Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to Newfoundland and Labrador for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements, as they are updated annually in line with population estimates. 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 (2025).*



# Prince Edward Island

Overview	64	<b>CHILD CARE FUNDING</b>	<b>85</b>
Provincial context	65	Eligibility for CWELCC funding	85
<b>KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA</b>	<b>68</b>	Child care services' eligibility for funding	85
Kindergarten for five-year-olds	68	Types of funding	85
Kindergarten for four-year-olds (prekindergarten)	68	Funding for regulated child care (fiscal year 2023 – 2024)	89
Curriculum framework	69		
Enrolment	69		
<b>CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>70</b>		
Administration	70		
Curriculum framework	71		
Children with disabilities	71		
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care	72		
Parent fees	73		
Workforce	74		
Standards and regulations	77		
Of interest	79		
<b>CHILD CARE DATA</b>	<b>80</b>		
Regulated child care space statistics	80		
Regulated child care enrolment statistics	83		



# Prince Edward Island

## ■ OVERVIEW

In Prince Edward Island, the Department of Education and Early Years is responsible for regulated child care centres, family child care, kindergarten, prekindergarten, and school-age child care.

Licensed child care includes designated Early Years Centres (EYCs), non-designated centres, part-day preschools, prekindergarten, family child care, and school-age centres. Most full-day centres are EYCs, which have additional requirements and considerations beyond the regulations.

Centre-based child care is delivered primarily by non-profit and for-profit operators. The bulk of full-day centre spaces are for-profit. Public entities operate a very small number of centres.

Family child care homes (termed Family Home Centres) are individually licensed. There is a small number of Family Home Centres.

Child care centres offer non-compulsory part-day prekindergarten for all four-year-olds as licensed child care. There are no parent fees. Full school-day kindergarten is part of the K – 12 education system; it is compulsory for all five-year-olds but may be delayed by one year.

The provincial government has set parent fees since 2010. In January 2024, fees were reduced to \$10/day for centres with EYC designation and for Family Home Centres serving children 0 – 6 years. The Child Care Subsidy Program, administered by the Department of Social Development and Housing, pays all or some of the child care fees of eligible families for children 0 – 12, including 12-year-olds.

In 2010, Prince Edward Island introduced a provincial wage grid. Designated EYCs are required to pay staff wages according to the wage grid.

Prince Edward Island signed the Canada-Prince Edward Island Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement in July 2021. It allocated nearly \$118 million over five years to the province.

In March 2025, Prince Edward Island accepted the federal offer to extend its bilateral agreement until 2031.

### Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)

	2021	2025	Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025
Non-profit and public	1,183	1,432	+249
For-profit	2,591	3,327	+736
<b>Total full-day spaces</b>	<b>3,774</b>	<b>4,759</b>	<b>+985</b>
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	69%	70%	+1.3%
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit	-	-	75%

## ■ PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded; however, the totals are based on exact figures. Therefore, totals may not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

### Number of children 0 – 12 years (2024 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	1,200
1	1,500
2	1,900
3	1,500
4	1,700
5	1,400
6	1,600
7	1,600
8	1,800
9	1,700
10	1,800
11	1,700
12	1,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,300</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	4,600
3 – 5	4,600
6 – 12	12,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,300</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0	800
1	1,100
2	1,400
3	1,200
4	1,400
5	1,000
6	1,200
7	1,200
8	1,300
9	1,300
10	1,500
11	1,200
12	1,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,900</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	3,300
3 – 5	3,600
6 – 12	9,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,900</b>

---

### 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	175	45	15	0	15
5 – 9	140	70	25	0	10
10 – 14	210	85	15	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>525</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>25</b>

### Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age of youngest child</i>	<i>Number of mothers</i>	<i>Participation rate (%)</i>
0 – 3	3,800	84.4
4 – 5	1,300	86.7
0 – 5	5,200	86.7
6 – 12	4,600	88.5

### Living arrangements by age of child (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Living with two parents</i>	<i>Living with one parent</i>			<i>Total</i>
		<i>Lone mother</i>	<i>Lone father</i>		
0 – 4	5,645	855	180		1,040
5 – 9	6,240	1,360	370		1,740
10 – 14	6,530	1,630	475		2,105

### Languages spoken most often at home (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Non-official</i>	<i>Multiple</i>
0 – 4	6,175	80	360	135
5 – 9	7,380	115	425	170
10 – 14	7,960	120	530	175
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,510</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>1,320</b>	<b>485</b>

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

<i>Two-parent families</i>	<i>Male lone parent</i>	<i>Female lone parent</i>
\$89,000	\$45,200	\$43,200

## KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA

### ■ KINDERGARTEN FOR FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

#### Provincial responsibility

Department of Education and Early Years  
Public Schools Branch (EN)  
*La Commission scolaire de langue française* (FR)  
Phone: 902-438-4130  
Email: [DeptEEY@gov.pe.ca](mailto:DeptEEY@gov.pe.ca)  
Website: [princeedwardisland.ca/en/topic/education-and-early-years](http://princeedwardisland.ca/en/topic/education-and-early-years)

#### Legislation

Prince Edward Island. Legislative Assembly.  
*Education Act*. – RSPEI1988, C-E.-02.

#### Provision

##### Kindergarten provision

<b>Definition</b>	Full school-day program for all five-year-olds.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Five years old by December 31.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Compulsory, but participation can be delayed by one year.
<b>Entitlement</b>	All eligible children have access.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Five hours (full school-day).
<b>Class size</b>	Maximum 18 children.

#### Teacher qualifications and certification

To be a qualified kindergarten teacher requires a valid [Prince Edward Island Teacher's Certificate](#) issued by the Certification and Standards Section of the Department of Education and Lifelong Learning. To qualify for a Teacher's Certificate, applicants require an approved Bachelor of

Education degree (120 credit hours) or an approved undergraduate degree with a minimum of 90 credit hours, plus an approved teacher education program with a minimum of 30 credit hours.

Kindergarten teachers are not required to have a primary/elementary concentration (K – 6), but it is considered an asset.

### ■ KINDERGARTEN FOR FOUR-YEAR-OLDS (PREKINDERGARTEN)

#### Provincial responsibility

Department of Education and Early Years  
Early Years Division  
Phone: 902-368-5655  
Email: [prekindergarten@gov.pe.ca](mailto:prekindergarten@gov.pe.ca)  
Website: [princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/education-and-early-years/the-universal-pre-kindergarten-program](http://princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/education-and-early-years/the-universal-pre-kindergarten-program)

#### Legislation

Prince Edward Island. Legislative Assembly. [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#). RSPEI 1988, c. E-0.1.  
Prince Edward Island. Legislative Assembly. [Early Learning and Child Care Act Regulations](#). PEI Reg. EC819/16.

## Provision

### Universal prekindergarten provision

**Definition** Part-day program that began in 2021 for all four-year-olds. Delivered as licensed child care in non-profit and for-profit Early Childhood Centres. There are no parent fees.

**Eligibility** Four years old by December 31.

**Compulsory schooling** Not compulsory.

**Entitlement** No entitlement.

**Instructional hours per day** Fifteen hours per week during the school year, but schedules vary.

**Class size** Staff:child ratio of 1:10.

*PEI Early Learning Framework: Relationships, Environments, Experiences* (2011) is a mandatory curriculum framework for provincially designated Early Years Centres and prekindergarten programs offered through licensed Early Childhood Centres in Prince Edward Island. It focuses on children from birth to school entry.

## ENROLMENT

### Kindergarten enrolment (2024 – 2025 school year)

#### Enrolment in public schools

Anglophone kindergarten for 5-year-olds	1,365
---	-------

Francophone kindergarten for 5-year-olds	89
--	----

#### Enrolment in private/independent schools

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	32
------------------------------	----

<b>Total kindergarten enrolment</b>	<b>1,486</b>
-------------------------------------	--------------

## Teacher qualifications and certification

Prekindergarten in Prince Edward Island is staffed by certified early childhood educators. See Prince Edward Island's "[Workforce](#)" section for more information.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

*Kindergarten Integrated Curriculum Document* (2008) is a mandatory curriculum framework for kindergarten in public schools in Prince Edward Island.

*Maternelle d'immersion française: Programme d'études* (2016) is a mandatory curriculum framework for French immersion kindergarten in public schools in Prince Edward Island.

The mandatory *Kindergarten Curriculum* includes the Prince Edward Island Physical Education Curriculum: Grades K – 6 (2011), Kindergarten Music: Curriculum Guide (2019), and Working Toward Communication and Information Technology Literacy: Kindergarten (2011).

# CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

## ■ ADMINISTRATION

### Provincial responsibility

Department of Education and Early Years  
Early Years Division

Phone: 902-438-4130

Email: [DeptEEY@gov.pe.ca](mailto:DeptEEY@gov.pe.ca)

Website: [princeedwardisland.ca/en/topic/early-years](http://princeedwardisland.ca/en/topic/early-years)

### Legislation

Prince Edward Island. Legislative Assembly. [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#). RSPEI 1988, c. E-0.1.  
Prince Edward Island. Legislative Assembly. [Early Learning and Child Care Act Regulations](#). PEI Reg. EC819/16.

### Service descriptions

#### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

There are no health, safety, or training requirements or provision for public oversight in unregulated child care. There may be attention by public officials [on a complaint basis](#).

An unregulated provider may care for a maximum of five children with no more than two infants, six children if all are preschool-age or a mixture of preschool and school-age, or seven school-age children. The provider's own children must be included in the total numbers. See the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#) for additional information.

#### REGULATED CHILD CARE

##### Child care centre

Child care centres (termed Early Childhood Centres) are licensed early learning and child care (ELCC) programs that provide services to infants, preschool-age children, and school-age children.

There are two types of Early Childhood Centres:

- Centres with Early Years Centre (EYC) designation that meet [specific criteria](#) and may be for-profit, not-for-profit, or public; and
- Non-designated centres that may be for-profit or not-for-profit.

Early Childhood Centres operate full-day for less than 24 hours per day. As of April 1, 2025, all but 11 centres had an EYC designation or a probationary EYC designation (in the process of designation).

##### Early Years Centre

Before September 2023, to be considered for an [EYC designation](#), a centre had to be an Early Childhood Centre and in good standing with the Early Learning and Child Care Board for a minimum of six months prior to designation. Effective April 1, 2024, a new open application process for EYC designation is now in place, with applications for designation reviewed on an ongoing basis. New centres can apply for a probationary EYC designation at any time. This is subject to budget availability. EYCs are provided with quarterly enrolment-based funding that supports staff wages and benefits, parent fee reductions, and operational costs.

EYCs are publicly managed. They are governed by additional provincial policies including being required to provide infant care, enrol children with disabilities, have parent advisory committees, charge provincially set parent fees, use the provincial wage grid, use the *PEI Early Learning Framework*, use the Early Learning and Child Care Registry, and hire only certified staff (except support staff). They are also required to participate in the Early Childhood Resource program, which



provides support on the curriculum framework. EYCs may be non-profit or for-profit.

### **Preschool**

Preschools are centre-based programs operating less than four consecutive hours per day for children who are at least three years of age but not yet attending school. In 2025, three preschool centres were operating in Prince Edward Island.

### **Universal prekindergarten**

Child care centres offer non-compulsory part-day prekindergarten for all four-year-olds as licensed child care. There are no parent fees. See Prince Edward Island's "[Kindergarten policy, programs, and data](#)" section for more information.

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

School-age child care centres are centre-based programs for school-age children (usually 5 – 12 years) before or after school, over the school lunch period, or during regular school hours when schools are closed, such as professional development days or summer break.

### **Family child care**

Family child care homes (termed Family Home Centres) are licensed child care located in a private residence. Family Home Centres are publicly managed. A family child care provider can care for a maximum of eight children from birth to school-age, including their own children, according to the staff:child ratio. A licensed home may have more than one caregiver to meet ratios.

## **CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK**

[PEI Early Learning Framework: Relationships, Environments, Experiences](#) (2011) is a mandatory curriculum framework for provincially designated EYCs and prekindergarten programs offered through licensed Early Childhood Centres in Prince Edward Island. It focuses on children

from birth to school entry. As of May 2025, the framework was being revised.

## **CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

### **Terminology and approach**

Prince Edward Island uses the term "special needs" to encompass children with disabilities. The provincial definition of "special needs" is being updated.

All types of regulated child care programs are eligible to receive inclusion funding.

The province provides inclusion funding to support the inclusion of an individual child with identified additional needs.

There are no specific qualifications or requirements for staff who work with children with disabilities.

### **Programs supporting inclusion in ELCC**

Prince Edward Island has two programs providing disability funding. The Special Needs Grant and Autism Funding both support the inclusion of children with disabilities in licensed early childhood settings, allowing for appropriate, individualized programming.

The [Special Needs Grant](#) provides funding for additional support staff to lower the staff:child ratio to allow for successful inclusion of children with "special needs" in early childhood settings. Centres may apply for a Special Needs Grant on behalf of a child to cover staff wages and mandatory employment-related costs. Approved funding is provided directly to the centre on a quarterly basis.

Since October 1, 2022, a wage enhancement grant funds special needs assistants (SNAs) working with children from birth to school-age. Funding is according to the special needs wage grid if the SNA holds early childhood educator (ECE) certification; it covers a maximum of eight hours per day to



a maximum of 40 hours per week. Funding for uncertified staff and those working in a school-age program is at minimum wage, plus 12.59% in mandatory benefits.

Prince Edward Island provides [Autism Funding](#) to support children with autism spectrum disorders in licensed child care in two categories: preschool and school-age. Preschool Autism Funding is available to help families and licensed Early Childhood Centres hire an autism assistant for eligible children receiving Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI). It may be provided to help offset autism assistant wages and benefits for a maximum of 25 hours per week. Funding is also used for assigned training for IBI-specific staff.

Since October 1, 2022, a wage enhancement grant funds autism assistants according to the autism assistant wage grid if they hold ECE certification; it covers a maximum of 25 hours per week. Funding for uncertified staff is at minimum wage, plus 12.59% in mandatory benefits.

School-age Autism Funding is available to help families and designated community-based organizations offset the costs of hiring one-on-one tutors and aides in home and group settings, including Early Childhood Centres, for school-age children with diagnosed autism spectrum disorder. The child must require the support of an adult to access community-based activities and/or tutoring outside of school hours. School-age autism funding may cover up to \$6,600 in tutor/aide services per year.

In Prince Edward Island, there is no child care service solely or primarily for children with disabilities.

### Access to inclusive ELCC

EYCs are required to accept children with disabilities.

A diagnosis is required for Autism Funding but not for the Special Needs Grant. The Special Needs Grant supports children under the age of 12 years who require additional support in order to be included safely and meaningfully within the ELCC environment and to meet developmental goals. Parents are not required to be income tested for eligibility for additional inclusion services.

Newly constructed or renovated facilities are not required to be fully accessible and barrier-free.

In Prince Edward Island, there is no delay for receiving inclusion funding for centres that hired a special needs assistant, but finding and approving a staff person for the centre may lead to delays.

## FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE

In Prince Edward Island, 2.2% of the total population identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in the most recent census (2021). There are four First Nations reserves in Prince Edward Island. Approximately 40% of First Nations people in the province live on reserve.

### First Nations child care on reserves

Prince Edward Island licenses child care on First Nations reserves. Licensed child care centres on reserve are eligible to receive the same funding as other provincially licensed centres, including operating grants, inclusion funding, and parent fee subsidies.

In 2025, two licensed child care centres (both designated EYCs) were operating in First Nations communities on reserve, providing a total of 92 full-day spaces. Prince Edward Island reported that Indigenous governing bodies operate both centres. The Abegweit First Nation operates a centre on the Scotchford reserve, and the Lennox Island First Nation operates a centre on the Lennox Island reserve.

There are no licensed family child care homes on reserve in Prince Edward Island.

Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (AHSOR) programs are licensed by invitation of the community or program. In 2025, two licensed AHSOR programs operated in Prince Edward Island, each located in an on-reserve EYC.

### **Indigenous child care other than on reserve**

One licensed Indigenous-focused child care centre not on reserve was operating in 2025. It is a designated EYC operating 12 full-day spaces. This centre includes an Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) part-day component.

AHSUNC programs are not licensed in Prince Edward Island.

### **Indigenous-specific resources/initiatives**

The Native Council of Prince Edward Island is represented on the Early Years Committee, a committee established by the Minister of Education and Early Years that provides expert knowledge, guidance, and direction to the implementation of the province's ELCC system.

The Mi'kmaq Family Resource Centre supports off-reserve families in Prince Edward Island to "foster the strength, pride, and respect of Aboriginal children and families." Programs include special playgroups and outings, children's programming, Aboriginal Head Start, EYCs, and parent support.

## **PARENT FEES**

The provincial government has set parent fees since 2010. The fees have been reduced and modified several times.

In January 2022, parent fees in all licensed Early Childhood Centres were set at \$25/day.

In January 2024, fees were further reduced to \$10/day for centres with EYC designation and Family Home Centres serving children 0 – 6 years.

### **Provincially set full-day parent fees in designated EYCs and family child care homes (2025)**

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Daily fee (2025)</i>
Infant, toddler, and preschool-age	\$10

On March 31, 2024, 92% of all Early Childhood Centres were designated EYCs.

There are no parent fees for publicly funded prekindergarten for the core program of 15 hours per week during the school year. Parent fees apply for additional ELCC services beyond the 15 hours.

Individual operators set parent fees for non-EYCs and before- and after-school care. Average fees for these programs are not available.

### **Additional fees**

Operators are permitted to charge waitlist fees and optional fees for transportation, extended hours beyond the 10-hour day, and field trips. EYC operators are not permitted to charge additional fees for food; meals must be provided as part of the program.

### **Parent fee subsidies**

The [Child Care Subsidy Program](#), administered by the Department of Social Development and Housing, pays all or some of the child care fees of eligible families for children 0 – 12, including 12 year olds. Payment is made directly to child care service providers on behalf of subsidized parents.

All eligible families are entitled to a fee subsidy. There is no waitlist.

Child care fee subsidies can be used in all licensed child care facilities, including EYCs, school-age centres, and family child care homes.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Eligibility for the Child Care Subsidy Program is based on one or more of the following:

- Employment;
- Education/training;
- Medical needs of parents; and
- Diagnosed “special needs” of child(ren).

## FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

Income eligibility for the Child Care Subsidy Program is based on family annual net income, minus eligible deductions. In addition, if families have combined assets that exceed \$100,000 – excluding their personal residence and vehicle, registered Education Savings Plan, Registered Disability Savings Plan, or life insurance with a cash surrender value of less than \$5,000 – they are expected to liquidate assets to meet the cost of child care.

The [Child Care Subsidy Calculator](#) helps families determine their financial eligibility for a fee subsidy and estimate their expected family/parental contribution toward child care costs.

### Financial eligibility for fee subsidy (2024)

Household size	Maximum annual net income at which partial subsidy ends	Annual net income at which partial subsidy ends
One parent with one child	\$30,000	\$41,800
Two parents with two children	\$38,500	\$59,100

## SUBSIDY RATES

The subsidy rate is the maximum amount the provincial government pays to a child care service on behalf of a fully subsidized parent to cover all or part of the parent fee.

Fully subsidized parents in EYCs cannot be charged child care fees. Partially subsidized parents cannot be charged more than their assessed fee.

In non-EYCs, fees are not capped; parent fees may be higher than the subsidy for which the family is eligible. In this case, families – including parents receiving Social Assistance or Assured Income who are eligible for a full subsidy – are responsible for paying the remainder of the fee.

### Maximum subsidy rates for non-EYCs (2024)

Age group	Daily maximum subsidy
Birth to school entry	\$34
Full-day school-age	\$30
Part-day school-age	\$15

## WORKFORCE

### Child care staff wages

#### PROVINCIAL WAGE DATA

Current average wage data are not available.

#### PROVINCIAL WAGE GRID

In 2010, Prince Edward Island introduced a provincial wage grid. Designated Early Years Centres (EYCs) are required to pay staff wages according to the wage grid.

From 2021 to 2025, wages for early childhood educators (ECEs) increased five times:

In [October 2021](#), hourly wages increased an additional \$1 for ECE level 1, \$2 for ECE level 2,

and \$4 for ECE level 3. Incremental wage increases were added for directors based on years of experience after meeting requirements of director certification. Wages of special needs assistants and autism assistants were aligned to the provincial wage grid.

On [October 1, 2022](#), hourly wages increased by \$0.75 for ECE level 1 and cooks, \$1.50 for ECE level 2, and \$3 for ECE level 3 and directors. Additionally, hourly wages for autism assistants,

special needs assistants, and pedagogical support staff were aligned to the provincial wage grid.

On [October 1, 2023](#), hourly wages increased by \$0.50 for ECE level 1 and cooks, \$1 for ECE level 2, and \$1.75 for ECE level 3 and directors. This was the third wage increase for ECEs in Prince Edward Island since signing the CWELCC agreement in 2021.

The wage grid was updated on April 1, 2024, and again on October 1, 2025.

### Hourly wage grid (effective October 1, 2025)

<b>Position</b>	<b>Education completed</b>	<b>Years of experience after certification</b>				
		<b>1 year or less</b>	<b>2 years</b>	<b>3 years</b>	<b>4 years</b>	<b>5 years or more</b>
Director	Post-diploma/degree	\$35.45	\$36.19	\$36.95	\$37.50	\$38.50
Early childhood educator (formerly ECE level 3)	2-year diploma	\$29.15	\$29.62	\$30.10	\$30.59	\$31.12
Early childhood associate (formerly ECE level 2)	1 year certificate	\$21.77	\$22.19	\$22.63	\$23.08	\$23.51
Early childhood intern (formerly ECE level 1)	Three 30-hour early childhood courses	\$19.00	-	-	-	-
Cook	<i>Not applicable</i>	\$17.93	-	-	-	-
Uncertified staff	<i>Not applicable</i>	Minimum wage	-	-	-	-
Support staff	<i>Not applicable</i>	Minimum wage	-	-	-	-

*Note: Staff must have completed the education level required and become certified by the Early Learning and Child Care Board to start the associated pay band.*

*Note: Funding for the director position will remain at the start level of the pay band until the director obtains the required educational credentials assessed by the Manager of Licensing and Compliance.*

### Staff benefits

Prince Edward Island announced the development of a [defined contribution pension plan](#) in 2023. The Early Childhood Development Association (ECDA) of Prince Edward Island worked in collaboration with the provincial government to develop a defined contribution pension plan

for EYC employees. The ECDA was tasked with implementation and management of the program.

To be eligible to participate in the defined contribution pension plan program, staff are required to have three months of employment in an EYC and must be employed for a minimum of 20 hours per week. The contribution at both the employee and EYC level is based on 4% of gross

pay. The employer portion of this is paid by the government.

### Other workforce measures

In fall 2021, a one-time retention grant was provided to recognize years of service. From 2021 to 2023, the grant was offered in two installments.

The province has also funded pedagogical support positions to support educators on various tasks, such as paid preparatory time.

### Early childhood certification

Prince Edward Island has a provincial system of certification for ECEs. Certification is required to work in licensed child care.

An Early Learning and Child Care Board with nine appointed members is responsible for certification of child care staff.

### ECE CERTIFICATION LEVELS

Certification levels were updated on December 30, 2023. There are five certification categories, based on the staff's role. A person may only hold one level of certification at a time.

#### ECE certification requirements

Position	Requirements
Family Home Child Care provider	30-hour course related to the care and education of infants and preschool-age children, approved by the Board.
School-age child care provider	30-hour course related to the care and education of school-age children, approved by the Board.
Early childhood intern (formerly ECE level 1)	Three 30-hour courses, approved by the Board, one in each of the following subject areas: child growth and development, child guidance, and early childhood pedagogy.
Early childhood associate (formerly ECE level 2)	A one-year certificate program in early childhood care and education, approved by the Board; or A diploma or degree program related to human studies, approved by the Board.
Early childhood educator (formerly ECE level 3)	A two-year diploma or degree program in early childhood care and education, approved by the Board; A degree program related to human studies that incorporates a two-year diploma program in early childhood care and education, approved by the Board; or A degree program related to human studies and a one-year certificate program in early childhood care and education, approved by the Board.

A criminal record check and vulnerable sector search are required to renew all types of certification. Individuals (except family child care providers or school-age child care providers) must complete 45 hours of continuing education every three-year period.

Prior to December 2023, an applicant for early childhood supervisor or director certification also required a letter from a supervisor/employer verifying the applicant's work experience, including position, hours per week, and dates of employment. The early childhood supervisor



and director certification levels, and thus this requirement, were discontinued when the Early Learning and Child Care Act Regulations were amended in December 2023.

## ■ STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Child care centres and family child care homes must adhere to standards and regulations regarding staffing requirements, grouping of children, and licensing. Some additional key elements of child care standards and regulations, such as physical environments and food provision,

are covered in the comparative tables in this publication, while others may be found in the [\*Early Learning and Child Care Act\*](#) and the [\*Early Learning and Child Care Act Regulations\*](#).

### Regulated child care centres

Child care centres are licensed under the [\*Early Learning and Child Care Act\*](#) and the [\*Early Learning and Child Care Act Regulations\*](#). Both the Act and the regulations were last amended in 2023.

### STAFF:CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZE

The maximum centre size in Prince Edward Island is 125 spaces.

---

#### Staff:child ratio and maximum group size

Age group	Staff:child ratio (indoor)	Staff:child ratio (outdoor)	Maximum group size
<22 months	1:3	1:3	12
22 months – 3 years	1:5	1:7	None
3 years – school entry	1:10	1:15	None
School-age (first day of school to the end of elementary)	1:15	1:22	None

*Note: The maximum group size for infants may exceed 12 for up to 25% of the time they are receiving care if the infants are under 18 months old, or 75% of the time if they are 18 – 22 months old. This only applies if the group also includes preschool- or school-age children.*

---

### STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRES

#### Qualification requirements for staffing a centre

In Prince Edward Island, staff qualification requirements are specified at the centre level.

An Early Childhood Centre or preschool centre must have at least one staff member who is certified at the ECE level. If additional staff are required to meet staff:child ratios, at least one staff member must also be certified at the early childhood associate or ECE level.

Designated Early Years Centres (EYCs) must meet all the requirements of an Early Childhood Centre. In addition, all staff except support staff must have

at least early childhood intern level certification. All certified staff must become members of the Early Childhood Development Association of Prince Edward Island.

A school-age centre must have at least one staff member who is certified at any level other than Family Home Child Care provider. If additional staff are required to comply with the staff:child ratio, at least one additional staff member must be certified at any level other than Family Home Child Care provider.



## Qualification requirements for on-site centre directors/supervisors

A designated early childhood supervisor or early childhood director must be responsible for the day-to-day operations at a preschool centre or Early Childhood Centre.

### Other requirements

Centre staff must be at least 18 years of age. Staff members must provide a criminal record check and a vulnerable sector record check (dated no more than six months prior) within eight weeks of commencing employment and at least every three years afterward. All staff must have an approved emergency first aid and infant and child CPR certification, or they must enrol in a course within two weeks of commencing employment and obtain certification within eight weeks.

At least one staff member who has emergency first aid and infant and child CPR certification must be present at all times during the operation of the centre.

## LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES

The Early Learning and Child Care Board is responsible for licensing and licence renewal of child care programs. The Board is also responsible for monitoring and investigating complaints.

A licence is issued for a term of three years. Centres are inspected upon licensing and subsequently within a 12-month period, or more frequently if there has been a complaint or an unsatisfactory inspection. Facilities are also inspected if there is a modification to the licence or a licence transfer.

### Regulated family child care

Family child care homes (termed Family Home Centres) are licensed under the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#) and [Early Learning and Child](#)

[Care Act Regulations](#). Family child care must be provided in the provider's personal residence.

## MODEL OF ORGANIZATION

Family child care in Prince Edward Island is individually licensed.

## MAXIMUM CAPACITY

A family child care provider can care for a maximum of eight children from birth to school-age, including their own children, according to the staff:child ratio.

### Staff:child ratio

Age group	Staff:child ratio (indoor)	Staff:child ratio (outdoor)
<22 months	1:3	1:3
22 months – 3 years	1:5	1:7
3 years – school entry	1:10	1:15
School-age (first day of school to the end of elementary)	1:15	1:22

A licensed home may have more than one caregiver to meet ratios. Thus, a licensed family child care home could have three infants and five toddlers if two caregivers are in the home. However, even with two caregivers in the home, the maximum number of children allowed is still eight.

## FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

A family child care home must be staffed with at least one certified family child care provider with early childhood intern designation or higher. School-age child care certification is not applicable in family child care.

There is no ongoing training requirement if the provider holds Family Home Centre provider



certification. However, if the provider is a certified ECE, 45 hours of continuing education during every three-year period is required to maintain certification.

The provider and any additional staff must be at least 18 years of age, provide a criminal record check and a vulnerable sector search within eight weeks of operating/employment, and hold first aid certification.

A criminal background check and vulnerable sector search are also required for any adult who lives in the home and any other person associated with the home.

### **LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES**

Licensed family child care homes follow the same inspection, monitoring, and enforcement procedures as licensed centres. Family Home Centre licenses are issued for a term of three years. See the [Family Home Centre Licence Application](#) for more information.

## **■ OF INTEREST**

### **Municipal role**

Municipalities do not have a mandated role in governance, funding, or program delivery. However, two municipalities in Prince Edward Island operate child care programs: the Rural Municipality of Kinkora and the Town of Cornwall.

### ***L'Association des centres de la petite enfance francophone de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard***

*L'Association des centres de la petite enfance francophone de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard* operates five Francophone Early Childhood Centres in Prince Edward Island. The five centres are located in Francophone schools in Évangéline, Summerside, Rustico, Charlottetown, and Souris.

### **Family Resource Centres**

Family Resource Centres are operated by non-profit grassroots community organizations and funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada under the Community Action Program for Children and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program. These centres provide community-based support, strengthening partnerships to enhance services for families with children from prenatal stages to early childhood. They offer a variety of programs, including family support groups, drop-in care, toy-lending libraries, and community kitchens.

## CHILD CARE DATA

### ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

#### Number of spaces (2024, 2025)

Full-day centre spaces	2024	2025
<i>Designated Early Years Centres</i>		
Infant (0 – <22 months)	558	717
Toddler (22 months – <3 years) and preschool-age (3 – 5 years)	3,267	3,615
<i>Non-designated centres</i>		
Infant (0 – <22 months)	15	24
Toddler (22 months – <3 years) and preschool-age (3 – 5 years)	226	250
<b>Total full-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>4,066</b>	<b>4,606</b>
Part-day centre spaces	2024	2025
Toddler (22 months – <3 years) and preschool-age (3 – 5 years)	192	50
<i>Note: For ECEC in Canada 2023, Prince Edward Island reported 152 part-day centre spaces. However, each half-day space was counted as 0.5 spaces. The actual number of part-day spaces was 304 in 2023 and 192 in 2024.</i>		
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>4,258</b>	<b>4,656</b>
Before- and after-school care centre spaces (licensed or regulated)	2024	2025
Kindergarten and Grades 1 – 6	2,640	2,592
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>6,898</b>	<b>7,248</b>
Family child care licensed capacity	2024	2025
<i>Total family child care spaces</i>	<i>134</i>	<i>159</i>
<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)</b>	<b>7,032</b>	<b>7,407</b>

## Number of child care centres and family child care homes (2024)

---

### Centre-based child care

<b>Total number of centres</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>Total number of licences</b>	<b>152</b>

---

### Centre-based programs

Designated Early Years Centres (full-day)	76
Non-designated centres providing a full-day program	7
Centres providing a part-day (nursery or preschool) program	7
Centres providing a prekindergarten program (4 years)	87
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 5 – 12 years)	72

*Note: This figure reflects all licensed centres providing a before- and after-school care program. For ECEC in Canada 2023, Prince Edward Island reported only licensed school-age centres (60). As such, the 2024 and 2023 data are not comparable.*

Centres providing infant care (<22 months)	79
Centres providing toddler care (22 months – <3 years)	83
Centres providing preschool-age care (3 – 5 years)	83
Centres providing a Francophone child care program	6
Centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – Grade 12)	28

*Note: This figure includes all licensed centres located in public schools, including school-age and Early Years Centres. For ECEC in Canada 2023, Prince Edward Island reported only on school-age centres (18). In total, 25 licensed centres were located in public schools in 2023.*

---

### Regulated family child care

Regulated family child care homes (Family Home Centres) (active)	17
--	----

---

### Participation in CWELCC

<b>Total number of designated Early Years Centres (full-day) receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>Total number of licensed family child care homes receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>17</b>

---

## Auspice (2024)

---

### Centres by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit	90
Non-profit	56
Public	5

*Note: Of the 90 for-profit centres, 48 are designated Early Years Centres (EYCs). EYCs are part of Prince Edward Island's publicly managed system.*

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>Part-day</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	2,730	112	1,589	4,431
Non-profit	1,239	80	916	2,235
Public	97	0	135	232

*Note: For-profit spaces include those in designated EYCs and non-designated centres. For-profit spaces in designated EYCs include 2,610 full-day spaces and 93 BASC spaces. For-profit spaces in non-designated centres include 120 full-day spaces, 112 part-day spaces, and 1,496 BASC spaces.*

<sup>1</sup> Preschool centres.

<sup>2</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

---

## Auspice (2025)

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>Part-day</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	3,327	30	1,461	4,818
Non-profit	1,326	20	883	2,229
Public	106	0	95	201

*Note: For-profit spaces include those in designated EYCs and non-designated centres. For-profit spaces in designated EYCs include 3,148 full-day spaces. For-profit spaces in non-designated centres include 179 full-day spaces, 30 part-day spaces, and 1,461 BASC spaces.*

<sup>1</sup> Preschool centres.

<sup>2</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

---

## Publicly operated child care (2024)

### Publicly operated child care

Entity type	Licence holders	Centres	Full-day spaces	BASC spaces <sup>1</sup>	Total spaces
Municipality	2	3	45	95	140
Indigenous governing body	2	2	82	10	92
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>232</b>

Note: The Town of Cornwall operates one EYC and the Rural Municipality of Kinkora operates one EYC and one school-age centre. Abegweit First Nation and Lennox Island First Nation each operate one centre.

Note: The total numbers of public full-day spaces and public before-and after-school care spaces reported by Prince Edward Island vary slightly from the equivalent totals reported for "Centre spaces by auspice" above.

<sup>1</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

## Fee subsidies (2024)

### Number of children receiving fee subsidies

Full or partial subsidy	798
-------------------------	-----

## Disability support (2024)

### Number of children receiving disability support

Children in licensed child care receiving special needs/disability support funding	290
--	-----

## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

### Number of children enrolled (2024)

#### Full-day centre enrolment

##### *Designated Early Years Centres*

Infant (0 – 22 months)	515
Toddler (22 months– <3 years)	963
Preschool-age (3 – 5)	2,095
<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>3,573</b>

Note: Prince Edward Island only tracks enrolment in designated Early Years Centres. Information on enrolment in non-designated centres and before- and after-school programs is not available.

---

**Family child care enrolment**

---

*Total family child care enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)* *Not available*

---

**TOTAL REGULATED ENROLMENT (centre and family child care enrolment)** *Not available*

---

## CHILD CARE FUNDING

The types of funding available for child care services in Prince Edward Island include operational funding, one-time funding, fee subsidies, and other ELCC funding programs.

### ■ ELIGIBILITY FOR CWELCC FUNDING

The CWELCC plan provides federal funds to provinces and territories for early learning and child care operational and one-time funding and fee subsidies for licensed child care for children aged 0 – 5. Funded new child care expansion is to be public and non-profit unless otherwise specified in the jurisdiction's agreement. Provinces and territories contribute their own funds and design their own policies and provision within this framework.

Designated Early Years Centres and Family Home Centres are part of Prince Edward Island's publicly managed system.

In Prince Edward Island, the following are eligible for operational funding under CWELCC:

- Designated Early Years Centres; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres are eligible for operational funding.

In Prince Edward Island, the following are eligible for capital funding under CWELCC:

- Designated Early Years Centres; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres are eligible for capital funding.

### ■ CHILD CARE SERVICES' ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

All licensed child care centres and homes are eligible for the Child Care Subsidy Program, Special Needs Grant, Autism Funding, and capital funding.

Early Years Centres receive operational funding. As of 2022, all licensed full-day centres and licensed family child care homes are also eligible for operational funding.

As of January 1, 2023, family child care homes became eligible for Family Home Centre Operating Grants.

### ■ TYPES OF FUNDING

#### **Operational funding**

##### ■ EARLY YEARS CENTRE FUNDING

Early Years Centres (EYCs) receive cost-based operational (base) funding on a quarterly basis. The funding is based on a formula that includes staff wages according to the province-wide mandatory wage scale, benefits, and operating costs, minus 90% of the provincially set parent fees (including the child care subsidy where it replaces the parent fee). EYCs must use the provincially set fees and the province-wide salary grid, as well as meet other requirements.

##### ■ QUALITY ENHANCEMENT GRANT

The Quality Enhancement Grant (QEG) is being phased out. Family Home Centres began receiving operating funding in January 2023, so they are no longer eligible for the QEG. School-age centres began receiving a stabilization grant in 2024 and no longer receive the QEG. All licensed,



non-designated Early Childhood Centres and preschool centres continue to be funded by the QEG to enhance the quality of their programs.

### **SPECIAL NEEDS GRANT**

The Special Needs Grant provides funding for additional support staff to lower staff:child ratios to allow for successful inclusion of children with “special needs” in early childhood settings. See Prince Edward Island’s “[Children with disabilities](#)” section for more information.

### **AUTISM FUNDING**

Prince Edward Island provides Autism Funding to support children with autism spectrum disorders in licensed child care in two categories: preschool and school-age. See Prince Edward Island’s “[Children with disabilities](#)” section for more information.

### **ALTERNATE HOURS DEMONSTRATION SITE GRANT**

The Alternate Hours Demonstration Site Grant helps licensed Early Childhood Centres to extend their hours of operation for children whose parents work non-standard hours and/or seasonally. The program has been under review since 2022 – 2023 and is not open to new applicants. Licensed Early Childhood Centres (including EYCs, preschool centres, and Family Home Centres) were eligible for this program. In September 2018, eligible providers were able to apply for the grant to extend their licensed hours of operation to any time between 5:00 am to 9:00 pm, Sunday to Saturday weekly. Eight EYCs that were part of the original pilot phase continue to offer alternate hours care.

### **FAMILY HOME CENTRE OPERATIONAL GRANT**

Through the [Family Home Centre Operational Grant](#), applicants may receive an annual operational grant of \$19,000, with full eligibility for

operators at a 0.5 ratio or above; those below this threshold will receive 50%. Additionally, an annual enrolment grant is available for each child: \$14,100 for infants, \$7,400 for toddlers, and \$3,700 for preschool-age children. Grants are paid quarterly based on average enrolment and are prorated for part-time or non-year-round services.

### **BRIDGE FUNDING**

Bridge Funding was being phased out in 2024 – 2025. Licensed centres that wanted to receive EYC designation could receive funding for financial, resource, and coaching support in preparation to meet the designation criteria.

### **NON-EARLY YEARS CENTRES OPERATIONAL FUNDING**

In January 2022, centres that were not EYCs began to receive operating funding to reduce parent fees.

### **One-time funding**

#### **EYC CAPITAL EXPANSION GRANT**

Applications for the EYC Capital Expansion Grant closed on January 17, 2025. The funding was to establish additional licensed early learning and child care (ELCC) spaces, especially for infants and toddlers, in both new and existing facilities. This grant provided up to \$200,000 for new construction, renovations, and equipment purchases.

#### **NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION CHILD CARE START-UP GRANT**

Applications for the [Non-profit Organization Child Care Start-up Grant](#) closed on October 31, 2025. The grant provided one-time funding to non-profit organizations for up to \$200,000 in eligible construction and renovation costs. Grant recipients must operate new Early Childhood Centres for at least five years and prioritize infant and toddler



spaces. Eligible applicants are expected to become designated within 18 months after opening.

### **EARLY YEARS CENTRE EXPANSION LOW-INTEREST LOAN PILOT PROGRAM**

The Early Years Centre Expansion Low-interest Loan Pilot Program provided financing for new construction or the expansion of EYCs to [create more licensed child care spaces](#). Applications closed on January 17, 2025. Eligibility required a commitment to operating as an EYC and the completion of the PEI Early Years Centre Location Suitability Tool, which evaluates program delivery priorities. The loans bore a 3% initial interest rate for five years and were amortized over a 20-year period. Approved projects were able to receive a non-repayable capital grant from the Department of Education and Early Years, up to 20% of total project costs, with a maximum of \$200,000 per project.

### **FAMILY HOME CENTRE CAPITAL GRANT**

Introduced in 2022, the [Family Home Centre Capital Grant](#) is available to licensed Family Home Centres for capital improvements of up to \$15,000 toward the modification of the recipient's existing physical space to meet licensing requirements. Eligible expenses could include renovations, such as a below-grade access door, appliances, walls, doors, plumbing, electrical, and outdoor fencing. The grant also provides an Infant Programming Incentive that funds up to \$5,000 toward items such as cribs, change tables, rocking chairs, toys, books, and strollers. It also funds Family Home Centre Program Improvements of up to \$5,000 for items such as play equipment and preschool-age toys.

### **FAMILY HOME CENTRE LICENSING INCENTIVE**

The Family Home Centre Licensing Incentive is for Family Home Centres seeking to become licensed.

Recipients receive a one-time \$3,000 licensing incentive grant.

### **RETURN TO PROFESSION GRANT**

The Return to Profession Grant was introduced in March 2022, and applications closed on March 15, 2024. It was a one-time grant to support the return of qualified educators to providing centre care for children from birth to school-age. To be eligible, educators must have worked outside the licensed ELCC system for 24 consecutive months prior to returning. They also needed to be certified at ECE Level 3 and provide a letter from their employer verifying their start date and a minimum two-year contract.

### **ONE-TIME RETENTION GRANT**

The One-time Retention Grant was available from 2021 to March 2023 to those working in the licensed ELCC system for 12 consecutive months or more. It was paid in two installments, and payments were based on full- or part-time hours of employment. Increments were based on years of experience in the Prince Edward Island licensed ELCC system.

### **EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE BUSINESS PLAN GRANT**

The Early Learning and Child Care Business Plan Grant offers financial support for individuals or EYC operators looking to develop a professional business plan to expand or open new child care facilities. This one-time grant provides up to \$4,000, covering 80% of costs for a certified business advisor. Priority is given to those increasing infant and toddler spaces in high-need areas.

### **SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CENTRE ONE-TIME STABILIZATION GRANT**

This one-time funding was offered in fall 2024. See [School-age Funding](#) for more information.



## Fee subsidies

### CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

The Child Care Subsidy Program pays all or some of the child care fees of eligible families for children 0 – 12, including 12-year-olds. See Prince Edward Island’s “[Parent fees](#)” section for more information.

### Other ELCC funding

#### EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

The Prince Edward Island government provides funding to the Early Childhood Development Association to support the following activities:

- Undertaking recruitment and retention initiatives;
- Providing professional development training programs and the Onboarding Toolkit to enhance provisions of quality support to new educators; and
- Maintaining the Early Learning and Child Care Registry.

#### EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TRAINING GRANT

The [Early Childhood Education Training Grant](#) covers 100% of the cost for an eligible course at post-secondary institutions approved by the Early Learning and Child Care Board. Applicants may receive a maximum of \$2,500 per year for approved courses, subject to the availability of funds.

Permanent, casual, part-time, and temporary employees of designated EYCs, non-designated centres, and preschool centres are eligible to receive funding under this program. Family Home Centre providers are also eligible.

### STEPS TO SUCCESS PROGRAM

Developed by the Early Childhood Development Association (ECDA) and funded by the Department of Workforce, Advanced Learning, and Population through Canada-Prince Edward Island labour market agreements, Steps to Success aims to support staffing ratios in licensed child care centres by providing backfill when ECEs attend accelerated programs at *Collège de l'Île* or Holland College. Participants identify as unemployed or underemployed prior to their participation in the program and they are often individuals who haven’t previously considered work in the ECE sector.

To be eligible for the program, participants must submit a complete application, pass a criminal record and vulnerable sector check, and participate in a selection process. Approved participants undergo first aid training and workshops on relevant topics before starting their roles. Participants receive a biweekly stipend administered by the ECDA and are considered full-time employees of the child care centres from September to the following July, allowing them to gain experience while completing the three introductory courses required for early childhood intern certification. The program has a very high success rate with 88% of participants staying in the ECE sector following their completion of the program. 80 individuals have been recruited following their placements.

## **FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024)**

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

### **Operational funding**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Early Years Centres	\$44,744,700
Quality Enhancement Grant	\$250,000
Special Needs Grant	\$3,162,000
Autism Funding	\$2,348,400
Alternate Hours Demonstration Site Grant	\$600,000
Family Home Centre Operational Grant	\$615,500
Bridge Funding	\$150,000
Non-Early Years Centres operational grant funding	\$50,000
<b>Total operational funding</b>	<b>\$51,920,600</b>

*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, disability funding, and other grants/funding paid on a recurring basis.*

### **One-time funding – capital (major and minor)**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Capital Grant Program	\$375,000
Family Home Centre Capital Grant	\$225,000
Physical Environment and Program Improvement Grant	\$40,000

### **One-time funding – other**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Family Home Centre Licensing Incentive	\$27,000
Return to Profession Grant	\$7,093
<b>Total one-time funding</b>	<b>\$674,093</b>

*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.*

### **Fee subsidies**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Parent fee reduction	\$8,870,000
Child Care Subsidy Program	\$3,846,000
<b>Total fee subsidies</b>	<b>\$12,716,000</b>

*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 directly to service providers.*

<b>TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, and fee subsidies)</b>	<b>\$65,310,693</b>
---	---------------------

### **Other ELCC funding**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Early Childhood Development Association	\$300,000
Early Childhood Education Training Grant	\$396,000
Accelerated program funding at Holland College	\$610,528
Post-Secondary Program Grants	\$411,300
Steps to Success Program	\$40,000
Francization Funding	\$60,000
Newcomer training and support	\$26,000
Handle With Care Program	\$180,000
Defined Contribution Pension Plan Matching Program	\$1,200,000
<b>Total other ELCC funding</b>	<b>\$3,223,828</b>

---

## Federal transfers to Prince Edward Island

---

<i>Federal transfer</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$4,339,744
Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care	\$24,022,318
Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$2,196,384

---

*Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to Prince Edward Island for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements, as they are updated annually in line with population estimates. 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 (2025).

---



# Nova Scotia

Overview	92	<b>CHILD CARE FUNDING</b>	<b>113</b>
Provincial context	93	Eligibility for CWELCC funding	113
<b>KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA</b>	<b>96</b>	Child care services' eligibility for funding	113
Kindergarten for five-year-olds (Grade Primary)	96	Types of funding	113
Kindergarten for four-year-olds (Pre-primary)	96	Funding for regulated child care (fiscal year 2023 – 2024)	117
Curriculum framework	97		
Enrolment	97		
Other early childhood programs	97		
<b>CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>98</b>		
Administration	98		
Curriculum framework	98		
Children with disabilities	99		
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care	99		
Parent fees	100		
Workforce	102		
Standards and regulations	105		
Of interest	107		
<b>CHILD CARE DATA</b>	<b>108</b>		
Regulated child care space statistics	108		
Regulated child care enrolment statistics	111		



# Nova Scotia

## ■ OVERVIEW

In Nova Scotia, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is responsible for regulated child care, kindergarten, and the Nova Scotia Before and After Program.

Licensed child care includes child care centres, school-age child care, and family child care. Nova Scotia Before and After Programs are not licensed but have specified requirements, so they are considered to be “approved.”

Centre-based child care is delivered by non-profit and for-profit operators, with non-profit programs providing a modest majority of full-day spaces. There are no publicly operated child care programs in Nova Scotia.

Family child care is delivered through an agency model that includes both non-profit and for-profit agencies.

Nova Scotia provides full school-day kindergarten for all five-year-olds (termed Grade Primary) and all four-year-olds (termed Pre-primary). Kindergarten is voluntary for four-year-olds and compulsory for five-year-olds, but it may be delayed by one year.

Nova Scotia parent fees are not set by the provincial government. In 2021 – 2022, licensed child care operators signed provincial funding agreements committing to reducing parent fees by set amounts. Parent fees have been reduced by set amounts by age group several times since 2022. Average fees range by age group from \$16.75/day to \$19/day for full-day centres. The Child Care Subsidy Program pays for all or part of child care fees for eligible families.

Nova Scotia’s first early childhood educator wage scale came into effect in November 2022. It was revised and increased in April 2024. A new wage scale came into effect in April 2025.

Nova Scotia signed the Canada-Nova Scotia Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement in July 2021. It allocated nearly \$605 million over five years to the province.

In March 2025, Nova Scotia accepted the federal offer to extend its bilateral agreement until 2031.

### Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)

	2021	2025	Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025
Non-profit	4,711	7,948	+3,237
For-profit	6,373	6,351	-22
<b>Total full-day spaces</b>	<b>11,084</b>	<b>14,299</b>	<b>+3,215</b>
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	57%	44%	-13%
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit	-	-	-0.7%
<i>Note: In 2025, total licensed capacity is not separated by age group. Nova Scotia calculated the total for children 0 – 5 years using a combination of total licensed capacity (for children 0 – 12 years) and centre enrolment for school-age children.</i>			
<i>Note: Nova Scotia provided the auspice breakdown for all centre spaces for children 0 – 12 years. The auspice breakdown for children 0 – 5 years was calculated by applying the overall percentage of for-profit and non-profit/public spaces to the 0 – 5 age group.</i>			

## PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded; however, the totals are based on exact figures. Therefore, totals may not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

### Number of children 0 – 12 years (2024 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	7,300
1	8,200
2	8,500
3	9,200
4	7,000
5	8,400
6	9,100
7	11,100
8	10,800
9	9,800
10	11,200
11	10,800
12	10,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>121,800</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	24,000
3 – 5	24,600
6 – 12	73,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>121,800</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0	4,600
1	5,300
2	5,800
3	6,700
4	4,800
5	5,800
6	6,200
7	7,700
8	7,800
9	6,900
10	8,700
11	7,100
12	7,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>84,900</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	15,700
3 – 5	17,300
6 – 12	51,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>84,900</b>

---

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

Age	First Nations	Métis	Inuk (Inuit)	Multiple	Other
0 – 4	2,020	875	85	75	60
5 – 9	2,385	1,125	85	70	100
10 – 14	2,445	1,365	110	80	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,850</b>	<b>3,365</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>220</b>

### Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2024 rounded estimate)

Age of youngest child	Number of mothers	Participation rate (%)
0 – 3	19,000	77.6
4 – 5	7,200	84.7
0 – 5	26,200	79.4
6 – 12	29,300	86.9

### Living arrangements by age of child (2021)

Age	Living with two parents	Living with one parent			Total
		Lone mother	Lone father		
0 – 4	31,010	7,520	1,185		8,710
5 – 9	33,900	10,150	2,175		12,330
10 – 14	33,870	11,500	2,805		14,305

### Languages spoken most often at home (2021)

Age	English	French	Non-official	Multiple
0 – 4	36,885	415	2,065	965
5 – 9	43,475	510	1,990	1,085
10 – 14	45,980	525	1,795	965
<b>Total</b>	<b>126,340</b>	<b>1,445</b>	<b>5,840</b>	<b>3,010</b>

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

Two-parent families	Male lone parent	Female lone parent
\$91,000	\$44,400	\$42,800

## KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA

### KINDERGARTEN FOR FIVE-YEAR-OLDS (GRADE PRIMARY)

#### Provincial responsibility

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Education Innovation, Programs, and Services Branch

Phone: 902-424-5168

Email: *Not available*

Website: [novascotia.ca/government/education-and-early-childhood-development](http://novascotia.ca/government/education-and-early-childhood-development)

#### Legislation

Nova Scotia. Legislative Assembly. [Education Act](#) –

SNS1995-96, C- 1, s.1. Amended 2018, C- 3, s.36.

#### Provision

##### Grade Primary provision

<b>Definition</b>	Full school-day program for all five-year-olds offered in public and private schools.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Five years old by December 31.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Compulsory, but participation can be delayed by one year.
<b>Entitlement</b>	All eligible children have access.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Minimum of four hours.
<b>Class size</b>	Maximum 20 with flexibility up to 22 children.

#### Teacher qualifications and certification

Public school teachers who teach five-year-old kindergarten (Grade Primary) must have a valid teaching certificate. An Initial Teacher's Certificate requires an undergraduate education, including three years of approved undergraduate content studies, two years of an approved program of professional studies including a practicum, and receipt of an approved bachelor's degree from a recognized university.

Public school Grade Primary teachers are not required to have an early childhood qualification.

### KINDERGARTEN FOR FOUR-YEAR-OLDS (PRE-PRIMARY)

#### Provincial responsibility

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Education Innovation, Programs, and Services Branch

Phone: 902-424-5168

Email: [PrePrimary@novascotia.ca](mailto:PrePrimary@novascotia.ca)

Website: [ednet.ns.ca/pre-primary/overview](http://ednet.ns.ca/pre-primary/overview)

#### Legislation

Nova Scotia. House of Assembly. [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#). RSNS 1989, c. 120, s.1; 2018, c.33, s.2.

Nova Scotia. House of Assembly. [Early Learning and Child Care Regulations](#). NS Reg. 165/2020.

Nova Scotia. House of Assembly. [Pre-primary Education Act](#). SNS 2005, c.44, s.1.

## Provision

### Pre-primary provision

<b>Definition</b>	Full school-day program for all four-year-olds. There are no parent fees.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Four years old by December 31.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Voluntary and not a prerequisite to enter Grade Primary.
<b>Entitlement</b>	Not a legislated entitlement; however, it is available in all communities with elementary schools, and all four-year-olds have access.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Minimum of four hours (full school-day).
<b>Class size</b>	Maximum 30 children.

### Teacher qualifications and certification

Four-year-old kindergarten (Pre-primary) programs are staffed by early childhood educators. A diploma or degree in early childhood education is required. See Nova Scotia's "[Workforce](#)" section for more information.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

[Nova Scotia Curriculum](#) is a mandatory curriculum framework implemented for five-year-old kindergarten (Grade Primary) programs in all English schools.

[Programmes d'études à l'élémentaire](#) is a mandatory curriculum set by *Conseil scolaire acadien provincial* for French Grade Primary programs (termed *maternelle*).

[Capable, Confident, and Curious: Nova Scotia's Early Learning Curriculum Framework](#) (2025) is a mandatory curriculum framework implemented in all four-year-old kindergarten (Pre-primary) programs in Nova Scotia. It is also implemented in regulated child care centres. The framework focuses on children 0 – 8 years.

## ENROLMENT

### Kindergarten enrolment (2024 – 2025 school year)

#### Enrolment in public schools

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds (Grade Primary)	8,533
--	-------

Kindergarten for 4-year-olds (Pre-primary)	6,800
--	-------

#### Enrolment in private/independent schools

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds (Grade Primary)	<i>Not available</i>
--	----------------------

Kindergarten for 4-year-olds (Pre-primary)	<i>Not available</i>
--	----------------------

<b>Total kindergarten enrolment</b>	<b>15,333</b>
-------------------------------------	---------------

Note: The total is not directly comparable to Nova Scotia's total kindergarten enrolment reported in ECEC in Canada 2023, which included enrolment in private/independent schools.

## OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

### K4 programs on reserve

K4 is a Mi'kmaw program for four-year-olds (similar to the Pre-primary program). The curriculum is set by Mi'kmaw Kina'matneway, which is the educational authority for 12 of the 13 First Nations communities in Nova Scotia. There are 12 K4 programs on reserve.

# CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

## ■ ADMINISTRATION

### Provincial responsibility

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Early Learning and Child Care Branch

Phone: 902-424-5168

Email: [ecdservices@novascotia.ca](mailto:ecdservices@novascotia.ca)

Website: [novascotia.ca/government/education-and-early-childhood-development](http://novascotia.ca/government/education-and-early-childhood-development)

### Legislation

Nova Scotia. House of Assembly. *Early Learning and Child Care Act*. RSNS 1989, c. 120, s.1; 2018, c.33, s.2.

Nova Scotia. House of Assembly. *Early Learning and Child Care Regulations*. NS Reg. 165/2020.

### Service descriptions

## UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

There are no health, safety, or training requirements or provision for public oversight in unregulated child care. There may be attention by public officials on a complaint basis.

An unregulated provider can care for six children of mixed ages or eight school-age children, including any of the provider's children.

Before- and after-school programs delivered in schools by approved municipal or recognized non-profit recreation providers are not required to be licensed. See "School-age child care," under "Regulated child care," below.

See the [Early Learning and Child Care Regulations](#) for more information.

## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE

### Child care centre

Child care centres provide care in a group setting for less than 24 hours per day for seven or more children from 0 – 12 years of age. Child care centres include full-day and part-day child care centres and programs for school-age children.

### School-age child care

The Nova Scotia Before and After Program (NS-BAP) is delivered in public schools by approved child care, municipal recreation, and recognized non-profit recreation providers. NS-BAPs may serve children 4 – 12 years; however, priority is given to four- and five-year-olds in kindergarten (Pre-primary and Grade Primary). These programs are not licensed but have specified requirements, so they are considered to be "approved." Each provider determines their registration process and sets the fees. Parents may be eligible to receive a fee subsidy to reduce the cost.

### Family child care

Family child care (termed Family Home Child Care) must be provided in the provider's personal residence. Individual providers are not licensed; they are approved and monitored by a licensed Family Home Child Care agency. An approved Family Home Child Care provider may care for up to seven children of mixed ages.

## ■ CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

[Capable, Confident, and Curious: Nova Scotia's Early Learning Curriculum Framework](#) (2025) is a curriculum framework implemented in child care programs in Nova Scotia. It is mandatory in all four-year-old kindergarten (Pre-primary)



programs and voluntary for all other programs. The framework focuses on children 0 – 8 years.

## ■ CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

### Terminology and approach

Nova Scotia uses the term “special needs” to refer not only to developmental or physical disabilities but also to factors such as the child’s lived experiences and developmental competencies in social, physical, and cognitive health and wellbeing.

All types of regulated child care programs are eligible to receive inclusion funding.

The province provides inclusion funding to the whole centre, not to support inclusion of an individual child.

There are no specific qualifications or requirements for staff who work with children with disabilities.

### Programs supporting inclusion in ELCC

The Inclusion Support Grant assists centres with the acquisition of resources and additional staffing to support developmental, social, and physical inclusion for vulnerable and/or low-income children who require specialized supports. Funding may be used to provide additional staff, training, professional development for regular staff, consultation by specialists, and assistive devices and equipment. Funding is based on a per diem for the number of operating days at 10% of the centre capacity.

The province also funds inclusion supports provided by Nova Scotia Early Childhood Development Intervention Services (NSECDIS) to families with children who are experiencing developmental delays from birth to school entry. Supports are provided in home and community settings, such as early learning and child care programs.

See [Inclusion Support and Early Childhood Development Intervention Services](#) for more details.

Following a three-year pilot project, in 2021 NSECDIS implemented and now manages the [Pyramid Model](#) – a framework of practices for supporting young children’s healthy social and emotional development. Participation in the Pyramid Model is voluntary and open to English and French licensed child care centres and Pre-primary programs. In 2024, 165 programs participated in the Pyramid Model.

In Nova Scotia, there is no child care service solely or primarily for children with disabilities.

### Access to inclusive ELCC

Child care programs are not required to accept children with disabilities.

A diagnosis is not required for admission to a child care service that provides inclusion.

Newly constructed or renovated facilities are not required to be fully accessible and barrier-free, but they must comply with building code requirements for accessibility. However, outdoor play spaces used by a facility must be accessible to all children, including those with diverse abilities.

## ■ FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE

In Nova Scotia, 5.5% of the total population identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in the most recent census (2021). There are 42 reserves in the province, held by 13 Mi’kmaw First Nations. Approximately 60% of First Nations people live on reserve.

### First Nations child care on reserves

Child care in Nova Scotia First Nations communities on reserve operates individually,



outside the mandate of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Neither full-day child care centres nor Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (AHSOR) programs are licensed.

In 2025, there were 12 unlicensed child care centres in First Nations communities and 13 unlicensed AHSOR programs on reserve.

### **Indigenous child care other than on reserve**

In 2025, one licensed Indigenous-focused and -led child care centre not on reserve was operated by the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre, providing 26 licensed child care spaces for children 18 months – 5 years.

Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) programs are not licensed by the province.

### **Indigenous-specific resources/initiatives**

Mi'kmaw Kina'matneway (MK), the educational authority for 12 of the 13 First Nations communities in Nova Scotia, administers post-secondary education and professional development of early childhood educators (ECEs). MK collaborates with universities and the Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) to provide customized programs. The collaboration has resulted in the successful development of the Mi'kmaw ECE diploma program for Mi'kmaw students, delivered in a blended format (virtually and in Mi'kmaw communities). The program uses a Mi'kmaw curriculum developed specifically through this initiative.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD), MK, and NSCC worked together to develop two versions of this program: A Mi'kmaw direct-entry ECE diploma program is available for students new to the sector,

and a Mi'kmaw accelerated program is available for individuals working in the sector, allowing them to earn their diploma in a shortened timeframe by completing a prior learning assessment and recognition process that gives them credit for their prior experience and competencies. EECD funds full tuition, textbooks, and student fees for up to 30 students in each of these two programs. Both programs launched in 2022 – 2023. A second cohort of the accelerated program is underway, and a second cohort of the direct-entry program began in September 2025.

### **PARENT FEES**

The provincial government does not set parent fees in Nova Scotia; operators set their own fees.

In 2021 – 2022, licensed child care operators signed provincial funding agreements committing to reducing parent fees by set amounts. Operators with signed agreements would then receive funding from the provincial government to offset these fee reductions.

In April 2022, fees were reduced in centres by \$10.50/day for infants, \$9/day for toddlers, and \$8.75/day for preschool-age children, retroactive to January 2022. This represented an average fee reduction of 25%.

In December 2022, the fees were reduced by an additional amount, making total average fee reductions of \$23/day for infants and \$18.25/day for toddlers and preschool-age children.

The reductions are smaller for licensed family child care. Effective December 2022, fees for family child care were reduced by a flat rate of \$17/day for infants and \$16.50/day for toddlers and preschool-age children.

---

### Average child care centre daily fees (2022 – 2025)

<i>Age group</i>	<i>January 2022</i>	<i>December 2022 – December 2025</i>
Infant	\$42.00	\$19.00
Toddler	\$36.00	\$17.75
Preschool-age (full-day)	\$35.00	\$16.75
Preschool-age (part-day)	\$15.00	\$10.50
School-age (full-day)	\$27.00	\$17.00
School-age (before- and after-school)	\$20.00	\$14.00
School-age (after-school only)	\$16.00	\$11.50
School-age (before-school only)	\$12.00	\$9.00

### Average Nova Scotia Before and After Program daily fees (2022 – 2025)

<i>Age group</i>	<i>January 2022</i>	<i>December 2022 – December 2025</i>
School-age (before- and after-school)	\$17.00	\$12.75
School-age (after-school only)	\$13.00	\$9.75
School-age (before-school only)	\$6.00	\$4.50

### Average Family Home Child Care daily fees (2022 – 2025)

<i>Age group</i>	<i>January 2022</i>	<i>December 2022 – December 2025</i>
Infant	\$34.00	\$17.00
Toddler	\$33.00	\$16.50
Preschool-age	\$33.00	\$16.50

### Additional fees

As of 2024, operators are not permitted to charge waitlist fees. They are permitted to charge optional fees for food, transportation, extended hours, and field trips.

### Parent fee subsidies

The Child Care Subsidy Program pays for all or part of eligible families' child care fees charged

by licensed non-profit and for-profit child care programs, approved Family Home Child Care agencies, and approved Nova Scotia Before and After Programs. Fee subsidies can be used in both full-day and part-day programs. Payment is made directly to child care service providers on behalf of subsidized parents.

All eligible families are entitled to a fee subsidy. There is no waitlist.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Nova Scotia has not required parents to be working or in school to be eligible for a fee subsidy since 2019.

## FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

Financial eligibility is typically based on gross household income minus allowable deductions plus the number of dependent children.

Before May 2024, a family could have no more than \$50,000 in savings or liquid assets to be eligible for a fee subsidy. Effective May 29, 2024, families are no longer required to provide liquid asset value when applying for a subsidy.

In 2025, the maximum annual income to receive a full subsidy was \$35,000. The maximum annual income for a partial subsidy was \$70,000.

## SUBSIDY RATES

The subsidy rate is the maximum amount the provincial government pays to the child care operator on behalf of a fully subsidized parent to cover all or part of the parent fee. Fee subsidies cover all or part of the rate established by the child care facility or Family Home Child Care provider, up to the maximum for the child's age group and type of care. A family eligible for a fee subsidy is responsible for paying any difference between the fee charged by the centre or home and the approved subsidy amount.

### Maximum daily subsidy rates for centres and Family Home Child Care (2025)

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Maximum daily subsidy rate</i>
Infant	\$29.00
Toddler	\$24.00
Preschool-age	\$23.00
School-age	\$17.70

## Additional programs that subsidize individual families

Individuals accessing Income Assistance and Employment Support Service who demonstrate a need for child care are eligible for a maximum of [\\$400/month child allowance](#) for regulated and non-regulated child care arrangements.

## WORKFORCE

### Child care staff wages

#### PROVINCIAL WAGE DATA

Current average wage data are not available.

#### PROVINCIAL WAGE SCALE

Nova Scotia's first early childhood educator (ECE) wage scale came into effect on November 1, 2022, retroactive to July 4, 2022. The wage scale included Level 1, 2, and 3 ECEs who were employed by provincially funded licensed child care centres and family child care agency staff. All ECEs included in the wage scale received a lump sum retroactive payment for the period from July 4, 2022, to October 21, 2022. The wage scale amounts were increased on April 1, 2024.

A new wage scale came into effect on April 1, 2025.

### ECE wage scale (April 1, 2024 – March 31, 2025)

<i>Position and level</i>	<i>Years of experience</i>				
	<i>&lt;1</i>	<i>1–2</i>	<i>2–3</i>	<i>3–4</i>	<i>4–5+</i>
Director – Level 1	\$28.31	\$29.16	\$30.03	\$30.94	\$31.86
Director – Level 2/school-age	\$30.51	\$31.42	\$32.37	\$33.34	\$34.34
Director – Level 3	\$31.61	\$32.55	\$33.53	\$34.54	\$35.57
Assistant director/inclusion coordinator – Level 1	\$25.95	\$26.73	\$27.53	\$28.36	\$29.21
Assistant director/inclusion coordinator/home consultant – Level 2/school-age	\$27.96	\$28.80	\$29.67	\$30.56	\$31.47
Assistant director/inclusion coordinator/home consultant – Level 3	\$28.97	\$29.84	\$30.74	\$31.66	\$32.61
ECE – Level 1	\$23.59	\$24.30	\$25.03	\$25.78	\$26.55
ECE – Level 2/school-age	\$25.42	\$26.19	\$26.97	\$27.78	\$28.61
ECE – Level 3	\$26.34	\$27.13	\$27.94	\$28.78	\$29.64

*Note: Annual public sector wage adjustments are included in the table.*

### ECE wage scale (April 1, 2025)

<i>Position and level</i>	<i>Years of experience</i>				
	<i>&lt;1</i>	<i>1–2</i>	<i>2–3</i>	<i>3–4</i>	<i>4–5+</i>
Director – Level 1	\$28.88	\$29.74	\$30.64	\$31.55	\$32.50
Director – Level 2/school-age	\$31.12	\$32.05	\$33.01	\$34.00	\$35.02
Director – Level 3	\$32.24	\$33.20	\$34.20	\$35.23	\$36.28
Assistant director/inclusion coordinator – Level 1	\$26.47	\$27.26	\$28.08	\$28.93	\$29.79
Assistant director/inclusion coordinator/home consultant – Level 2/school-age	\$28.52	\$29.38	\$30.26	\$31.17	\$32.10
Assistant director/inclusion coordinator/home consultant – Level 3	\$29.55	\$30.44	\$31.35	\$32.29	\$33.26
ECE – Level 1	\$24.06	\$24.79	\$25.53	\$26.30	\$27.08
ECE – Level 2/school-age	\$25.93	\$26.71	\$27.51	\$28.34	\$29.19
ECE – Level 3	\$26.86	\$27.67	\$28.50	\$29.36	\$30.24

*Note: Annual public sector wage adjustments are included in the table.*

Family child care providers classified as ECE Level 1, 2, or 3 who work with a family child care agency are eligible for additional remuneration. Child care providers receive a quarterly grant amount based on their classification level and the number of weeks they have provided service in the quarter being reported.

#### Family Home Child Care ECE grant amounts (2025)

	<i>Level</i>	<i>Quarterly grant amount</i>	<i>Total annual grant amount</i>
<i>Full-time</i>	1	\$2,500.00	\$10,000
	2	\$2,875.00	\$11,500
	3	\$3,125.00	\$12,500
<i>Part-time</i>	1	\$1,250.00	\$5,000
	2	\$1,437.00	\$5,750
	3	\$1,562.50	\$6,250

#### Staff benefits

Nova Scotia introduced a defined [benefit pension plan](#) and a [comprehensive group benefits plan](#) in 2021, including [a grant for family child care providers](#) to assist with health and dental contributions and a Registered Retirement Savings Plan.

In May 2024, ECEs working in licensed and funded centres gained access to a benefits package through the [Health Association of Nova Scotia](#), covering prescriptions, dental care, vision, and life insurance. ECEs also receive pension benefits from the [CAAT Pension Plan](#), with the province funding 100% of employer contributions. These benefits are transferable across eligible employers.

#### Early childhood certification

In 2022 – 2023, Nova Scotia introduced a [regulated classification system](#) for ECEs.

Classification is required for all staff working in licensed centre-based child care.

Classification Services of the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is responsible for the regulation of individuals who work in regulated child care programs, Family Home Child Care agencies, and Pre-primary programs.

#### ECE CERTIFICATION LEVELS

There are five levels of classification: Entry level, ECE Level 1, ECE Level 2, ECE Level 3, and school-age approval.

#### ECE classification levels (2024)

<i>Level</i>	<i>Minimum requirements</i>
Entry level	<a href="#">Orientation for staff working in licensed child care facilities</a> ; or Post-secondary ECE courses that are equivalent to the orientation training.
ECE Level 1	Orientation training for staff working in licensed child care facilities, and completion of coursework and workplace training as specified in standards set by the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development; or A one-year certificate in early childhood development or early childhood education from a training program recognized by the director.
ECE Level 2	Two-year college diploma program in early childhood education; or Early Childhood Education Recognition of Prior Learning Program (delivered through the Association of Early Childhood Educators Nova Scotia).
ECE Level 3	Bachelor's degree in early childhood education; or Level 2 requirements and bachelor's degree in any discipline.

School-age approval	Orientation for staff working in licensed child care facilities; and Either a bachelor's degree in early (childhood) elementary education or a post-secondary credential that qualifies a person to plan and deliver developmentally appropriate programming for school-age children.
---------------------	--

*Note: The orientation for staff working in licensed child care facilities is a series of 16 free online informational modules and activities for child care staff working directly with children and who do not meet the regulated training requirements.*

To maintain the classification, at least 30 hours of professional development is required every three years. Records of continuing professional development are submitted to Classification Services. An extension may be requested with a plan to complete the required number of hours.

See [A Guide to Classification and Professional Development for Early Childhood Educators](#) for more information.

## STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Child care centres and family child care homes must adhere to standards and regulations regarding staffing requirements, grouping of children, and licensing. Some additional key elements of child care standards and regulations, such as physical environments and food provision, are covered in the comparative tables in this publication, while others may be found in the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#) and [Early Learning and Child Care Regulations](#).

### Regulated child care centres

Child care centres are licensed under the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#) and [Early Learning and Child Care Regulations](#). The Act was most recently amended in 2018, and the regulations in 2020.

### STAFF:CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZE

Nova Scotia does not specify a maximum number of children permitted in a child care centre.

#### Staff:child ratio and maximum group size

Program type	Age group	Staff:child ratio	Maximum group size
Full-day	Infant (0 – 17 months)	1:4	10
	Toddler (18 – 35 months)	1:6	18
	Toddler and preschool-age (30 months – 5 years)	1:7	24
	Preschool-age (36 months – 5 years, not attending school)	1:8	24
Part-day	Toddler (30 – 35 months)	1:12	24
	Preschool-age (30 months – 5 years, not attending school)	1:12	24
School-age (before- and after-school care)	School-age only	1:15	30
	School-age and fewer than eight Pre-primary children	1:15	30
	School-age and eight or more Pre-primary children	1:12	30
	Pre-primary children only	1:12	30

*Note: If other age groups are mixed in a single room, the ratio and maximum group size for the youngest child applies.*

## STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRES

### Qualification requirements for staffing a centre

In Nova Scotia, staff qualification requirements are specified at the centre level.

In a full-day or part-day child care centre, two thirds of staff working directly with children must hold at least Level 1 classification. In a school-age centre, two thirds of staff working directly with children must hold at least Level 1 classification or school-age training approval.

In all centres, the remaining staff who work directly with children must have at least entry level classification. In any centre with only two staff working directly with children, one staff member must have at least Level 1 classification or school-age training approval.

### Qualification requirements for on-site centre directors/supervisors

All centre-based programs must be administered by a centre director who is present at all times to supervise and manage the daily operations of the program.

In a centre that offers programming for all ages, the director must have at least Level 2 classification. If only school-age programming is offered, the director must have at least Level 2 classification or school-age training approval.

A centre director who began working as a director before May 1, 2012, must have at least Level 1 classification.

### Other requirements

Centre staff must be at least 16 years of age to be included in the staff:child ratio.

Each centre director and staff member who works directly with children must have a child abuse register check, a vulnerable sector check, and a first aid certificate that includes infant CPR.

## LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES

A licence is usually valid for one year. Centres must be inspected at least annually.

### Regulated family child care

Family child care (termed Family Home Child Care) is regulated under the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#) and [Early Learning and Child Care Regulations](#).

Family Home Child Care must be provided in the provider's personal residence.

## MODEL OF ORGANIZATION

Family Home Child Care in Nova Scotia operates under an agency model. The agencies, not the individual family child care providers, are licensed by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

The agencies approve, manage, and monitor family child care programs in providers' homes. The agency's duties include:

- Ensuring each provider operates in accordance with the legislation;
- Regularly assessing providers and homes; and
- Ensuring that its family home consultants make regular home visits.

There are [14 Family Home Child Care agencies](#) across 18 Nova Scotia counties.

## MAXIMUM CAPACITY

A child care provider may care for a maximum of seven children at a time, including their own.

If a provider is caring for four to seven children, no more than three may be under three years of age. Of those three, no more than two children may be infants. A provider may care for a maximum of three infants at a time, including their own infants.



If caring for a maximum of three infants, no other children may be in their care.

A provider caring for school-age children may care for a maximum of nine school-age children at a time, including their own children.

## **FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS**

Child care providers must complete Level 1 of the Canadian Child Care Federation's Family Home Day Care Training (approximately 40 hours) no later than one year after being approved. Providers must also complete five hours of professional development workshops annually.

Providers must be at least 18 years old and have a child abuse register check, a vulnerable sector check, and a first aid certificate that includes infant CPR.

Any person who is 13 years old or older who lives in a family child care home and has contact with children or the records of children must complete a child abuse register check. Any person who is 18 years old or older who lives in a family child care home and who has or will have contact with children or the records of children must complete a vulnerable sector check.

## **LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES**

Agencies are subject to regular monitoring by licensing officers of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for compliance with the requirements and regulations. Agencies are inspected twice annually, and licences are valid for five years.

As a part of the agency inspection, 25% of the homes managed by the agency are inspected. A licensing officer will inspect every new family child care home approved by an agency in the first year of operation. Family Home Child Care consultants, who are agency employees, conduct regular home visits to provide support, such as administrative

assistance and coordination of professional development. The frequency of these visits is not regulated; however, monthly visits are the practice for all agencies. Agency-issued approvals of homes have no end date.

## **■ OF INTEREST**

### **Municipal role**

In Nova Scotia, municipalities have no mandated role in child care governance, funding, or administration.

### **Family Resource Centres**

Family Resource Centres in Nova Scotia are operated by non-profit organizations. They receive federal funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada and provincial funding from the Departments of Opportunities and Social Development, Education and Early Childhood Development, and Health and Wellness (through the District Health Authorities). Nova Scotia has [27 Family Resource Centres](#), 23 of which are provincially funded by the Department of Opportunities and Social Development. These centres provide community-based programs and services that support the healthy development and wellbeing of children and youth. Each centre is an independent organization, offering unique programs and services tailored to the needs of its local community.

## CHILD CARE DATA

### ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

#### Number of spaces (2024, 2025)

Centre spaces	2024	2025
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>13,608</b>	<b>14,299</b>
<i>Note: Nova Scotia did not report on licensed spaces for children 0 – 5 years by age group or by full-day and part-day spaces. As a result, further breakdowns are not available.</i>		
Before- and after-school care centre spaces	2024	2025
Kindergarten and Grades 1 – 6	4,445	4,603
Nova Scotia Before and After Program (NS-BAP)	2,952	3,048
<i>Note: NS-BAPs are regulated but not licensed. They may serve children up to age 12; however, priority is given to kindergarten-age children.</i>		
<b>Total before- and after-school care centre spaces</b>	<b>7,397</b>	<b>7,651</b>
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>21,005</b>	<b>21,950</b>
Family child care licensed capacity	2024	2025
<b>Total family child care spaces</b>	<b>1,404</b>	<b>1,746</b>
<i>Note: For the Interim Space Statistics 2024 publication, Nova Scotia reported 1,728 regulated family child care spaces. However, this figure was as of December 2024. For consistency with the rest of the data in this report, we have included the number of spaces on March 30, 2024, here instead (1,404).</i>		
<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)</b>	<b>22,409</b>	<b>23,696</b>
<i>Note: The total number of regulated spaces for 2024 has been updated since the Interim Space Statistics 2024 publication, due to the change in Nova Scotia's total family child care spaces.</i>		

## Number of child care centres and family child care homes (2024)

### Centre-based child care

<b>Total number of centres</b>	<b>325</b>
--------------------------------	------------

*Note: Nova Scotia reported 337 total centres for ECEC in Canada 2023. This figure reflected the total number of licences, which included 14 family child care agencies. The actual number of centres on March 30, 2023, was 323. The 2024 data reflects the total number of centres only.*

### Centre-based programs

Centres providing a full-day program	267
Centres providing a part-day (nursery or preschool) program	64
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school, excluding NS-BAP (approximately 5 – 12 years)	208
Centres providing infant care (<18 months)	113
Centres providing toddler care (18 – <36 months)	279
Centres providing preschool-age care (36 months – 5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	297
Centres providing a Francophone child care program	18
Centres providing non-standard hours care (as defined by the province)	3
Centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – Grade 12)	33

### Regulated family child care

Approved family child care homes (active)	234
Family child care agencies	14

### Participation in CWELCC

Centres providing a full-day program	267
Centres providing a part-day (nursery or preschool) program	61
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school, excluding NS-BAP (approximately 5 – 12 years)	201

<b>Total number of child care centres receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>318</b>
--	------------

<b>Total number of licensed family child care homes receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>234</b>
--	------------

## Auspice (2024)

---

### Centres by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit	174
Non-profit	151
Public	0

*Note: In ECEC in Canada 2023, Nova Scotia's breakdown of centres by auspice included 14 family child care agencies. The 2024 breakdown includes centres only. As a result, the 2023 and 2024 data are not directly comparable.*

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of spaces</i>
For-profit	9,715
Non-profit	11,290

*Note: Spaces include full-day, part-day, before- and after-school care, and NS-BAP spaces.*

---

### Family child care agencies by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of agencies</i>
For-profit	5
Non-profit	9

## Auspice (2025)

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of spaces</i>
For-profit	9,750
Non-profit	12,200

*Note: Spaces include full-day, part-day, before- and after-school care, and NS-BAP spaces.*

---

## Publicly operated child care (2024)

There are no publicly operated child care programs in Nova Scotia.

## Fee subsidies (2024)

### Number of children receiving fee subsidies

Full subsidy	3,231
Partial subsidy	1,992
<b>Total children receiving fee subsidies</b>	<b>5,223</b>

## Disability support (2024)

### Number of children and centres receiving disability support

Children in licensed child care receiving disability/special needs support funding	2,145
--	-------

*Note: This is an estimate based on the total number of children 0 – 5 years receiving early intervention support. In ECEC in Canada 2023, the total number of children receiving early intervention support (including children not in licensed child care) was reported. As a result, the 2023 and 2024 data are not directly comparable.*

Number of centres receiving the Inclusion Support Grant	302
---	-----

*Note: Approximately 90% of licensed child care centres receive the Inclusion Support Grant to support inclusive programming and resources for all children, including children with disabilities.*

## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

### Number of children enrolled (2024)

#### Full-day centre enrolment

Infant (0 – <18 months)	1,125
Toddler (18 – <36 months)	4,908
Preschool-age (36 months – 5 years)	5,418
<b>Total full-day centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>11,450</b>

#### Part-day centre enrolment

Preschool-age (30 months – 5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	201
<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>11,651</b>

#### Before- and after-school care enrolment (licensed or regulated)

Kindergarten and Grades 1 – 6	7,397
<i>Note: This number is an estimate using centre-based before- and after-school care enrolment (4,445) and NS-BAP spaces (2,952). NS-BAP enrolment is not available.</i>	
<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>19,048</b>

---

**Full-day family child care enrolment**

Not attending Pre-primary, Grade Primary, or school	1,300
---	-------

---

**Part-day family child care enrolment**

Attending Pre-primary, Grade Primary, or school	457
---	-----

---

<b><i>Total family child care enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</i></b>	<b>1,757</b>
---	--------------

---

<b>TOTAL REGULATED ENROLMENT (centre and family child care enrolment)</b>	<b>20,805</b>
---	---------------

---

## CHILD CARE FUNDING

The types of funding available for child care services in Nova Scotia include operational funding, one-time funding, fee subsidies, and other ELCC funding programs. See [Information for Operators](#) for more information.

### ■ ELIGIBILITY FOR CWELCC FUNDING

The CWELCC plan provides federal funds to provinces and territories for early learning and child care operational and one-time funding and fee subsidies for licensed child care for children aged 0 – 5. Funded new child care expansion is to be public and non-profit unless otherwise specified in the jurisdiction's agreement. Provinces and territories contribute their own funds and design their own policies and provision within this framework.

In Nova Scotia, the following are eligible for operational funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools);
- Licensed before- and after-school centres that enrol children under age six; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres are not eligible for operational funding.

In Nova Scotia, the following are eligible for capital funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools); and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres are not eligible for capital funding.

### ■ CHILD CARE SERVICES' ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

All non-profit and for-profit child care operators with funding agreements with the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development are eligible for operational funding and fee subsidies.

Capital funding is limited to municipal governments, organizations wholly owned by a municipality, universities, the Nova Scotia Community College, Mi'kmaw/Indigenous communities/organizations, and registered not-for-profit organizations.

### ■ TYPES OF FUNDING

#### **Operational funding**

#### **QUALITY INVESTMENT GRANT AND PROGRAM SUPPORT FUNDING**

Prior to October 2022, the Quality Investment Grant (QIG) and Program Support Funding were available to eligible licensed child care programs to supplement wages for staff, focusing on those who work directly with children as required for the ratio. The funding was to be used primarily to ensure that trained staff who were required to meet the staff:child ratios earned at least the wage floor established by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD). Prior to October 2022, historical QIG per diem rates were based on ECE classification levels.

### Quality Improvement Grant (QIG) rates prior to October 2022

Rate type	Historical QIG per diem	Hourly rate
Level 3	\$48.00	\$6.00
Level 2/school-age approval	\$44.00	\$5.50
Level 1	\$36.00	\$4.50
Entry level	\$26.00	\$3.25
Untrained	\$24.00	\$3.00

The QIG was updated in October 2022 to provide new funding support for both fee reductions and compensation for ECEs. The updated funding accounts for the implementation of the wage grid introduced November 1, 2022, and provincial parent fee reductions. All child care centres with updated funding agreements with EECD are

eligible for funding. The fee reduction rates vary by age of the child and hours of care.

### Fee reduction funding rates (December 31, 2022)

Age group	Centres	Family child care
Infant (0 – 18 months)	\$23.00	\$17.00
Toddler (18 – 35 months)	\$18.25	\$16.50
Part-day preschool-age (36 months and older)	\$4.50	Not applicable
Full-day preschool-age (36 months and older)	\$18.25	\$16.50
Full-day school-age	\$10.00	\$16.50
School-age (before- and after-school)	\$6.00	\$6.00

Centres receive fixed hourly funding rates based on classification levels and steps on the wage grid to support ECE compensation on the wage grid.

### ECE hourly funding rates (April 2024 – March 31, 2025)

Classification	Step and number of years				
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
	<1 year	1 – 2 years	2 – 3 years	3 – 4 years	4 – 5 years or more
Level 1	\$14.38	\$15.20	\$16.03	\$16.90	\$17.79
Level 2/school-age approval	\$15.19	\$16.06	\$16.97	\$17.90	\$18.86
Level 3	\$14.44	\$15.35	\$16.28	\$17.25	\$18.24

### ECE hourly funding rates (April 2025 – March 31, 2026)

Classification	Step and number of years				
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
	<1 year	1 – 2 years	2 – 3 years	3 – 4 years	4 – 5 years or more
Level 1	\$14.92	\$15.75	\$16.61	\$17.49	\$18.40
Level 2/school-age approval	\$15.77	\$16.67	\$17.59	\$18.54	\$19.51
Level 3	\$15.04	\$15.97	\$16.93	\$17.91	\$18.92



See the [Quality Investment Grant Operator Guide](#) for more information about compensation and fee reductions.

### **FAMILY HOME CHILD CARE OPERATING GRANT**

The Family Home Child Care Operating Grant is an annual grant to agencies to support the costs of salaries and benefits to agency staff, transportation, education, program material, and fixed costs (rent and utilities, insurance, phone, equipment, advertising, and administration costs). The grant is based on an annual budget, which is set according to internal guidance for appropriate costs, and distributed in quarterly installments.

### **INCLUSION SUPPORT GRANT**

The Inclusion Support Grant assists centres with the acquisition of resources and additional staffing to support developmental, social, and physical inclusion for vulnerable and/or low-income children who require specialized supports. Funding may be used to provide additional staff, training, professional development for regular staff, consultation by specialists, and assistive devices and equipment. Funding is based on a per diem for the number of operating days at 10% of the centre capacity.

### **INFANT QUALITY CARE GRANT**

As of March 31, 2021, the Infant Incentive Grant – intended to incentivize child care providers to increase infant spaces by providing \$4/space/day in centres and \$2/space/day in Family Home Child Care – transitioned to the Infant Quality Care Grant and added professional development requirements. This grant provides funding for professional learning related to infant care for staff and family child care providers who care for infants.

### **BEFORE AND AFTER PROGRAMS**

The Nova Scotia Before and After Program (NS-BAP) is delivered in public schools by approved child care, municipal recreation, and recognized non-profit recreation providers. NS-BAPs may serve children 4 – 12 years; however, priority is given to four- and five-year-olds in kindergarten (Pre-primary and Grade Primary). These programs are not licensed but have specified requirements, so they are considered to be “approved.” Each provider determines their registration process and sets their fees. Parents may be eligible to receive a fee subsidy to reduce the cost.

### **One-time funding**

### **MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM**

The Major Infrastructure Program offers grants for developing new not-for-profit child care spaces in licensed and provincially funded centres, focusing on children 0 – 5 years in communities with the highest need for child care, prioritizing diverse and vulnerable communities. Funding for approved projects includes leasehold/rental properties for up to \$20,000 per space, with a total project value up to \$1.5 million. Funding is also available for owned/public properties for up to \$40,000 per space, with a total project value up to \$3.5 million. Eligible applicants include municipal governments, universities, Mi’kmaw/Indigenous communities, and registered not-for-profit organizations.

### **MINOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM**

The Minor Infrastructure Program replaced the Space Conversion Grant that ended in 2021. The Minor Infrastructure Program offers grant funding for creating new not-for-profit child care spaces through minor renovations to existing licensed child care centres or by establishing new locations for children 0 – 5 years. Approved projects can receive up to \$1 million (up to \$20,000



per space) for eligible costs and project-related design, management, and legal fees. Eligible applicants include municipal governments, universities, Mi'kmaw/Indigenous communities, and registered not-for-profit organizations.

### **FAMILY HOME START-UP GRANT**

The Family Home Start-up Grant offers a one-time grant of up to \$7,500 for newly recruited child care providers to help establish quality early learning and child care environments in their homes. Interested individuals should reach out to their local Family Home Child Care agency for support services, professional development, and assistance with the grant application.

### **OPERATIONAL SUPPORT GRANT**

The Operational Support Grant offers temporary financial assistance to licensed provincially funded early learning and child care centres in need. This grant is available to both full-day and part-day licensed child care programs. To apply, centres must comply with licensing requirements, submit a brief application detailing their request, and provide necessary supporting documents.

### **FAMILY HOME CHILD CARE START-UP GRANT**

The Family Home Child Care Start-up Grant is available for approved agencies. Agencies receive a start-up grant of \$7,500 to offset expenses directly related to the start-up costs for the agency. It provides a one-time fixed amount to be used by the agency to pay for advertising, equipment, and legal fees incurred to set up the agency.

### **Fee subsidies**

The Child Care Subsidy Program pays for all or part of child care fees for eligible families. See Nova Scotia's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

### **Other ELCC funding**

#### **ASSOCIATION OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS NOVA SCOTIA**

Before 2019, the Association of Early Childhood Educators Nova Scotia (AECENS) was known as the Nova Scotia Child Care Association (NSCCA). AECENS is a membership-based professional association by and for all early childhood educators (ECEs) in the province. The association receives funding from the provincial government to support the child care workforce in Nova Scotia through the delivery of the Recognition of Prior Learning program (a program that enables educators to earn equivalency to an ECE Level 2 classification) and professional learning opportunities.

#### **BURSARIES FOR FULL-TIME ECE DIPLOMA STUDENTS**

Bursaries of up to \$5,000 paid over the course of an early childhood education diploma program are available for eligible students enrolled in full-time studies at approved Nova Scotia post-secondary institutions. Payments are issued to the training institution on behalf of successful applicants, and priority is given to students from equity-deserving groups. In 2024 – 2025, 374 students received bursaries.

#### **ECE VIRTUAL DIPLOMA PROGRAM**

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development partnered with Nova Scotia Community College to provide a full-time virtual early childhood education diploma program for individuals residing in hard-to-recruit areas. Tuition, textbooks, and program fees are covered for eligible applicants living in northern Nova Scotia (Pictou, Antigonish, and Guysborough Counties), the South Shore (Lunenburg and Queens Counties), and western Cape Breton (Inverness, Victoria, and Richmond Counties).



Priority admission is given to residents of these areas, while others are placed on a waitlist.

### **ECE TRAINING INITIATIVES SUPPORT**

Early Years Professional Learning Support Sites in Nova Scotia are community-based centres that provide resources, professional learning, and leadership to ECEs and students. The eight sites are located across the province, within or near educational institutions. Each site offers professional learning opportunities focused on provincial priorities and tailored professional learning to meet regional needs.

### **CONTINUING EDUCATION**

The [Continuing Education Program](#) (CEP) is intended to enhance the ability of regulated centres, Family Home Child Care agencies, and Pre-primary programs to recruit and retain qualified staff. The program provides financial support to staff to continue their education and enhance their skills and qualifications by studying part-time toward their early childhood education diploma or degree, or taking courses in early childhood leadership. Students must be actively working in the sector. Courses must be taken at approved Nova Scotia ECE training institutions. Those receiving CEP funding are required to continue working in the sector for up to 1,500 hours upon completion. Eligible staff can apply for reimbursements of up to \$1,000 per year if working part-time and up to \$5,000 per year if working full-time in the sector. The program supports approximately 200 staff annually.

### **FRENCH DIPLOMA PROGRAM**

French Diploma Program funding is provided to Université Sainte-Anne to support French language diploma training and upskilling for Acadian/Francophone students. Eligible ECE students and educators working in the sector wanting to earn their diploma receive funding that covers full tuition, textbooks, and student fees.

### **PATHWAY PROGRAM FOR NEWCOMERS**

The Pathway Program for Newcomers supports eligible newcomers to gain on-the-job experience while earning their ECE diploma. Students are provided with employment in licensed child care centres or the Pre-primary program, allowing them to earn an income while studying part-time online toward their diploma. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development covers the cost of tuition, textbooks, student fees, and additional language supports, if required.

### **FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024)**

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

## Operational funding

Program	Amount
50% fee reduction	\$60,973,358
Quality Investment Grant and Program Support Grant	\$57,912,798
Family Home Child Care Operating Support	\$4,519,668
Inclusion Support Grant	\$10,777,533
Infant Quality Care Grant	\$3,208,358
Development Intervention Services	\$10,000,000
Nova Scotia Before and After Program	\$1,576,167
<b>Total operational funding</b>	<b>\$148,967,882</b>

*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, disability funding, and other grants/funding paid on a recurring basis.*

## One-time funding – capital (major and minor)

Program	Amount
Space Expansion	\$11,455,978
Operational Support Grant	\$7,504,056

## One-time funding – other

Program	Amount
Not-for-Profit Transition Pilot	\$666,661
Operational Support Fund	\$1,096,774
Family Home Start-up Grant	\$397,500
<b>Total one-time funding</b>	<b>\$21,120,969</b>

*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.*

## Fee subsidies

Program	Amount
Child Care Subsidy Program	\$21,033,719
<b>TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, and fee subsidies)</b>	<b>\$191,122,570</b>

## Other ELCC funding

Program	Amount
ECE Training Initiatives Support	\$2,548,434
Professional Development	\$633,388
Association of Early Childhood Educators Nova Scotia	\$138,087
Bursaries for full-time ECE diploma students	\$1,487,899
Nova Scotia Before and After Program	\$608,937
<b>Total other ELCC funding</b>	<b>\$5,416,745</b>

## Federal transfers to Nova Scotia

Federal transfer	Amount
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$16,253,502
Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care	\$130,597,963
Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$3,103,604

*Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to Nova Scotia for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements, as they are updated annually in line with population estimates. 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 (2025).



# New Brunswick

Overview	120	<b>CHILD CARE FUNDING</b>	<b>143</b>
Provincial context	121	Eligibility for CWELCC funding	143
<b>KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA</b>	<b>124</b>	Child care services' eligibility for funding	143
Kindergarten for five-year-olds	124	Types of funding	143
Curriculum framework	124	Funding for regulated child care (fiscal year 2023 – 2024)	146
Enrolment	124		
Recent or anticipated developments	125		
<b>CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>126</b>		
Administration	126		
Curriculum framework	127		
Children with disabilities	127		
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care	128		
Parent fees	129		
Workforce	132		
Standards and regulations	134		
Of interest	136		
<b>CHILD CARE DATA</b>	<b>138</b>		
Regulated child care space statistics	138		
Regulated child care enrolment statistics	141		



# New Brunswick

## ■ OVERVIEW

In New Brunswick, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is responsible for regulated child care centres, family child care, kindergarten, and school-age child care.

Licensed child care includes designated Early Learning and Childcare Centres, designated Early Learning and Childcare Homes, before- and after-school programs, and undesignated child care centres and family child care homes. In 2025, most eligible programs were “designated.”

Centre-based child care is delivered by non-profit and for-profit operators, with the bulk of full-day spaces delivered by for-profit operators. There is a very small amount of public child care.

Family child care homes (termed Early Learning and Childcare Homes) are individually licensed. Family child care spaces in New Brunswick are called licensed spaces.

New Brunswick is officially a bilingual province with parallel English and French public education sectors. Attendance in full school-day kindergarten is compulsory for five-year-olds. There is no kindergarten for four-year-olds.

In June 2022, New Brunswick implemented set fees for children 0 – 5 years enrolled in a designated child care facility. The fees vary by age of child and size of community. The Parent Subsidy Program is available for eligible families with children 0 – 5 years (not in school) enrolled in a designated centre or home.

The Daycare Assistance Program is available for eligible families with children 0 – 5 years enrolled in a non-designated facility and school-age children enrolled in either a designated or non-designated facility.

New Brunswick introduced a provincial wage grid in November 2022, which sets out the required minimum wage operators must pay eligible educators and standardizes wages based on educators’ experience and qualifications. Wages were increased in 2023, 2024, and 2025.

New Brunswick signed the Canada-New Brunswick Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement in December 2021. It allocated \$492 million over five years to the province.

In March 2025, New Brunswick accepted the federal offer to extend its bilateral agreement until 2031.

### Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)

	2021	2025	Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025
Non-profit and public	4,159	5,095	+936
For-profit	10,182	12,088	+1,906
<b>Total full-day spaces</b>	<b>14,341</b>	<b>17,183</b>	<b>+2,842</b>
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	71%	70%	-0.7%
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit	-	-	67%

## ■ PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded; however, the totals are based on exact figures. Therefore, totals may not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

### Number of children 0 – 12 years (2024 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	5,700
1	5,900
2	6,800
3	6,900
4	8,200
5	8,500
6	8,200
7	7,500
8	7,600
9	9,200
10	8,500
11	9,500
12	9,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>101,400</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	18,400
3 – 5	23,600
6 – 12	59,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>101,400</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0	3,800
1	4,200
2	4,400
3	4,800
4	5,500
5	5,700
6	6,000
7	5,200
8	5,100
9	6,600
10	5,600
11	7,500
12	6,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>70,800</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	12,400
3 – 5	16,000
6 – 12	42,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>70,800</b>

---

### 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	1,445	335	90	25	55
5 – 9	1,705	455	75	30	75
10 – 14	1,825	690	50	70	70
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,975</b>	<b>1,480</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>200</b>

### Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age of youngest child</i>	<i>Number of mothers</i>	<i>Participation rate (%)</i>
0 – 3	14,600	81.1
4 – 5	7,700	81.1
0 – 5	22,300	81.1
6 – 12	23,700	87.5

### Living arrangements by age of child (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Living with two parents</i>	<i>Living with one parent</i>			<i>Total</i>
		<i>Lone mother</i>	<i>Lone father</i>		
0 – 4	25,465	5,280	990		<b>6,265</b>
5 – 9	28,165	7,375	1,970		<b>9,345</b>
10 – 14	28,480	8,800	2,420		<b>11,215</b>

### Languages spoken most often at home (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Non-official</i>	<i>Multiple</i>
0 – 4	23,005	7,180	1,100	950
5 – 9	27,050	8,690	1,240	1,190
10 – 14	28,440	9,670	1,260	1,175
<b>Total</b>	<b>78,490</b>	<b>25,535</b>	<b>3,600</b>	<b>3,315</b>

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

<i>Two-parent families</i>	<i>Male lone parent</i>	<i>Female lone parent</i>
\$90,000	\$44,400	\$43,200

# KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA

## KINDERGARTEN FOR FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

### Provincial responsibility

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development  
Educational Services (Anglophone)  
*Secteur des services éducatifs francophones*  
Phone: 506-453-3678  
Email: Not available  
Website [EN]: [gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/education/k12.html](http://gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/education/k12.html)  
Website [FR]: [gnb.ca/content/gnb/fr/ministères/education/m12.html](http://gnb.ca/content/gnb/fr/ministères/education/m12.html)

### Legislation

New Brunswick. Legislative Assembly. *Education Act*. SNB1997. C-E-1.12. Amended 2000, C-52, s.1; 2004, C-19, s.1.

### Provision

#### Kindergarten provision

<b>Definition</b>	Full school-day program for all five-year-old children delivered in parallel English and French public schools.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Five years old by December 31.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Compulsory, but participation can be delayed by one year for children born between September 1 and December 31.
<b>Entitlement</b>	All eligible children have access.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	5 – 5.5 hours (full school-day).
<b>Class size</b>	Maximum 21 children or maximum 16 children if combined with any other grade.

### Teacher qualifications and certification

Kindergarten teachers must hold a New Brunswick Teacher's Certificate. A bachelor's degree in a teachable subject and a bachelor's degree in education are two of the requirements for certification. Eligible internationally trained teachers may be issued an Interim Teacher's Certificate until they have worked for two years in the New Brunswick public school system.

Kindergarten teachers do not have specific early childhood qualification requirements.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

*K – 12 Anglophone Sector Kindergarten Curriculum* (2023) and *K – 12 Francophone Sector Kindergarten Curriculum* are two distinct curriculum frameworks for kindergarten in all schools in New Brunswick. The most recent updates to the Francophone sector curriculum were for French (2022), mathematics (2016), and *Cadre d'orientation pédagogique de la maternelle* (2011). Kindergarten programs must use either the English or French framework.

## ENROLMENT

### Kindergarten enrolment (2024 – 2025 school year)

#### Enrolment in public schools

Anglophone kindergarten for 5-year-olds	4,958
Francophone kindergarten for 5-year-olds	2,152
<b>Total kindergarten enrolment</b>	<b>7,110</b>



## ■ RECENT OR ANTICIPATED DEVELOPMENTS

### **Early Years Evaluation – Direct Assessment**

All learners entering kindergarten are offered the Early Years Evaluation – Direct Assessment, which screens four domains: awareness of self and environment, cognitive skills, language and communication, and physical development.

# CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

## ■ ADMINISTRATION

### Provincial responsibility

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Early Learning and Childcare Services Branch  
Phone: 506-453-3714

Email: [edcommunication@gnb.ca](mailto:edcommunication@gnb.ca) or [clc.sge@gnb.ca](mailto:clc.sge@gnb.ca)  
Website: [gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/education/elcc.html](http://gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/education/elcc.html)

### Legislation

New Brunswick. Legislative Assembly. [Early Childhood Services Act.](#) SNB 2010, c.E-0.5.

New Brunswick. Legislative Assembly. [Licensing Regulation – Early Childhood Services Act.](#) NB Reg. 2018-11.

New Brunswick. Legislative Assembly. [Child Care Grants and Subsidies Regulation – Early Childhood Services Act.](#) NB Reg. 2018-12.

New Brunswick. Legislative Assembly. [Programs for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder Regulation – Early Childhood Services Act.](#) NB Reg. 2018-13.

New Brunswick. Legislative Assembly. [On-line Registry Regulation – Early Childhood Services Act.](#) NB Reg. 2021-42.

### Service descriptions

#### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

There are no health, safety, or training requirements or provision for public oversight in unregulated child care. There may be attention by public officials on a complaint basis.

Unregulated child care is limited to no more than two infants, no more than four preschool-age children, or no more than eight school-age children,

with a total of no more than five children of mixed ages where no more than one child is an infant and one must be a school-age child. An operator's children are counted toward all maximums.

#### REGULATED CHILD CARE

##### Child care centre

Licensed full-day child care centres (termed Full-time Early Learning and Child Care Centres) provide care for more than four consecutive hours per day, three or more days per week, for more than three infants, more than five preschool-age children, or more than six total children consisting of infants, preschool-age children, and/or school-age children.

Part-day child care centres (termed Part-time Early Learning and Child Care Centres) provide services to more than five preschool-age children for up to four consecutive hours per day or for fewer than three days per week, or to more than nine school-age children.

##### Family child care

A family child care home (termed Early Learning and Child Care Home) is a licensed facility at which services are provided to a group of children in a home setting for more than four consecutive hours per day, three or more days per week. An Early Learning and Child Care Home operator can provide services at any one time to three infants, five preschool-age children, nine school-age children, or six children of mixed ages that include not more than two infants and at least one school-age child at any one time.

#### Designated Early Learning and Child Care Facilities

To become designated, a licensed Early Learning and Child Care Facility (centre or home) must



apply through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. Non-profit and for-profit facilities are eligible for designation. Designated centres and family child care homes provide care for children 0 – 5 years who are not attending school. They receive operational funding to offset the costs of meeting the designation requirements.

[Policy 901 – Space Allocation for Designated Early Learning and Child Care Facilities](#) outlines the process to become a designated facility and establishes criteria for the allocation of designated spaces in the province.

To gain and maintain designation, operators must be in compliance with the *Early Childhood Services Act*, Licensing Regulation, Childcare Grants and Subsidies Regulation, and On-line Registry Regulation. Operators must:

- Provide early learning and child care services to children aged five years and under, prior to school entry;
- Implement one of the two provincial curriculum frameworks and deliver services in the same language;
- Establish annual quality improvement plans and participate in quality assessments;
- Participate in professional learning;
- Use and promote the Child Care Portals (provincial registry);
- Establish fees at or below the market fee threshold; and
- Not charge parents any mandatory daily fees beyond the standard parent fee grid.

Designation requirements are described in more detail in the [Operator Handbook – Designated Early Learning and Childcare Facilities](#).

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

[New Brunswick Curriculum Framework for Early Learning and Child Care](#) (2008) and [Curriculum éducatif Services de garde francophones du Nouveau-Brunswick](#) (2008) are two distinct curriculum frameworks in New Brunswick. Designated Early Learning and Child Care facilities must use either the English or French framework, corresponding to the language in which services are provided. Both frameworks focus on children from 0 – 5 years.

## CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

### **Terminology and approach**

New Brunswick uses the term “children with disabilities and additional needs” to encompass children with disabilities.

Since 2021, all licensed facilities must have an inclusion policy and implement inclusive practices.

The province provides inclusion funding to support the inclusion of an individual child or several children. Targeted and universal practices can support inclusion for all children.

### **Programs supporting inclusion in ELCC**

The Inclusion Support Program, Preschool Autism Program, and the Access Project facilitate participation of children with additional support needs in licensed child care in New Brunswick.

The [Inclusion Support Program](#) provides funding to support the wages of an inclusion support worker in licensed early learning and child care (ELCC) facilities. It is intended to increase accessibility for children with additional support needs who require support to meaningfully and actively participate in the daily activities while in child care. Inclusion support workers are funded



\$25.91 per hour (Level 1) and \$18.95 per hour (entry level) plus 14% for administrative costs (Employment Insurance, Canada Pension Plan, vacation pay), effective April 1, 2025. Eligibility for the program is determined through an annual application process. To be eligible, parents of the child with additional support needs must be working or attending school or training.

The Inclusion Support Program has two options: individualized support and the shared support model. Individualized support (one-on-one) is intended to support those children with the most intensive needs (long-term complex medical conditions). The shared support model allows for an inclusion support worker to support two to four children based on their individual and collective needs. The shared support model provides a balanced level of support for children to meaningfully participate and is tailored to provide individual support during targeted times, such as during activities, transitions, and routines. Early Learning Consultants in each of seven school district teams provide targeted inclusion support and universal inclusion support training. Child-specific support is provided through observation, documentation and planning, coaching on family engagement strategies, and accessing professional learning to build capacity for implementing inclusion practices. Universal inclusion support provides child care staff with access to professional learning to build capacity for developing and implementing inclusion policies and practices.

Children who have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder may participate in the [Preschool Autism Program](#). Through this program, children can obtain individualized intervention sessions within a child care facility for a portion of the day and may participate in daily activities at the facility with or without an inclusion support worker. The program provides evidence-based intervention services through a contracted agency on behalf of

the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. The agency provides services based on the principles of applied behaviour analysis, which aim to teach basic and complex skills in communication, social relationships, play, and self-care.

The Access Project is a fund for vulnerable children to access quality early learning. This funding is provided to centre operators to provide full-time licensed child care services for vulnerable four-year-olds who would otherwise be unable to attend. It covers 100 children from 2023 to 2026.

In New Brunswick, there is no child care service solely or primarily for children with disabilities.

### Access to inclusive ELCC

Child care programs are not required to accept children with disabilities.

Funding is available to cover all eligible children. A diagnosis is not required to access Inclusion Support Program funding.

Newly constructed child care facilities are required to meet the accessibility standards in the provincial and municipal building codes.

In New Brunswick, there is no wait for receiving inclusion funding.

See the [Inclusion Support Program Guidelines](#) for more information about New Brunswick's inclusion policies.

## FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE

In New Brunswick, 4.4% of the total population identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in the most recent census (2021). There are 31 reserves in the province, held by 15 First Nations. Approximately 56% of First Nations people live on reserve.

## First Nations child care on reserves

New Brunswick licenses on-reserve child care for First Nations communities upon request of the community. In 2022, eligibility for provincial funding and designation status was expanded to include licensed First Nations child care facilities on reserve.

In March 2025, there were six licensed full-day centres on First Nations reserves. Three of these licensed facilities are designated.

New Brunswick reports that Indigenous governing bodies operated five of these six centres. Welamukotuk First Nation, Madawaska Maliseet First Nation, and Tobique First Nation Child and Family Services each operate one centre, and Elsipogtog First Nation operates two centres. One additional centre located in a First Nations community is contracted out to a for-profit operator.

### Licensed spaces on reserve (2025)

Program type	Number of spaces
Full-day	188
Before- and after-school	54
<b>Total licensed spaces</b>	<b>242</b>

The number of unlicensed child care facilities on reserve is not available.

There are no regulated Early Learning and Child Care Homes on reserve.

Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (AHSOR) is licensed on request. In 2025, 15 AHSOR programs operated in New Brunswick.

## Indigenous child care other than on reserve

Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) may be licensed by the province on request. In 2025, there was one licensed AHSUNC program.

## Indigenous-specific resources/initiatives

The New Brunswick Indigenous Career College provides training to Indigenous early childhood educator (ECE) students.

## PARENT FEES

In June 2022, New Brunswick implemented set fees for children 0 – 5 years enrolled in a designated child care facility, representing an average fee reduction of 50%. The fees vary by age of child and size of community, and are outlined in a standard [parent fee grid](#).

As of April 2025, 96% of spaces for children 0 – 5 years were in designated facilities.

---

**Set parent fees in designated ELCC Centres and Homes (Effective June 1, 2022)**

<i>Large urban community</i>	<i>Infant</i>	<i>Preschool-age</i>
Full-day	\$21	\$18
Part-day	\$12	\$7
<i>Small urban and rural community</i>	<i>Infant</i>	<i>Preschool-age</i>
Full-day	\$19	\$16
Part-day	\$12	\$7

*Note: School-age spaces are not designated and are included in the non-designated fees.*

---

**Average daily parent fees in non-designated ELCC Centres (2022, 2025)**

<i>Age group</i>	<i>April 27, 2022</i>	<i>March 2025</i>
Full-time infant (0 – <2 years)	\$38.27	\$48.25
Full-time toddler (2 years)	\$30.95	\$34.45
Full-time preschool-age (3 – 5 years)	\$32.38	\$35.64
Part-time school-age	\$17.97	\$19.50

**Average daily parent fees in non-designated ELCC Homes (2022, 2025)**

<i>Age group</i>	<i>April 27, 2022</i>	<i>March 2025</i>
Full-time infant (0 – <2 years)	\$35.47	\$33.33
Full-time toddler (2 years)	\$34.50	\$32.67
Full-time preschool-age (3 – 5 years)	\$34.19	\$32.00
Part-time school-age	\$18.41	\$17.47

**Additional fees**

Operators are permitted to charge waitlist fees and additional fees for food, transportation, extended hours, and field trips. However, the services and their accompanying fees cannot be mandatory.

**Parent fee subsidies**

New Brunswick has two child care fee subsidy programs: the Parent Subsidy Program and the Daycare Assistance Program.

The Parent Subsidy Program is for families with children 0 – 5 years (not in school) enrolled in a designated centre or home.

The Daycare Assistance Program is for families with children 0 – 5 years enrolled in a non-designated facility and school-age children enrolled in either a designated or non-designated facility. The Daycare Assistance Program is administered by the Department of Social Development on behalf of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, which has budget responsibility.

In both subsidy programs, payment is made directly to child care service providers on behalf of subsidized parents. All eligible families are entitled to a fee subsidy. There is no waitlist.

All regulated child care services are eligible to enrol children receiving subsidies. Eligible services may be full- or part-time, centre- or home-based, non-profit or for-profit.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for either the Parent Subsidy Program or the Daycare Assistance Program, parents must be:

- Employed;
- Attending a training program; or
- Have special circumstances to qualify.

## FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

### Parent Subsidy Program

Families with a total annual gross income of \$37,500 or less are eligible for free child care for children under five years (not yet in school) at a designated centre or home. Partial subsidies are available on a sliding scale to families with a gross annual income between \$37,501 and \$80,000. Subsidy amounts take into account child care fees, the number of children under the age of five not attending school, and total annual gross household income. Families with multiple preschool-age children under the age of five do not pay more than 20% of their gross household annual income for child care for children 0 – 5 years enrolled in a designated facility, regardless of income level.

### Daycare Assistance Program

A family qualifies for a full subsidy up to \$22,000 net annual income. Families are subsidized on a sliding scale up to \$55,000 net annual income.

## SUBSIDY RATES

The subsidy rate is the maximum amount paid by the provincial government to the service on behalf

of a fully subsidized parent to cover all or part of the parent fee.

### Parent Subsidy Program

The maximum subsidy rate under the Parent Subsidy Program is the set parent fee in the standardized parent fee grid. Families who are not eligible for free child care are responsible for paying any difference between the set fee and their approved daily subsidy amount.

### Daycare Assistance Program

A family eligible for a fee subsidy is responsible for paying any difference between the fee charged by the centre or home and the approved subsidy amount. The provincial government pays fee subsidies to the child care service provider on behalf of the family.

**Daycare Assistance Program maximum daily subsidy rates for children 0 – 5 years enrolled in licensed, non-designated ELCC facilities and for school-age children in either a designated or non-designated facility (2025)**

Age group	Full-day	Part-day
Infant (0 – <2 years)	\$28.50	\$14.40
Children 2 – 13 years	\$24.25	\$12.75

### Additional programs that subsidize individual families

In addition to the fee subsidy programs parents use in regulated child care, the Alternative Child Care Program provides funding for eligible families to use in unlicensed child care if they are working or in training and do not have access to regulated child care due to where they live or their hours of work. It is administered by the Department of Social Development on behalf of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, which has the budget responsibility. Families must



demonstrate that they do not have reasonable access to a regulated ELCC facility within a five-kilometre radius of their home, workplace, or training institution.

The maximum daily subsidy for the Alternative Child Care Program is \$18.50 for infants, \$16.50 for children 2 – 5 years, and \$9.25 for school-age care. Maximum daily subsidy rates for part-day attendance are \$9.75 for infants and \$9.25 for children two years and older.

## ■ WORKFORCE

### Child care staff wages

#### PROVINCIAL WAGE DATA

Current average wage data are not available.

#### WAGE ENHANCEMENT

In May 2021, New Brunswick implemented the [Wage Support Program for Early Childhood Educators](#) (WSP-ECE) through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to support the recruitment and retention of trained early childhood educators (ECEs). Staff working in child care centres or family child care homes may be eligible for the WSP-ECE.

Wage top-up under the WSP-ECE is based on the following levels of training:

- Level 1: Certificate or diploma in early childhood education or university degree issued by a recognized Canadian post-secondary institution or equivalent; or
- Entry level: Completion of the “Introduction to Early Childhood Education” 90-hour online course, or untrained school-age educators or relief staff.

On April 1, 2022, wages were increased for trained ECEs working in school-age child care. Educators approved for Level 1 in the WSP-ECE saw their hourly wages rise from \$19.00 to \$21.47; the wage top-up increased from \$7.25/hour to \$9.72/hour. New Brunswick introduced a minimum wage offset of \$2.00 per hour paid to operators.

Also on April 1, 2022, wages for trained ECEs working in designated preschool-age facilities (0 – 5 years) were increased as follows:

- Level 1 in the WSP-ECE had an hourly wage increase from \$19.00 to \$23.47. This increased the wage top-up for Level 1 from \$7.25/hour to \$11.72/hour (including the province’s recent \$2/hour minimum wage increase).
- Entry level in the WSP-ECE had an hourly wage increase from \$14.90 to \$16.90. This increased the wage top-up for entry level from \$3.15/hour to \$5.15/hour (including the province’s recent \$2/hour minimum wage increase).

#### PROVINCIAL WAGE GRID

On November 1, 2022, New Brunswick launched the [Early Childhood Educator Wage Grid](#), which sets out the required minimum wage operators must pay eligible educators. The ECE Wage Grid standardizes wages based on educators’ experience and qualifications.

Wage increases took effect annually on April 1 from 2023 to 2025. The ECE Wage Grid increased by \$1/hour in April 2023, by 3.6% in April 2024, and by 2.2% across all levels and steps in April 2025.

## ECE Wage Grid funding amounts (2025)

	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3		
	Designated, 0 – 5 years	School-age	Designated, 0 – 5 years	School-age	Designated, 0 – 5 years	School-age	
<b>Level 1</b>	\$10.19	\$7.64	\$11.47	\$8.92	\$12.81	\$10.26	Wage support funding (includes \$2.55 minimum wage offset)
	\$13.10	\$15.65	\$13.10	\$15.65	\$13.10	\$15.65	Operator minimum contribution
	<b>\$23.29</b>	<b>\$23.29</b>	<b>\$24.57</b>	<b>\$24.57</b>	<b>\$25.91</b>	<b>\$25.91</b>	Minimum hourly wage rate
<b>Entry level</b>	\$3.73	\$1.18	\$4.76	\$2.21	\$5.85	\$3.30	Wage support funding (includes \$2.55 minimum wage offset)
	\$13.10	\$15.65	\$13.10	\$15.65	\$13.10	\$15.65	Operator minimum contribution
	<b>\$16.83</b>	<b>\$16.83</b>	<b>\$17.86</b>	<b>\$17.86</b>	<b>\$18.95</b>	<b>\$18.95</b>	Minimum hourly wage rate

## Minimum hourly wage (effective April 1, 2025)

Level	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Level 1	\$23.29	\$24.57	\$25.91
Entry level	\$16.83	\$17.86	\$18.95

On April 1, 2024, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development introduced a \$2.55/hour minimum wage offset as part of the WSP-ECE funding for educators working with children 0 – 5 years in a designated facility. The wage top-up for designated facilities includes the province's \$2.55/hour to offset the minimum wage increases.

The operator's minimum contribution to the wage of an educator working in a designated facility is \$13.10/hour. Operators of non-designated (0 – 5

years old) and school-age facilities are responsible for providing the provincial minimum wage (\$15.65/hour) to their educators.

Educators working exclusively in non-designated facilities with children 0 – 5 years continue to receive a wage top-up of \$7.25/hour for Level 1 and \$3.15/hour for entry level.

The following chart reflects a salary based on a standard 36-hour work week in 2025 and a tiered progression system.

## Typical ECE annual salary (2025)

Level	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Level 1	\$43,599	\$45,995	\$48,504
Entry level	\$31,506	\$33,434	\$35,474

These figures do not include an additional 14% administration fee or mandatory employment-related costs, such as Employment Insurance (EI), Canada Pension Plan (CPP), vacation pay (4% or 6%), and WorkSafeNB contributions, which are all included in all WSP-ECE funding.

For further information on the ECE Wage Grid and program eligibility see the WSP-ECE [program handbook](#).

### Staff benefits

New Brunswick does not provide or fund province-wide staff benefits to child care programs.

### Early childhood certification

New Brunswick currently does not have a provincial early childhood certification process. In 2021, the province completed an exploration of certification models across Canada to develop recommendations for an ECE certification program. No process had been established as of 2025.

## STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Child care centres and family child care homes must adhere to standards and regulations regarding staffing requirements, grouping of children, and licensing. Some additional key elements of child care standards and regulations, such as physical environments and food provision, are covered in the comparative tables in this publication, while others may be found in the [Early Childhood Services Act](#) and [Licensing Regulation – Early Childhood Services Act](#).

### Regulated child care centres

Child care centres are licensed under the [Early Childhood Services Act](#) and the [Licensing Regulation](#). The Act was most recently amended in 2023 (with substantial amendments in 2022), and the regulations were last amended in 2024.

### STAFF:CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZE

The maximum centre size in New Brunswick is 60 spaces.

## Staff:child ratio and maximum group size

<i>Single age group</i>	<i>Staff:child ratio</i>	<i>Maximum group size</i>
Infant	1:3	6
2 years	1:5	10
3 years	1:8	16
4 years and older, not yet in school	1:10	20
School-age	1:15	30
<i>Mixed-age group</i>	<i>Factors</i>	<i>Maximum group size</i>
<2 years	0.333	The number of children grouped at a full-day or part-day centre must not be more than the number that requires two educators.
2 years	0.200	
3 years	0.125	
4 years	0.100	
School-age	0.067	

*Note: If an infant is grouped at a full-day centre with children of a mixed-age group, the number of children grouped must not be more than the number that requires one educator. An infant may only be grouped with children of a mixed-age group outside the hours of 8:30 am to 4:30 pm and on the condition that the infant is grouped with preschool children and other infants.*

*Note: The number of educators required for a mixed-age group is calculated by multiplying the number of children of the same age by the corresponding factor and adding the results.*

## STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRES

### Qualification requirements for staffing a centre

In New Brunswick, staff qualification requirements are specified at the centre level.

At least 50% of educators in full- or part-day centres for children younger than school-age must hold a one-year Early Childhood Education Certificate or equivalent training. Any educator who does not meet this criterion must have successfully completed the “Introduction to Early Childhood Education” course.

Educators working in designated early learning and child care (ELCC) facilities are required to participate in 10 hours of professional learning each year. Educators in non-designated child care centres do not have regulated requirements for ongoing professional learning.

Staff working solely with school-age children in before- and after school programs do not have regulated early childhood qualification requirements.

### Requirements for on-site centre directors/ supervisors

An operator must appoint an individual as administrator to provide on-site supervision of the day-to-day activities of a facility. An operator/ owner may be considered an administrator if carrying out these duties.

Administrators must hold a one-year Early Childhood Education Certificate or equivalent training.

### Other requirements

All administrators, educators, and staff must be at least 16 years old. Educators who are under 19 years of age are required to be supervised by an educator who is at least 19 years of age.



All administrators and staff counted in the staff:child ratio must have first aid training, a CPR certificate, a criminal record check and/or vulnerable sector check depending on their role in the facility, and a check with the Department of Social Development at least every five years.

### LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES

A licence may be issued for up to one year. Centres are inspected annually for licence renewal, and one to three additional times per year for monitoring. See the [Operator Manual: Full-time and Part-time Early Learning and Childcare Centres](#) for more information.

### Regulated family child care

In New Brunswick, regulated family child care homes are called Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Homes. ELCC Homes are licensed under the [Early Childhood Services Act](#) and [Licensing Regulation – Early Childhood Services Act](#).

### MODEL OF ORGANIZATION

ELCC Homes are individually licensed. Care is to be provided in the provider's personal residence.

### MAXIMUM CAPACITY

Only one of the following groups of children may be cared for in a home at any one time:

- three infants;
- five preschool-age children;
- nine school-age children; or
- six mixed-age children with at least one school-age child and no more than two infants.

In all these variations, the provider's own children count toward the maximum number of children.

### FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

Family child care providers must have successfully completed the 90-hour "Introduction to Early Childhood Education" course. In addition, providers must have a criminal record check, vulnerable sector check, and check with the Department of Social Development conducted at least every five years.

Operators of designated New Brunswick ELCC Homes are required to participate in 10 hours of professional learning each licensing year. There are no requirements for ongoing professional learning for non-designated ELCC Home providers.

An alternate care provider may provide care in a child care home in the absence of the provider. This person may also be referred to as a staff member and must meet all staff requirements, including current first aid and CPR training and the required checks.

Any adult 18 years and over living in the home where the centre operates must complete a criminal record check and a check with the Department of Social Development.

### LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

A licence may be issued for up to one year. Homes are inspected annually for licence renewal, and one to three additional times per year for monitoring. See the [Operator Manual: Early Learning and Childcare Homes](#) for more information.

## ■ OF INTEREST

### Municipal role

While there is no mandated or formal role for municipalities in the delivery of early learning and child care, two towns operate child care centres. The Town of Woodstock one full-day program



(licensed in 2005) and one school-aged program (licensed in 2015). The Town of Bathurst operates a full-time child care centre, licensed in 1999.

### **Family Resource Centres**

Family Resource Centres are operated by non-profit organizations and funded through the federal Community Action Program for Children and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. The New Brunswick Association of Family Resource Centres supports the 13 Family Resource Centres operating in New Brunswick, which have a network of over 90 outreach sites across the province, including remote rural areas.

## CHILD CARE DATA

### ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

#### Number of spaces (2024, 2025)

<b>Full-day centre spaces</b>	<b>2024</b>		<b>2025</b>	
	<i>Anglophone</i>	<i>Francophone</i>	<i>Anglophone</i>	<i>Francophone</i>
Infant (0 – <2 years)	1,484	845	1,644	873
Preschool-age (2 – <5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	8,981	4,803	9,681	4,985
<b>Total full-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>16,113</b>		<b>17,183</b>	
<b>Part-day centre spaces</b>	<i>Anglophone</i>		<i>Anglophone</i>	
	<i>Anglophone</i>	<i>Francophone</i>	<i>Anglophone</i>	<i>Francophone</i>
Infant (0 – <2 years)	6	0	6	0
Preschool-age (2 – <5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	537	104	448	120
<b>Total part-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>647</b>		<b>574</b>	
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>16,760</b>		<b>17,757</b>	
<b>Before- and after-school care centre spaces (licensed or regulated)</b>	<i>Anglophone</i>		<i>Anglophone</i>	
	<i>Anglophone</i>	<i>Francophone</i>	<i>Anglophone</i>	<i>Francophone</i>
Kindergarten and Grades 1 – 6	10,375	6,718	10,441	6,587
<b>Total before- and after-school care centre spaces</b>	<b>17,093</b>		<b>17,028</b>	
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>33,853</b>		<b>34,785</b>	
<b>Family child care licensed capacity</b>	<i>Anglophone</i>		<i>Anglophone</i>	
	<i>Anglophone</i>	<i>Francophone</i>	<i>Anglophone</i>	<i>Francophone</i>
Full-day (children not yet in kindergarten or school)	327	226	371	230
Part-day (children attending kindergarten or school)	176	98	171	97
<b>Total family child care spaces</b>	<b>827</b>		<b>869</b>	
<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)</b>	<b>34,680</b>		<b>35,654</b>	

## Number of child care centres and family child care homes (2024)

Centre-based child care	Anglophone	Francophone
<b>Total number of centres</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>189</b>
<b>Total number of Anglophone and Francophone centres</b>		<b>553</b>
<i>Note: In previous versions of ECEC in Canada, New Brunswick has reported individual licences in place of centres. For consistency with other jurisdictions, the 2024 centre data reflect the number of centres. In 2023, there were 358 Anglophone and 181 Francophone centres in New Brunswick (539 total).</i>		
<b>Total number of licences</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>269</b>
Centre-based programs	Anglophone	Francophone
Centres providing a full-day program	251	130
Centres providing a part-day (nursery or preschool) program	28	7
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 5 – 12 years)	295	166
Centres that are designated Early Learning and Child Care Centres	251	128
Centres that are not designated Early Learning and Child Care Centres	157	93
<i>Note: In this report, in instances where a designated centre and a non-designated centre are located in the same building, they are counted as two separate centres.</i>		
Centres providing infant care (<2 years)	148	86
Centres providing preschool-age care (2 – <5 years)	270	133
Centres providing a Francophone child care program	0	189
Centres providing non-standard hours care (as defined by the province)	11	1
Centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – Grade 12)	63	59
<i>Note: In previous versions of ECEC in Canada, New Brunswick has reported individual licences in place of centres. The 2024 data reflect the number of centres, so are not directly comparable with previous versions of ECEC in Canada.</i>		
Regulated family child care	Anglophone	Francophone
Early Learning and Child Care Homes	73	51
<b>Total number of family child care homes</b>		<b>124</b>
Participation in CWELCC	Anglophone	Francophone
Centres providing a full-day program	237	124
Centres providing a part-day (nursery or preschool) program	22	5
<b>Total number of child care centres receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>Total number of licensed family child care homes receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>45</b>

## Auspice (2024)

---

### Centres by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit	389
Non-profit	158
Public	6

*Note: In previous versions of ECEC in Canada, New Brunswick has reported individual licences in place of centres. The 2024 data reflect the number of centres. In 2023, there were 383 for-profit, 150 non-profit, and 6 public centres.*

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>Part-day</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	11,414	255	10,761	22,430
Non-profit	4,469	392	6,228	11,089
Public	230	0	104	334

<sup>1</sup> Nursery/preschool.

<sup>2</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

---

## Auspice (2025)

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>Part-day</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	12,088	201	10,903	23,192
Non-profit	4,907	373	6,045	11,325
Public	188	0	80	268

<sup>1</sup> Nursery/preschool.

<sup>2</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

---

## Publicly operated child care (2024)

### Publicly operated child care

Entity type	Licence holders	Centres	Full-day spaces	BASC spaces <sup>1</sup>	Total spaces
Municipality	2	2	36	50	86
Indigenous governing body	4	4	194	54	248
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>334</b>

*Note: The City of Bathurst and the Town of Woodstock operate child care centres.*

<sup>1</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

## Fee subsidies (2024)

### Number of children receiving fee subsidies

Daycare Assistance Program – total	1,955
Parent Subsidy Program – full subsidy	2,242
Parent Subsidy Program – partial subsidy	2,112
<b>Total children receiving fee subsidies</b>	<b>6,309</b>

## Disability support (2024)

### Number of children receiving disability support

Children in licensed child care receiving disability support funding	794
--	-----

## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

In previous versions of *ECEC in Canada*, New Brunswick has reported enrolment as full-time equivalents (FTE). The 2024 data reflect the actual number of children enrolled (headcounts) so are not directly comparable with previous versions of *ECEC in Canada*.

## Number of children enrolled (2024)

<b>Full-day centre enrolment</b>	<i>Anglophone</i>	<i>Francophone</i>
Infant (0 – <2 years)	1,361	707
Preschool-age (2 – <5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	8,073	3,898
<b>Total full-day centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>		<b>14,039</b>
<b>Part-day centre enrolment</b>	<i>Anglophone</i>	<i>Francophone</i>
Preschool-age (2 – <5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	377	21
<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>		<b>14,437</b>
<i>Note: When calculated as headcounts instead of FTE, 2023 total centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years) was 13,880.</i>		
<b>Before- and after-school care enrolment (licensed or regulated)</b>	<i>Anglophone</i>	<i>Francophone</i>
Kindergarten and Grades 1 – 6	7,461	4,390
<b>Total before- and after-school care enrolment</b>		<b>11,851</b>
<i>Note: Enrolment data for before- and after-school care centres is incomplete, as operators are not required to report on school-age enrolment.</i>		
<i>Note: When calculated as headcounts instead of FTE, 2023 before- and after-school care enrolment was 11,113.</i>		
<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>		<b>26,288</b>
<i>Note: When calculated as headcounts instead of FTE, 2023 total centre enrolment (children 0 – 12 years) was 24,993.</i>		
<b>Full-day family child care enrolment</b>	<i>Anglophone</i>	<i>Francophone</i>
Not attending kindergarten or school	332	200
<b>Part-day family child care enrolment</b>	<i>Anglophone</i>	<i>Francophone</i>
Attending kindergarten or school	155	88
<i>Note: Part-day family child care enrolment data for children attending kindergarten or school is incomplete, as providers are not required to report on school-age enrolment.</i>		
<b>Total family child care enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>		<b>775</b>
<i>Note: When calculated as headcounts instead of FTE, 2023 total family child care enrolment was 803.</i>		
<b>TOTAL REGULATED ENROLMENT (centre and family child care enrolment)</b>	<b>27,063</b>	
<i>Note: When calculated as headcounts instead of FTE, 2023 total regulated enrolment (centre and family child care enrolment) was 25,796.</i>		



## CHILD CARE FUNDING

The types of funding available for child care services in New Brunswick include operational funding, one-time funding, fee subsidies, and other ELCC funding programs.

### ■ ELIGIBILITY FOR CWELCC FUNDING

The CWELCC plan provides federal funds to provinces and territories for early learning and child care operational and one-time funding and fee subsidies for licensed child care for children aged 0 – 5. Funded new child care expansion is to be public and non-profit unless otherwise specified in the jurisdiction's agreement. Provinces and territories contribute their own funds and design their own policies and provision within this framework.

In New Brunswick, the following are eligible for operational funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools); and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres are eligible for operational funding.

In New Brunswick, the following are eligible for capital funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed and designated full-day centres;
- Licensed and designated part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools); and
- Licensed/approved and designated family child care.

New or expanded designated for-profit centres are eligible for capital funding.

### ■ CHILD CARE SERVICES' ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

Non-profit and for-profit facilities are eligible for specific funding according to program guidelines.

Funding specific to designated Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centres and Homes is not available to non-designated centres or homes. Both non-profit and for-profit programs are eligible for designation.

Funding specific to designated facilities includes operational grants, wage enhancement for ECEs, and the Parent Subsidy Program. Designated facilities are also eligible to apply for one-time capital funding and Quality Improvement Grants.

Non-designated facilities are eligible to receive a lower wage top-up for educators, and eligible parents can access the Daycare Assistance Program to offset parent fees at non-designated facilities.

### ■ TYPES OF FUNDING

#### **Operational funding**

##### **OPERATING GRANT**

Operational funding is available to designated ELCC Centres and ELCC Homes. Operational grants are paid monthly to designated facilities to offset the costs of administering the program and maintaining the low fee policy. Operational funding is based on enrolment and is reported through the Operator Portal.

Funding includes the following components:

- Infant Operating Grant – ELCC Centres receive \$15.00/enrolled infant space/day.
- Quality Grant – All designated centres and homes are eligible to receive an operational grant of \$3.00/enrolled preschool-age space/day.

## WAGE SUPPORT PROGRAM

The [Wage Support Program for Early Childhood Educators](#) (WSP-ECE) provides funding to eligible child care operators to support wages for the child care workforce. Licensed child care operators who register for the program and agree to its terms and conditions may receive funding for qualifying educators. Registration must be renewed annually.

Before May 2021, the WSP-ECE was known as the Quality Improvement Funding Support Program (QIFS).

Before the ECE Wage Grid was introduced in November 2022, WSP-ECE was administered as wage top-up based on educator qualifications and facility designation. For information on the previous top-up amounts and current wage rates paid to educators, see the New Brunswick “Workforce” section.

Operators of non-designated facilities and school-age services are responsible for meeting the minimum wage requirements in order to qualify for the hourly wage top-up.

For more information, see WSP-ECE program [handbook](#).

## INCLUSION SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Inclusion Support Program provides funding to support the wages of an inclusion support worker in licensed ELCC facilities. See New Brunswick’s [“Children with disabilities”](#) section for more information.

## PARENT FEE REDUCTION SUBSIDY

On June 1, 2022, the Fee Reduction Subsidy for operators of designated centres was introduced. This subsidy covers the difference between the new set fees in the parent fee grid and the fees on record for the designated facility.

## ACCESS PROJECT

The Access Project is a fund for vulnerable children to access quality early learning. This funding is provided to centre operators to provide full-time licensed child care services for vulnerable four-year-olds who would otherwise be unable to attend. It covers 100 children from 2023 to 2026.

## PRESCHOOL AUTISM PROGRAM

Children who have a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder may participate in the Preschool Autism Program. See New Brunswick’s [“Children with disabilities”](#) section for more information.

## One-time funding

### NEW BRUNSWICK EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE PRESCHOOL DESIGNATED SPACE CREATION

Capital funding is available to eligible applicants through a call for proposals to establish new designated preschool spaces in New Brunswick. Funding is also available to support existing operators of designated not-for-profit ELCC services and designated ELCC homes to expand infant spaces. There are three capital funding categories: Designation Start-Up Funding – New Licence ELCC Coordination Grant, New Space Creation Implementation Grant, and Expansion for Infants Spaces Grant – Renovations.

The Designation Start-up Funding – New Licence ELCC Coordination Grant covers essential start-up costs, including:

- Project coordination;
- Architectural and engineering fees;
- Financial analysis for long-term viability; and
- Development of exterior playground and parking plans.

Up to \$270,000 is available for for-profit and not-for-profit ELCC centres, and up to \$6,000



is available for ELCC homes. Applicants who have successfully obtained a new license for an ELCC centre or home are eligible.

The New Space Creation Implementation Grant is available for pedagogical materials and equipment. Applicants opening a new licensed ELCC centre or home are eligible to receive \$5,000 per infant space and \$500 per preschool space.

The Expansion for Infants Spaces Grant – Renovations funds renovations to expand infant spaces in existing ELCC centres and homes. It is available to current ELCC operators adding new infant spaces or expanding under the Policy 901 exemption for not-for-profit ELCC centres and homes.

ELCC homes are eligible for \$3,000 per infant space. For-profit and not-for-profit ELCC centres are eligible for \$10,000 per infant space.

For further details on the capital funding programs, see [Early Learning and Childcare Preschool Designated Spaces Creation](#).

## Fee subsidies

New Brunswick has two kinds of fee subsidies: the Parent Subsidy Program for designated early learning facilities and the Daycare Assistance Program for non-designated facilities and school-age facilities. See New Brunswick's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

## Other ELCC funding

### MICRO-CREDENTIALING, ONLINE PART-TIME ECE TRAINING, AND WORK STUDY ECE GRANTS

The micro-credentialing program is an onsite training program offered by New Brunswick Community College (NBCC) for the Anglophone sector. The program is offered free of charge (tuition and books) to obtain the one-year college certificate. It is offered to educators who have

worked for a minimum of three years in a licensed ELCC facility with children under five years and who have completed the "Introduction to Early Childhood Education" course.

*Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick* (CCNB) offers online part-time ECE training for the Francophone sector. It is offered free of charge (tuition and books) to obtain a one-year college certificate. It is offered to educators currently working in a designated ELCC facility with children under the age of five. The operator also receives staff replacement and technology funding to support the ELCC educators in their learning.

Work Study ECE training is offered by CCNB for the Francophone sector free of charge (tuition and books). To achieve the one-year college certificate, the currently employed educators must work in a designated ELCC facility with children under the age of five; the educator studies in the morning and works in the afternoon. The operator receives staff replacement and technology funding to support the ELCC educators in their learning without losing their wages.

### EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE TUITION REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

Funding up to \$3,000 is available to ECE graduates who completed their certificate or diploma after January 1, 2007, and are currently working in a licensed ELCC facility in New Brunswick. Individuals are not eligible for this fund if they receive 100% funding from Employment Insurance, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD), Post-Secondary Student Support Program (PSSSP), or their employer for the ECE program.

## ASSOCIATION FRANCOPHONE DES GARDERIES ÉDUCATIVES DU NOUVEAU BRUNSWICK

The Association Francophone des Garderies Éducatives du Nouveau Brunswick receives an annual grant to support their activities to support Francophone educators and operators of licensed ELCC facilities. These activities include recruitment and retention, recognition of the profession, and development of the social-enterprise model and their organizational needs.

## DEVELOPMENTAL CHILD CARE PROGRAM

The Developmental Child Care Program is specific to preschool-age children (ages three and four) whose families are receiving services through the Early Intervention Program. The program may include children with additional support needs, but the primary focus is children living in conditions of vulnerability who have developmental delays or may be at risk in their development. The goal is to increase their skills, abilities, learnings, and development during the year prior to entering school. This program is offered 12 hours per week.

## FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024)

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

### Operational funding

Program	Amount
Wage Support Program	\$77,074,310
Inclusion Support Program	\$15,367,073
Parent Fee Reduction Subsidy	\$64,460,749
Access Project	\$486,340
Operational Grant	\$16,850,513
Preschool Autism Program	\$21,700,000
<b>Total operational funding</b>	<b>\$195,938,985</b>

*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, disability funding, and other grants/funding paid on a recurring basis.*

### One-time funding – capital (major and minor)

Program	Amount
Designation Start-up Funding: New Licence ELCC Coordination Grant	\$5,167,643
New Space Creation Implementation Grant	\$799,500
Expansion for Infants Spaces Grant – Renovations	\$367,500

### One-time funding – other

Program	Amount
Recruitment and retention	\$150,000
Quality – ECE College Training	\$3,214,798
Micro-credentialing, Online part-time ECE training, and Work Study ECE Grants	\$1,385,286
<b>Total one-time funding</b>	<b>\$11,084,727</b>

*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.*

## Fee subsidies

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Daycare Assistance Program	\$7,427,363
Parent Subsidy Program	\$9,820,178
<b>Total fee subsidies</b>	<b>\$17,247,541</b>

*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 directly to service providers.*

<b>TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, and fee subsidies)</b>	<b>\$224,271,253</b>
---	----------------------

## Other ELCC funding

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Early Learning and Child Care Tuition Reimbursement Program	\$710,941
Association Francophone des Garderies Éducatives du NB	\$130,000
Family Resource Centres (New Brunswick Association of Family Resource Programs)	\$390,000
Professional Development (all school districts)	\$388,449
Inclusion NB – Professional development	\$262,781
<b>Total other ELCC funding</b>	<b>\$1,882,171</b>

## Federal transfers to New Brunswick

<i>Federal transfer</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$13,237,685
Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care	\$106,325,970
Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$2,899,823

*Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to New Brunswick for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements, as they are updated annually in line with population estimates. 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 (2025).



# Quebec

Overview	149	<b>CHILD CARE FUNDING</b>	<b>174</b>
Provincial context	151	Eligibility for CWELCC funding	174
<b>KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA</b>	<b>154</b>	Child care services' eligibility for funding	174
Kindergarten for four- and five-year-olds ( <i>maternelle</i> )	154	Types of funding	174
Curriculum framework	155	Funding for regulated child care (fiscal year 2023 – 2024)	178
Enrolment	155		
Recent or anticipated developments	155		
Other early childhood programs	155		
<b>CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>157</b>		
Administration	157		
Curriculum framework	159		
Children with disabilities	159		
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care	161		
Parent fees	161		
Workforce	162		
Standards and regulations	165		
Of interest	167		
<b>CHILD CARE DATA</b>	<b>169</b>		
Regulated child care space statistics	169		
Regulated child care enrolment statistics	172		



# Quebec

## ■ OVERVIEW

In Quebec, the *Ministère de la Famille* is responsible for regulated child care centres for children not yet in school and for family child care. The *Ministère de l'Éducation* is responsible for kindergarten and school-age child care.

Licensed child care includes non-profit child care centres (*centres de la petite enfance*; CPE), funded and unfunded daycare centres (termed *garderies*), and family child care. School-age child care programs (*Services de garde en milieu scolaire*) in Quebec are not licensed. School-age child care is publicly funded and considered technically regulated under the *Education Act* and its regulations.

Centre-based child care is delivered by non-profit and for-profit operators, with a modest majority of spaces operated by for-profit operators. CPEs are operationally funded non-profit centres. Both funded and unfunded *garderies* are primarily for-profit. Other than Indigenous child care on reserves and Inuit lands, there is no publicly delivered full-day child care.

Family child care (termed Home Educational Child Care, Educational Home Child Care Services, or recognized Family Home Child Care) is operationally funded and operates under an agency model. Agencies are called Home Child Care Coordinating Offices (*Bureaux coordonnateurs de la garde éducative en milieu familial*).

Full school-day kindergarten is available for all five-year-olds (*maternelle 5 ans*) and is being phased in for four-year-olds (*maternelle 4 ans*). Kindergarten for four- and five-year-olds is not compulsory.

Quebec has set province-wide parent fees for all publicly funded reduced contribution CPEs and funded *garderies* since September 1, 1997. The provincially set parent fees are indexed annually on January 1. Unfunded *garderies* set their own market-based fees. Eligible parents whose children attend unfunded *garderies* can claim a refundable Tax Credit for Child Care Expenses. Quebec has not used a parent fee subsidy program since operational funding was introduced in 1997. However, some Quebec parents, including social assistance recipients, pay no fees when using publicly funded child care.

Since 2006, Quebec has used a provincial wage scale (*taux et échelles de salaires du personnel de garde*) for CPEs, funded *garderies*, and Home Child Care Coordinating Offices. Quebec is the sole province with a sizable unionized child care workforce. About half of the child care workforce in Quebec is represented by one of three unions. Many family child care providers are also unionized.

While the Government of Quebec supports the general principles of the Early Learning and Child Care Framework, it does not adhere to the Framework as it intends to preserve its sole responsibility in this area

on its territory. The Government of Quebec expects to receive its share of the federal funding and will continue to invest significantly toward programs and services for families and children.

Quebec signed the Asymmetrical Agreement on the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Component in August 2021. As under its previous ELCC agreements, Québec intends to use a significant portion of the contribution made under the agreement to fund further improvement to its early learning and child care system. The agreement allocated \$5.96 billion over five years to the province.

In March 2025, Quebec accepted the federal offer to extend its asymmetrical agreement until 2031.

Please note that many of the webpages linked in this section are only available in French.

#### **Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025</b>
Non-profit and public	96,127	110,358	+14,231
For-profit	118,041	126,644	+8,603
<b>Total full-day spaces</b>	<b>214,168</b>	<b>237,002</b>	<b>+22,834</b>
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	55%	53%	-1.7%
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit	-	-	38%



## ■ PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded; however, the totals are based on exact figures. Therefore, totals may not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

---

### **Number of children 0 – 12 years (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0	66,800
1	83,400
2	79,500
3	94,300
4	83,100
5	91,700
6	88,400
7	98,900
8	97,700
9	100,800
10	98,000
11	98,800
12	89,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,171,200</b>

---

### **Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	229,700
3 – 5	269,100
6 – 12	672,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,171,200</b>

---

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0	51,700
1	62,400
2	61,600
3	74,200
4	63,400
5	69,000
6	65,800
7	71,500
8	71,400
9	76,400
10	77,200
11	74,500
12	68,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>887,300</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	175,700
3 – 5	206,600
6 – 12	505,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>887,300</b>

---

**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	7,075	3,265	1,965	215	460
5 – 9	8,105	3,810	1,740	205	445
10 – 14	9,040	4,295	1,720	240	530
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,220</b>	<b>11,370</b>	<b>5,425</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>1,435</b>

---

### Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age of youngest child</i>	<i>Number of mothers</i>	<i>Participation rate (%)</i>
0 – 3	212,600	84.2
4 – 5	86,000	87.4
0 – 5	298,600	85.1
6 – 12	262,800	90.3

### Living arrangements by age of child (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Living with two parents</i>	<i>Living with one parent</i>		<i>Total</i>
		<i>Lone mother</i>	<i>Lone father</i>	
0 – 4	365,185	43,155	10,615	<b>53,765</b>
5 – 9	374,500	73,075	26,105	<b>99,175</b>
10 – 14	358,790	89,780	33,835	<b>123,610</b>

### Languages spoken most often at home (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Non-official</i>	<i>Multiple</i>
0 – 4	41,795	321,235	36,795	22,955
5 – 9	47,860	369,050	34,625	27,240
10 – 14	49,570	377,360	33,655	28,335
<b>Total</b>	<b>139,225</b>	<b>1,067,650</b>	<b>105,075</b>	<b>78,525</b>

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

<i>Two-parent families</i>	<i>Male lone parent</i>	<i>Female lone parent</i>
\$98,000	\$51,200	\$49,200

## KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA

### KINDERGARTEN FOR FOUR- AND FIVE-YEAR-OLDS (MATERNELLE)

#### Provincial responsibility

Ministère de l'Éducation

Direction des programmes d'études de la formation générale des jeunes maternelle 4 et 5 ans

Responsable du programme d'éducation préscolaire

Phone: 418-644-5240, poste 2517

Email: [fji\\_presco@education.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:fji_presco@education.gouv.qc.ca)

Website: [quebec.ca/education/prescolaire-primaire-et-secondaire/programmes-formations-evaluation/programme-formation-ecole-quebecoise/education-prescolaire](http://quebec.ca/education/prescolaire-primaire-et-secondaire/programmes-formations-evaluation/programme-formation-ecole-quebecoise/education-prescolaire)

#### Legislation

Quebec. National Assembly. [Education Act](#).

CQLRYEAR C- I-13.3. Amended Bill 41 (2001, c. 30), Bill 35. (2001, c. 46), R.S.Q., C- I-14, C- E 9.1, Bill 5 (2019, c. 24).

Quebec. National Assembly. [Education Act for Cree, Inuit and Naskapi Native Persons](#). R.S.Q., c. I-14.

Quebec. National Assembly. [Act Respecting Private Schools](#), Chapter E 9.1.

Quebec. National Assembly. [Bill 5: An Act To Amend the Education Act and Other Provisions Regarding Preschool Education Services for Students 4 Years of Age](#) (2019, c. 24).

#### Provision

##### *Maternelle 5 ans provision*

<b>Definition</b>	Full school-day program for all five-year-old children. Available in English and French in public and publicly funded private schools.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Five years old by September 30.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Not compulsory.
<b>Entitlement</b>	All eligible children have access.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Full school-day (23.5 hours per week for 36 weeks).
<b>Class size</b>	Maximum 19 children or 14 children in multi-age groups.

##### *Maternelle 4 ans provision*

<b>Definition</b>	Full school-day program being phased in for four-year-olds. Available in English and French in public and publicly funded private schools.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Four years old by September 30.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Not compulsory.
<b>Entitlement</b>	Access is uneven, as the program is being phased in.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Full school-day (23.5 hours per week for 36 weeks).
<b>Class size</b>	Maximum 17 children; average 14.

## Teacher qualifications and certification

*Maternelle 5 ans* and *maternelle 4 ans* teachers require a four-year Bachelor of Education in Kindergarten and Elementary Education (*Baccalauréat en Éducation préscolaire et enseignement au primaire*). A provisional teaching licence may be issued to individuals with a *Collège d'enseignement général et professionnel* (CEGEP) diploma in early childhood education who are enrolled in a teacher education program if they have completed nine credits in an accredited preschool and elementary school teacher education program and have at least 3,000 hours of experience in an early childhood setting. Additionally, teachers are required to take at least 30 hours of continuing education every two years.

In addition to a full-time licensed teacher, *maternelle 4 ans* classes are also staffed by a qualified education professional who is specialized in the development of preschool-age children. This professional could be, for example, a special education technician (*technicienne/technicien en éducation spécialisée*) or an early childhood educator. They must be present for half of the class time as support for the teacher.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

[Preschool Cycle Program](#) (2023) is a mandatory curriculum framework for kindergarten in all public and publicly funded private schools in Quebec.

## ENROLMENT

### Kindergarten enrolment (2024 – 2025 school year)

	Full school-day	Part-day
<b>Enrolment in public schools</b>		
Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	83,046	-
Kindergarten for 4-year-olds	18,791	303
<b>Enrolment in private/independent schools</b>		
Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	5,242	-
Kindergarten for 4-year-olds	691	-
<b>Total kindergarten enrolment for 5-year-olds</b>	<b>88,288</b>	-
<b>Total kindergarten enrolment for 4-year-olds</b>	<b>19,482</b>	<b>303</b>
<b>Total kindergarten enrolment</b>		<b>108,073</b>

## RECENT OR ANTICIPATED DEVELOPMENTS

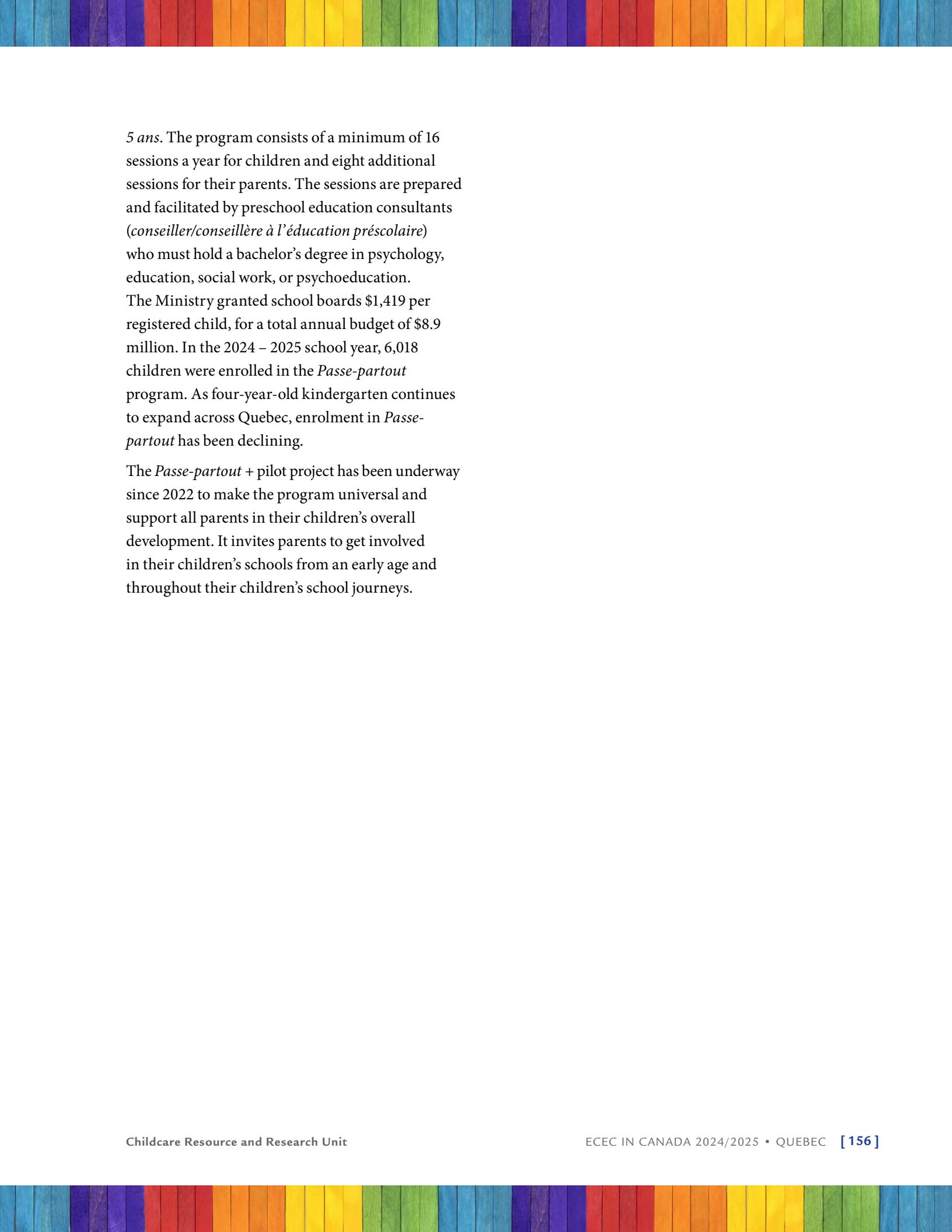
### Pilot project for children with disabilities

In 2023 – 2024, a pilot project was launched in 22 *Maternelle 4 ans* classes for four-year-olds with disabilities or learning or adjustment difficulties. The pilot was mostly in mainstream schools and regional and supra-regional schooling services.

## OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

### *Passe-partout*

The *Ministère de l'Éducation* oversees the [Passe-partout](#) program. It targets four-year-olds and their parents to support the transition from home to school in the year before attending *Maternelle*.



5 ans. The program consists of a minimum of 16 sessions a year for children and eight additional sessions for their parents. The sessions are prepared and facilitated by preschool education consultants (*conseiller/conseillère à l'éducation préscolaire*) who must hold a bachelor's degree in psychology, education, social work, or psychoeducation.

The Ministry granted school boards \$1,419 per registered child, for a total annual budget of \$8.9 million. In the 2024 – 2025 school year, 6,018 children were enrolled in the *Passe-partout* program. As four-year-old kindergarten continues to expand across Quebec, enrolment in *Passe-partout* has been declining.

The *Passe-partout* + pilot project has been underway since 2022 to make the program universal and support all parents in their children's overall development. It invites parents to get involved in their children's schools from an early age and throughout their children's school journeys.

# CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

## ■ ADMINISTRATION

### Provincial responsibility

*Ministère de la Famille*

Phone: 1-855-336-8568

Email: [renseignements@mfa.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:renseignements@mfa.gouv.qc.ca)

FR website: [quebec.ca/famille-et-soutien-aux-personnes/enfance/garderies-et-services-de-garde](http://quebec.ca/famille-et-soutien-aux-personnes/enfance/garderies-et-services-de-garde)

EN website: [quebec.ca/en/family-and-support-for-individuals/childhood/childcare-centres](http://quebec.ca/en/family-and-support-for-individuals/childhood/childcare-centres)

*Ministère de l'Éducation*

*Direction des encadrements pédagogiques et scolaires*

Phone: 418-644-5686

Email: [fgj\\_presco@education.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:fgj_presco@education.gouv.qc.ca)

Website: [quebec.ca/en/education/preschool-elementary-and-secondary-schools/programs-training-evaluation/kindergarten](http://quebec.ca/en/education/preschool-elementary-and-secondary-schools/programs-training-evaluation/kindergarten)

### Legislation

Quebec. National Assembly. [\*Educational Childcare Act\*](#). CQLR c. S-4.1.1.

Quebec. National Assembly. [\*Educational Childcare Regulation\*](#). CQLR c. S-4.1.1, r 2.

Quebec. National Assembly. [\*Reduced Contribution Regulation\*](#). CQLR c. S-4.1.1, r. 1.

Quebec. National Assembly. [\*Education Act\*](#). CQLR c. I-13.3.

Quebec. National Assembly. [\*Regulation Respecting Childcare Services Provided at School\*](#). CQLR c. I-13.3, r. 11.

## Service descriptions

### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

In Quebec, unregulated child care is termed non-recognized child care. There are no health, safety, or training requirements or provision for public oversight in unregulated child care. To be legal, unregulated child care must respect certain conditions (see below). There may be attention by public officials on a complaint basis. See section six of the [\*Educational Childcare Act\*](#) for more information.

### School-age child care

School-age child care in Quebec, under the *Ministère de l'Éducation*, is not licensed, but it is funded and considered to be technically regulated. See the “Regulated child care” section below.

### Family child care

A person providing unregulated family child care in a private residence (termed non-recognized Home Child Care) may care for a maximum of six children, including the provider's children under nine years. No more than two children can be under the age of 18 months. Since 2018, non-recognized Home Child Care providers have been required to meet additional conditions beyond the number of children: Providers must have liability insurance of at least \$1 million and not been convicted of an offence for inappropriate conduct under section 6.2 of the *Educational Childcare Act* within the last two years. Providers must have a valid first aid certificate specific to young children. The provider and each adult living in the residence must also have a criminal background check or verification that no impediment exists.



Effective September 2026, most unregulated (non-recognized) family child care will be illegal. A person without a licence to provide family child care will be limited to a maximum of two children or to a family of more than two children if they normally live together in the same home. See Bill 1, [An Act To Amend the Educational Child Care Act To Improve Access to the Educational Child Care Services Network and Complete Its Development](#), enacted in April 2022, for more information.

### **Stop-over Centre Initiatives**

Stop-over Centre Initiatives (called *Halte-garderies*) are drop-in occasional or temporary child care centres. In 2024 – 2025, more than 270 organizations received funding for stop-over initiatives. Community Stop-over Initiatives and Stop-over Centre Initiatives in an Educational Setting are two types of unregulated Stop-over Initiatives.

Community Stop-over Initiatives are temporary and casual child care offered by community organizations to enable family members to participate in activities offered by the organization. The child care may be one-off, part-time, or full-time, but for a limited period. These initiatives are distinct from Educational Child Care services. Community Stop-over Initiatives must complement the organization's mission.

Non-profit organizations offer Stop-over Centre Initiatives in an Educational Setting exclusively for the children of student-parents, supporting the parents to balance family, work, and studies.

### **REGULATED CHILD CARE**

In Quebec, regulated child care is called regulated educational child care.

#### **Non-profit child care centre**

Non-profit child care centres (*centres de la petite enfance*) are referred to as CPEs, Educational Child Care centres, reduced contribution centres, or

subsidized/funded centres. They are operationally funded by the province according to a cost-based formula and must charge a provincially set fee that is the same for all age groups and indexed to inflation annually. A CPE must be a non-profit legal entity or a cooperative; their board of directors must have at least seven members of whom at least two thirds are parents of children enrolled in the CPE.

CPEs provide care for eligible children from birth until they are admitted to preschool or elementary school or, at the latest, until the first day of the school calendar in the school year following the year they turn six years old. Children may be present in a CPE for periods no longer than 48 consecutive hours. A maximum of two CPE facilities may be housed in one building; each facility may accommodate a maximum of 100 children.

#### **Daycare centre**

Daycare centres (termed *garderies*) provide child care in a facility for no more than 100 children, where children receive care regularly for periods not exceeding 48 consecutive hours. No more than two facilities may be housed in one building. *Garderies* are primarily for-profit operations but may be operated by a non-profit organization or Indigenous Band Council without a board of directors. *Garderies* must have a parent advisory committee.

There are two types of *garderies*: funded and unfunded. Funded *garderies* are operationally funded like CPEs and must charge parents the provincially set fee. Most of the funded *garderies* were already operating and included in public funding when Quebec began operationally funding child care in 2000. From 2000 to 2021, new *garderies* were not operationally funded, however some new funded *garderies* have been created since 2021. These *garderies* are referred to as reduced contribution or subsidized/funded.



*Garderies* not receiving government operational funds set their own market-based fees. These for-profit centres are referred to as unsubsidized, unfunded, or non-reduced contribution *garderies*. Eligible parents whose children attend unfunded *garderies* can claim a refundable Tax Credit for Child Care Expenses. The amount of the credit covers 67% to 78% of eligible child care expenses, depending on family income.

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

School-age child care programs (*Services de garde en milieu scolaire*) in Quebec are not licensed. School-age child care is publicly funded and considered technically regulated under the [\*Education Act\*](#) and its regulations. Under the jurisdiction of the *Ministère de l'Éducation*, the programs are provided in schools by school service centres, school boards, and private schools for children 4 – 12 years. School boards are obligated to provide school-age child care when there is a demonstrated need. Children may attend before school, during the lunch period, after school, on professional development days, and during spring break. These programs do not operate during the summer.

### **Family child care**

Family child care (*Service de garde en milieu familial reconnu*) is termed Home Educational Child Care, Educational Home Child Care Services, or recognized Family Home Child Care. Family child care is operationally funded and operates under an agency model. Agencies are called Home Child Care Coordinating Offices (*Bureaux coordonnateurs de la garde éducative en milieu familial*); they are authorized by the *Ministère de la Famille* and are not licensed. Home Educational Child Care is provided in the private residence of a Home Educational Child Care provider. They may accept a maximum of six children or, if they have an assistant, a maximum

of nine children, including their own. Home Educational Child Care operates under an agency model.

## **CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK**

[\*Accueillir la petite enfance: Programme éducatif pour les services de garde éducatifs à l'enfance\*](#) (2019) is a voluntary early childhood curriculum framework in Quebec. It focuses on children from birth to school entry. Non-profit child care centres (CPEs), daycare centres (*garderies*), and Home Educational Child Care providers must use an educational program. It is a [regulatory requirement](#) that centres and licensed family child care include specific educational elements in their programs.

CPEs, *garderies*, and Home Educational Child Care services must submit to an assessment of the educational quality of their service. The implementation of this legal obligation is being carried out progressively across the network of child care services. A first phase of implementation took place from spring 2019 to fall 2022 in CPEs and *garderies* caring for children aged 3 – 5. The second phase of implementation began in spring 2023 in CPEs and *garderies* open to children aged 0 – 5. As of late 2025, the implementation of the process for evaluating the educational quality of home-based child care services and Indigenous child care services was planned to take place at a later stage.

## **CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

### **Terminology and approach**

Quebec uses the term “children with disabilities” to refer to children with child care integration and social participation needs that require adapted educational strategies or additional resources.

Non-profit CPEs, for-profit funded *garderies*, and family child care are funded to support children with disabilities; for-profit unfunded *garderies* are not.

Funding is specific to the individual child.

### Programs supporting inclusion in ELCC

Two funding programs support the inclusion of children with disabilities in child care: Allowance for Integration into Childcare (*Allocation pour l'intégration en service de garde*; AIC) and Exceptional Assistance Measure for Integration into Childcare (*Mesure exceptionnelle de soutien à l'intégration en services de garde*; EAM).

AIC supports the integration of a child with a disability leading to significant and persistent incapacity who faces obstacles in the integration process. When a child is eligible for AIC, the staff:child ratio may be increased for the group of children. Each centre has a maximum number of children eligible for AIC, equivalent to 20% of the facility's annualized funded spaces. AIC funding covers training and professional development for permanent staff, assistive devices and equipment, and modification of the premises to meet mobility needs. It is funded as part of the operating subsidy for funded child care through a daily allowance based on the child's attendance. A one-time payment of \$2,200 per eligible child is also included.

#### AIC funding per child per day (2024 – 2025)

Type of program	Funding per child per day
CPEs	\$51.08
Funded <i>garderies</i>	\$49.29
Home Educational Child Care	\$45.87

*Note: Unfunded *garderies* do not receive funding to support children with special support needs, but the maximum amount of child care expenses eligible for the refundable Tax Credit for Child Care Expenses is higher for children with disabilities.*

EAM provides financial support for funded child care providers (CPEs, funded *garderies*, and Home Educational Child Care providers). It funds all or some of the additional hours of assistance from a resource person who provides individualized support for a child with disabilities. To qualify for funding, the provider must already be receiving AIC funds and have specific documentation, including a professional report and child care integration plan created within the last year. Ideally, the provider should have an individualized service plan, indicating every available resource that is working to meet the child's needs. EAM is intended as a last-resort assistance measure. EAM funding is \$26.01 per hour, capped at eight hours daily, for up to 260 days per year for CPEs and funded *garderies* and 234 days per year for family child care providers. It is calculated using approved hours multiplied by the daily rate and maximum occupancy days.

In Quebec, there is no child care service solely or primarily for children with disabilities.

### Access to inclusive ELCC

Child care programs are required to accept children with disabilities.

AIC funding covers all eligible children. A diagnosis (certification of a persistent and significant disability) is required for the AIC program. To be eligible for EAM, the child must be eligible for the AIC program and provide proof of the need for additional support.

Newly constructed or renovated facilities are not required to be fully accessible and barrier-free. However, *Programme fonctionnel et technique* requires certain universal accessibility standards.

In Quebec, there may be a wait, delay, or administrative barrier for receiving inclusion funding.



See [Integration of Children with Special Support Needs](#) (*Intégration des enfants présentant des besoins de soutien particulier*) for more information about Quebec's inclusion policies.

## ■ FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE

In Quebec, 2.5% of the total population identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in the most recent census (2021). There are 10 First Nations in Quebec and 41 First Nations communities, most of which are reserves administered by a band council. Approximately 57% of First Nations people in Quebec live on reserve. Additionally, the autonomous Inuit area of Nunavik makes up the northern third of the province.

### First Nations and Inuit child care on reserves and Inuit lands

The province of Quebec is responsible for authorizing/licensing full-day child care on reserves and in Nunavik. Licensed child care providers on reserves and in Nunavik are eligible for the same funding as providers in the rest of the province, including operational and inclusion funding.

In January 2025 in Quebec (except Nunavik), 48 CPEs and funded *garderies* were operating on First Nations reserves, accommodating 3,007 spaces, including family child care (Home Educational Child Care) spaces. Two of these CPEs were managed by Indigenous governing bodies: The Abenaki First Nations of Wôlinak and the Anishinabeg First Nations of Kitigan Zibi each operated one.

There were 21 CPEs in Nunavik with a total of 1,082 spaces, as well as 50 spaces in family child care.

One Home Child Care Coordinating Office operated on the Mashteuiatsh reserve, and another operated in Nunavik.

Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (AHSOR) is not licensed. In 2025, 41 AHSOR programs were operating in Quebec.

### Indigenous child care other than on reserve or Inuit lands

In January 2025, 12 Indigenous-led or -focused full-time CPEs were located off reserve and not in Nunavik, with a total of 558 spaces. One Indigenous-led or -focused family child care agency (Home Child Care Coordinating Office) was located off reserve in an urban centre, overseeing 52 total spaces.

Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) programs are not licensed. In 2025, 28 AHSUNC programs were operating in Quebec.

### Indigenous-specific resources/initiatives

*Cégep de Saint-Félicien*, *Cégep de Sept-Ile (Côte-Nord)*, and *Cégep de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue (Abitibi-Témiscamingue)* provide an Attestation of Collegial Studies in childhood education that has an Indigenous focus, aimed at preparing future early childhood educators to work in an Indigenous context.

The Government of Quebec has Delegation of Authority agreements that include ELCC components with a number of Indigenous organizations, including First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission, the Kativik Regional Government, Government of the Cree Nation, and the Council of the Atikamekw Nation.

## ■ PARENT FEES

Quebec's asymmetrical Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) agreement with the federal government does not require it



to set or meet federal parent fee targets. Quebec has set province-wide parent fees for all publicly funded reduced contribution CPEs and funded *garderies* since September 1, 1997. The provincially set parent fees are indexed annually on January 1. The parent fee (contribution) is paid directly to the funded child care program.

In 2024, the base rate for parents was \$9.10/day for CPEs, funded *garderies*, and funded family child care. The parent contribution is indexed annually; the fixed parent fee increased to \$9.35/day on January 1, 2025.

Unfunded *garderies* can set their own market fee. Parents using these centres may apply for a rebate from the Quebec government in the form of a Tax Credit for Child Care Expenses. Information on average fees in unfunded *garderies* is not available.

### **Additional fees**

Reduced contribution child care operators are not permitted to charge waitlist fees or additional fees for transportation or field trips. They are permitted to charge \$2 for a breakfast, \$4 for an additional meal, and \$5 for each additional hour of child care beyond 10 consecutive hours (extended hours).

### **Parent fee subsidies**

Quebec has not used a parent fee subsidy program since operational funding was introduced in 1997. However, parents are entitled to free child care in publicly funded child care if they receive benefits from one of the following:

- Aim for Employment Program;
- Social Assistance Program;
- Social Solidarity Program; or
- Economic Security Program for Cree Hunters.

### **Additional programs that subsidize individual families**

Eligible parents whose children attend unfunded *garderies* can claim a refundable Tax Credit for Child Care Expenses. The amount of the credit covers 67% to 78% of eligible child care expenses, depending on family income. The maximum eligible child care expense for 2025 is \$12,275, or \$16,800 for a child with a severe and prolonged mental or physical disability.

In 2024, parents who claimed advance payments of the refundable Tax Credit for Child Care Expenses for children under five years of age paid an average daily rate of \$50.19.

See [Requirements for Claiming the Tax Credit for Child Care Expenses](#) for more information.

## **■ WORKFORCE**

### **Child care centre staff wages**

#### **PROVINCIAL WAGE DATA**

In Quebec, salaries for unionized staff in CPEs, funded *garderies*, and Home Child Care Coordinating Offices (CCCOs) must comply with specified provincial salary scales. A sizable number of Quebec child care facilities are unionized. If the CPE or the CCCO is unionized, it must use the wage scale set out in the collective agreement.

For non-unionized CPEs, the *Ministère de la Famille* provides and recommends, but does not impose, a provincial salary scale. Non-unionized CPEs, CCCOs, and *garderies* do not need to apply the provincial salary scale, but many do.

No data are available regarding wages in unfunded *garderies*.

## PROVINCIAL WAGE SCALE FOR CENTRE AND FAMILY CHILD CARE AGENCY STAFF

Since 2006, Quebec has used a [provincial wage scale](#) (*taux et échelles de salaires du personnel de garde*) for CPEs, funded *garderies*, and CCCOs.

The wage scales apply to qualified and unqualified child care staff and non-child care staff (e.g., cooks, administration, accounting). The employer assesses an employee for the minimum eligibility requirements based on education qualifications and credentials.

The wage scale (*échelles de salaires*) for each job category includes several levels (*échelons*), with level 1 being the lowest of the levels applicable to an employee who meets the minimum eligibility requirements without relevant experience. Wages progress depending on the experience acquired.

On April 1, 2022, the hourly wage increased by 18% for qualified child care staff and 10% for unqualified child care staff.

### Provincial wage scale for qualified child care staff

<i>Level</i>	<i>Hourly rate</i>	<i>April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024</i>	<i>April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025</i>	<i>April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026</i>
1		\$22.89	\$23.53	\$25.15
2		\$23.61	\$24.28	\$25.69
3		\$24.35	\$25.03	\$26.25
4		\$25.15	\$25.85	\$26.80
5		\$25.95	\$26.67	\$27.38
6		\$26.74	\$27.49	\$28.22
7		\$27.63	\$28.40	\$29.16
8		\$28.49	\$29.28	\$30.07
9		\$29.41	\$30.23	\$31.03
10		\$30.31	\$31.16	\$31.99
1 year at Level 10		\$31.83	\$32.72	\$33.59

From April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026, hourly wages of unqualified child care staff varied between \$20.71 and \$31.06. For further information see [the provincial wage scale](#), the [Child Care Human Resources Management](#) website, and the [guide](#) to the classification and remuneration of salaried staff in child care centres, subsidized daycare centres, and CCCOs.

### Staff benefits

Quebec has a defined benefit pension plan and group insurance for staff in funded child care (CPEs, funded *garderies*, and CCCOs). Employer contributions receive funding from the Quebec government.

## Unionization

Quebec is the sole province with a sizable unionized child care workforce. About half of the child care workforce in Quebec is represented by one of three unions:

- The *Fédération des intervenantes en petite enfance du Québec*, which exclusively represents centre staff and family child care (Home Educational Child Care) staff and is affiliated with the *Centrale des syndicats du Québec*;
- The *Fédération de la santé et des services sociaux*, affiliated with the *Confédération des syndicats nationaux*; and
- The *Syndicat des employées et employés de service du Québec*, affiliated with the *Fédération des travailleurs et travailleuses du Québec*.

In addition to centre-based child care, a substantial number of Quebec's Home Educational Child Care providers are unionized. In December 2023, a new five-year agreement for 2023 – 2028 was reached, covering approximately 70% of Home Educational Child Care providers in Quebec.

## Early childhood certification

The Diploma of College Studies in early childhood education (*Diplôme d'études collégiales en techniques d'éducation à l'enfance*) is a three-year program and the main direct route to be recognized as a qualified early childhood educator in Quebec.

Other equivalences recognized by the Minister of the *Ministère de la Famille* also lead to qualification (i.e., diplomas with training and/or experience conditions). The most common recognized equivalences are:

- An attestation of collegial studies in early childhood education (minimum of 1,110 hours), combined with three years or 4,992 hours of qualifying experience;

- An attestation of collegial studies for educators working in an Indigenous child care centre (minimum of 1,200 hours). Educators working outside of an Indigenous community require three years or 4,992 hours of qualifying experience;
- A diploma of college studies in special education or social work, combined with an attestation of collegial studies in early childhood education (minimum 1,110 hours) or a university certificate with a specialization in early childhood;
- A diploma of college studies in special education combined with courses to develop skills in health and safety, as well as planning and organizing educational strategies adapted to children's needs and interests (equivalence applicable after January 30, 2023);
- A special university certificate (30 credits) in early childhood combined with courses in health and safety and educational approaches, as well as three years or 4,992 hours of qualifying experience, or 1,664 hours of qualifying experience after January 30, 2023; and
- A Bachelor of Arts including at least 30 credits in early childhood, preschool or primary education, special education (orthopedagogy), psychoeducation, or psychology. Courses in health and safety and educational approaches are also required.

See the [Qualification Guidelines](#) for more information on the standards and qualifications required to be an early childhood educator.

The [Qualifications Evaluation for Child Care Educators](#) (*La directive sur l'évaluation de la qualification du personnel éducateur de la petite enfance*) was modified on January 30, 2023, and April 2, 2024.

Measures are also available for child care staff to upgrade their qualifications. The Work-Study

Program (COUD) for early childhood educators is a paid program that alternates between work (10 to 20 hours each week) and study and puts learning into practice. It leads to an attestation of collegial studies in early childhood education. The diploma, combined with 4,992 hours of qualifying experience, leads to qualification.

Another measure for child care staff to upgrade their qualifications is the process of Recognition of Acquired Competencies (RAC), which enables adults who have acquired experience, knowledge, and know-how in early childhood education to be evaluated and have their skills officially recognized based on their life and work experiences. It may lead to an attestation of collegial studies or diploma of college studies in early childhood education. RAC96 offers experienced, unqualified individuals a favourable context in which to undertake a RAC, including financial support of up to 96 hours of paid time to prepare their file and attend various meetings. The government covers the costs associated with the attestation of collegial studies option.

Since January 30, 2023, the *Ministère de la Famille* has offered a service to assess the qualifications of early childhood educators. A Compulsory Certificate of Qualification is issued to individuals who meet one or more of the requirements set out in the [\*Directive sur l'évaluation de la qualification\*](#).

This service is offered free of charge to educators working in CPEs and anyone interested in a career in early childhood who may or may not hold a diploma in a field related to early childhood education from Quebec, Canada, or elsewhere. The certificate helps educators by confirming essential skills have been acquired. See [Steps to Becoming an Early Childhood Educator](#) (*Démarches pour devenir éducatrice ou éducateur de la petite enfance*) for more information.

## ■ STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Child care centres and family child care homes must adhere to standards and regulations regarding staffing requirements, grouping of children, and licensing. Some additional key elements of child care standards and regulations, such as physical environments and food provision, are covered in the comparative tables in this publication, while others may be found in the [\*Educational Childcare Act\*](#) and [\*Educational Childcare Regulation\*](#).

### Regulated child care centres

CPEs and *garderies* are licensed under the [\*Educational Childcare Act\*](#) and [\*Educational Childcare Regulation\*](#). The Act and regulations were most recently amended in 2024. CPEs and *garderies* are also regulated by the Reduced Contribution Regulation.

Child care for children 4 – 12 years outside school hours is under the [\*Education Act\*](#) and the [\*Regulation Respecting Childcare Services Provided at School\*](#). These regulations are not covered in this section.

### STAFF:CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZE

The maximum centre size is 100 spaces.

#### Staff:child ratio and maximum group size

Age group	Staff:child ratio	Maximum group size
<18 months	1:5	15
18 months – <4 years	1:8	30
4 years – <5 years	1:10	30

*Note: In multi-age groups, the ratio is based on the age of the youngest child in the group.*

## STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRES

### Qualification requirements for staffing a centre

In Quebec, staff qualification requirements are specified at the centre level.

The general standard for the ratio of qualified staff set out in the Educational Childcare Regulations stipulates that two of every three staff in a child care centre must be qualified. If fewer than three staff are present, at least one must be qualified at all times.

In July 2021, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Quebec amended the Educational Childcare Regulations to temporarily reduce the required ratio of qualified staff from two thirds to one third. In March 2023, the ratio was increased to one in two, with the expectation of returning to the pre-pandemic ratio of two thirds in March 2024.

Due to ongoing workforce shortages, the regulations were instead further amended in March 2024 to allow for a more gradual return to the two-thirds ratio with a new goal of March 2027. CPEs and *garderies* can maintain a ratio of one qualified staff member out of two staff present until March 2027.

A ratio of one to three is permitted during a centre's first and last business hours.

Additionally, since October 2023, a ratio of one qualified staff out of three staff present is allowed for the first five years following the issuance of a licence, following a centre expansion by eight or more spaces, or following a first funding agreement.

### Qualification requirements for on-site centre directors/supervisors

There are no regulated qualification requirements specific to centre directors/supervisors.

### Other requirements

All staff members in a CPE must take an eight-hour early childhood specific first aid course, including a component on the management of severe allergic reactions, or a minimum six-hour refresher course.

## LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES

The *Ministère de la Famille* issues licences/permits to CPEs and *garderies* for up to a five-year period. These centres receive at least one full inspection within six months after obtaining a licence (termed permit), when renewing the licence, and when an update of compliance information is required. Additionally, unannounced partial inspections are carried out as part of the processing of a complaint, follow-up on another inspection, or necessary verification of compliance to certain legal and regulatory requirements.

### Regulated family child care

Recognized Home Educational Child Care is regulated by the [\*Educational Childcare Act\*](#) and the [\*Educational Childcare Regulation\*](#).

Home Educational Child Care must be provided in a private residence.

## MODEL OF ORGANIZATION

Home Educational Child Care in Quebec follows an agency model. Home Educational Child Care providers are recognized and supervised by 160 Home Child Care Coordinating Offices (CCCOs) in accordance with provincial regulations.

The offices are accredited (not licensed) by the *Ministère de la Famille*.

## MAXIMUM CAPACITY

One Home Educational Child Care provider may care for up to six children, two of whom are younger than 18 months. If the Home Educational Child Care provider has an adult assistant, they may accept a maximum of nine children, of whom four at most may be younger than 18 months. The provider's children or children living with them under the age of nine are considered for the purposes of these ratios if they are present when services are provided.

## FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

During the three years preceding the request for recognition, a child care provider must take at least 45 hours of training in the following: the role of the Home Educational Child Care provider, child development, safety, health and nutrition, and the education program required by the Act.

Home Educational Child Care providers must take a six-hour refresher course every year, of which at least three hours is about child development and the education program required by the Act.

If the child care provider is assisted by another person, the assistant must take at least 12 hours of child development training within six months of starting work.

The provider and the assistant must both have a criminal record check and an eight-hour early childhood-specific first aid course. Each adult living or present regularly in the home must also have a criminal reference check.

The assistant is considered an employee of the Home Educational Child Care provider and must have a file indicating the assistant meets the requirements. The CCCO conducts a background check of the assistant.

## LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

Home Educational Child Care provider recognition is granted for a period of five years. A CCCO representative visits the home and interviews the provider and residents in the home over the age of 14 before the recognition is issued. The CCCO must make three unannounced visits a year to the home where child care is provided to verify compliance with the Act and regulations. The first visit must take place three months after the recognition. The CCCO may also make an unannounced home visit after a complaint.

The provincial government accredits CCCOs for a maximum of five years. CCCOs are subject to a full administrative inspection by the *Ministère de la Famille* when their accreditation is renewed and when updated compliance information is required.

## ■ OF INTEREST

### Municipal role

Municipalities in Quebec do not have a mandated role in child care governance, funding, or administration. There are no municipally operated centres.

In 2020, the *Union des municipalités du Québec* set up a commission to examine ways in which local municipalities could contribute to providing child care services. Their [report](#) outlines several political levers available to the municipality, especially the fact that, due to provisions in the [Educational Childcare Act](#) (section 134), municipal councils may purchase, build, or develop buildings on their land that may be rented or sold for CPEs and *garderies*.

In 2015, [Espace MUNI](#) produced a practical guide for municipalities and regional county municipalities, *Un service de garde éducatif à la petite enfance qui prend racine dans sa*



*communauté*, to help them better understand the legal and administrative environment of Educational Child Care services and highlight their importance in community development.

In November 2023, the guide was revised and reissued. The new guide, *Les services de garde éducatifs à l'enfance, c'est aussi l'affaire des municipalités!*, is intended to provide complete and current information on Educational Child Care services. It was designed to help municipalities understand their role and become more involved in developing spaces and supporting the Educational Child Care network.

## **Family Support Organizations**

Family support organizations are designed to provide services to vulnerable families and improve the wellbeing of the children and family. These organizations are open and free, and may be formal or informal, but they are not part of a therapeutic or clinical path. For example, family support initiatives may include individual, co-parenting, family, or group activities designed to enrich the parenting experience or strengthen the relationship between parents and children. In 2024 – 2025, more than 280 family community organizations and 20 Indigenous family organizations were supported.

## **Centralized waiting list portal**

In 2015, Québec created Place 0 – 5, a platform for child care spaces. At the end of 2025, Place 0 – 5 was replaced by the [Child Care Services Registration Portal](#). Parents only need to register their child once on a single platform that brings together regulated child care services in their region. Recognized child care providers in Quebec are required to join the Registration Portal and use parent registrations exclusively to fill available spaces. The rules for allocating spaces are now regulated and standardized for CPEs and funded *garderies*.

## CHILD CARE DATA

### ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

#### Number of spaces (2024, 2025)

Full-day centre spaces	2024	2025
Centres de la petite enfance (CPEs)	107,078	110,358
Publicly funded garderies	64,632	67,994
Unfunded garderies	59,931	58,650
<i>Note: CPEs are non-profit child care centres. Both publicly funded and unfunded garderies are primarily for-profit.</i>		
<b>Total full-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>231,641</b>	<b>237,002</b>

Full-day centre spaces by age	2024			
	CPEs	Publicly funded garderies	Unfunded garderies	Total
<18 months	15,218	9,359	9,787	<b>34,364</b>
18 months – 5 years (not yet in kindergarten or school)	91,860	55,273	50,144	<b>197,277</b>
2025				
	CPEs	Publicly funded garderies	Unfunded garderies	Total
<18 months	16,134	10,292	9,664	<b>36,090</b>
18 months – 5 years (not yet in kindergarten or school)	94,224	57,702	48,986	<b>200,912</b>

*Note: CPEs are non-profit child care centres. Both publicly funded and unfunded garderies are primarily for-profit.*

Before- and after-school care centre enrolment	2024	2025
Children in 4- and 5-year-old kindergarten	61,241	61,911
Children in Grades 1 – 6	207,541	209,744
<b>Total before- and after-school care centre enrolment</b>		
<b>Total before- and after-school care centre enrolment</b>	<b>268,782</b>	<b>271,655</b>
<i>Note: Before- and after-school programs in Quebec are regulated but not licensed for a particular number of children. These data reflect the number of children enrolled in before- and after-school programs in public schools only.</i>		
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>500,423</b>	<b>508,657</b>

## Family child care licensed capacity

<b>Total family child care spaces</b>	71,781	72,773
<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)</b>	572,204	581,430

*Note: The 2024 total centre spaces and total regulated spaces have been revised since the publication of the Interim Space Statistics 2024 report. In that report, 2025 before- and after-school care (BASC) data were used in place of 2024 BASC data.*

## Number of child care centres and family child care homes (2024)

### Centre-based child care

<b>Total number of centres (children 0 – 5, not yet in kindergarten or school)</b>	3,754
<b>Total number of before- and after-school care centres (children approximately 4 – 12 years)</b>	1,893

*Note: Before- and after-school programs in Quebec are regulated but not licensed. This figure reflects programs in public schools only.*

### Centre-based programs

Centres providing a full-day program	3,754
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 4 – 12 years)	1,893
Centres providing infant care (<18 months)	2,954
Centres providing toddler/preschool-age care (18 months – 5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	3,738
Centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – Grade 12)	<i>Not available</i>

*Note: The total number of centres located in schools is not available, but all 1,893 before- and after-school care programs are located in schools.*

### Regulated family child care

Individually licensed family child care homes (active)	11,893
Home Child Care Coordinating Offices	160

## Auspice (2024)

---

### Centres by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit (publicly funded <i>garderies</i> )	938
For-profit (unfunded <i>garderies</i> )	1,077
Non-profit and public (CPEs or facilities that are part of CPEs)	1,739
Public (school-operated before- and after-school care programs)	1,893

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	124,563	<i>Not applicable</i>	<b>124,563</b>
Non-profit and public	107,078	<i>Not applicable</i>	<b>107,078</b>
Public (school authority)	<i>Not applicable</i>	268,782	<b>268,782</b>

<sup>1</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 4 – 12 years).

---

### Home Child Care Coordinating Offices

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of offices</i>
For-profit	0
Non-profit	160

## Auspice (2025)

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	126,644	<i>Not applicable</i>	<b>126,644</b>
Non-profit and public	110,358	<i>Not applicable</i>	<b>110,358</b>
Public (school authority)	<i>Not applicable</i>	271,655	<b>271,655</b>

<sup>1</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 4 – 12 years).

---

## Publicly operated child care (2024)

### Publicly operated child care

Entity type	Licence holders	Centres	Full-day spaces	BASC spaces <sup>1</sup>
School authority	Not applicable	1,893	0	268,782
Indigenous governing body	2	2	69	Not applicable

Note: In ECEC in Canada 2023, Quebec reported that 66 centres were operated by Indigenous governing bodies in Quebec. However, 66 centres were located on First Nations reserves and Inuit lands, but only two were operated by Indigenous governing bodies.

Note: In 2024, Conseil des Abénakis de Wôlinak operated one centre with 21 spaces, and the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg operated a centre with 48 spaces.

<sup>1</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 4 – 12 years).

## Fee subsidies (2024)

### Number of children receiving fee subsidies

Not applicable

Note: Quebec has not used a parent fee subsidy program since operational funding was introduced in 1997. See Quebec's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

## Disability support (2024)

### Number of children receiving disability support

Children in licensed child care receiving disability support funding	15,944
--	--------

## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

### Number of children enrolled (2024)

Full-day centre enrolment	CPEs	Publicly funded garderies	Unfunded garderies
<12 months	7,406	5,742	6,397
1 year	18,246	12,486	10,944
2 years	23,431	15,023	11,268
3 years	26,527	16,191	10,684
4 years	26,104	13,192	8,191
<b>Total full-day centre enrolment (children 0 – 4 years)</b>	<b>101,714</b>	<b>62,634</b>	<b>47,484</b>

---

**Before- and after-school care enrolment (regulated)**

4- and 5-year-old kindergarten	61,241
Grades 1 – 6	207,541
<b>Total before- and after-school care enrolment</b>	<b>268,782</b>
<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>480,614</b>

*Note: Before- and after-school programs in Quebec are regulated but not licensed for a particular number of children. These data reflect the number of children enrolled in before- and after-school programs in public schools only.*

---

**Family child care enrolment**

<12 months	12,289
1 – 2 years	32,707
3 – 5 years (not yet in kindergarten or school)	22,266
<b>Total family child care enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>67,262</b>
<b>TOTAL REGULATED ENROLMENT (centre and family child care enrolment)</b>	<b>547,876</b>

## CHILD CARE FUNDING

The types of funding available for child care services in Quebec include operational funding, one-time funding, and other ELCC funding programs. See [Financial Documents and Accountability for Child Care Services](#) for more information.

### ■ ELIGIBILITY FOR CWELCC FUNDING

The CWELCC plan provides federal funds to provinces and territories for early learning and child care operational and one-time funding and fee subsidies for licensed child care for children aged 0 – 5. Funded new child care expansion is to be public and non-profit unless otherwise specified in the jurisdiction's agreement. Provinces and territories contribute their own funds and design their own policies and provision within this framework.

While the Quebec government subscribes to the shared Canada-wide ELCC principles first set out in the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework in 2017, it retains exclusive responsibility for child care in Quebec. Quebec signed the Asymmetrical Agreement on the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Component in August 2021. As under its previous ELCC agreements, Quebec uses the funding to continue to develop its own child care system. The agreement allocated \$5.96 billion over five years to the province.

In March 2025, Quebec accepted the federal offer to extend its asymmetrical agreement until 2031.

### ■ CHILD CARE SERVICES' ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

Child care funding in Quebec is available for all CPEs, funded *garderies*, and Home Educational Child Care through a formula approach.

The funding for CPEs (non-profit child care centres) is slightly higher than for funded *garderies* (for-profit daycares). Only CPEs are eligible for the *Programme de financement des infrastructures*.

Unfunded *garderies* receive no direct funding. Government support is paid to parents through the refundable Tax Credit for Child Care Expenses.

### ■ TYPES OF FUNDING

#### **Operational funding**

#### **CPES, FUNDED GARDERIES, AND HOME EDUCATIONAL CHILD CARE**

In Quebec, CPEs, funded *garderies*, and Home Educational Child Care are operationally funded. Unfunded *garderies* are not eligible for operational funding. For CPEs and funded *garderies*, the formula for operational funding is based on both licensed capacity and occupancy rates. In the case of Home Educational Child Care providers, operational funding is negotiated by collective agreement. In December 2023, a new five-year agreement (2023 – 2028) was reached, covering approximately 70% of Home Educational Child Care providers in Quebec. A Home Educational Child Care provider has the option of not requesting funded spaces and can set their own parent fees. Parents can then claim the refundable Tax Credit for Child Care Expenses.

## ALLOWANCE FOR INTEGRATION INTO CHILDCARE

Allowance for Integration into Childcare (*Allocation pour l'intégration en service de garde*) is one of two funding programs that support the inclusion of children with disabilities in child care. See Quebec's "[Children with disabilities](#)" section for more information.

## EXCEPTIONAL ASSISTANCE MEASURE FOR INTEGRATION INTO CHILD CARE

The Exceptional Assistance Measure for Integration into Child Care (*Mesure exceptionnelle de soutien à l'intégration en services de garde*) is one of two funding programs that support the inclusion of children with disabilities in child care. See Quebec's "[Children with disabilities](#)" section for more information.

## PENSION AND GROUP INSURANCE PLANS FOR EMPLOYEES IN CHILD CARE

In Quebec, child care employee compensation benefits include 6.6% employer contribution to a pension plan for staff in CPEs and funded *garderies*. Child care workers may also be eligible for the Quebec Pension Plan and other pension plans specifically designed for them. In addition to pension options, these workers can access various group insurance plans, such as the Public Service Health Care Plan, the Public Service Dental Care Plan, and disability insurance, including long-term disability and life insurance coverage. Additionally, employees receive 13 statutory holidays and vacation time ranging from two to five weeks, depending on their seniority.

## FINANCIAL INCENTIVES TO OFFSET THE ADDITIONAL COSTS OF UP TO NINE CHILDREN CARED FOR BY A RECOGNIZED EDUCATIONAL HOME CHILD CARE SERVICE WITH TWO PROVIDERS

Beginning in 2021 and continuing until March 2026, recognized Educational Home Child Care providers with nine children enrolled can receive up to \$6,000 a year to help offset costs, including the hiring of an assistant. To be eligible, a recognized provider must offer services at least four days per week and have nine signed service agreements with parents. The provider's own children can count toward the total enrolment if they are under nine years old and are present the whole time child care is provided. A provider who has only eight children enrolled due to the inclusion of a child with a disability is also eligible. Funds are distributed through Child Care Coordinating Offices (CCCOs).

## PREVENTIVE WITHDRAWAL PLAN FOR OPERATORS OF EDUCATIONAL HOME CHILD CARE SERVICES

Through the Preventive Withdrawal Plan for Operators of Educational Home Child Care Services (*Retrait préventif des personnes responsables d'un service de garde éducatif en milieu familial subventionné*), funded Educational Home Child Care providers who are pregnant or breastfeeding may be eligible for salary replacement if they are required to temporarily stop offering services to take preventive leave from work. To qualify, an individual must be medically able to perform their duties but have documentation from a health care provider stating that their work poses significant risk to their health and safety or to that of their unborn or breastfed child. This program has been in effect since September 2019 and was last modified in January 2025.



## PROJECTS TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL QUALITY IN FAMILY CHILD CARE – PEDAGOGICAL MATERIALS FOR AGENCIES

Since 2017, CCCOs have been able to apply for funding of up to \$25,000 for projects aimed at raising the quality of education of family child care in Quebec. For example, the allocated sums enable CCCOs to buy pedagogical material that can be borrowed by family child care providers, and to offer training or support services.

### One-time funding

#### FINANCIAL INCENTIVE TO SUPPORT THE START-UP OF A FAMILY CHILD CARE HOME

A Home Educational Child Care provider may receive a start-up payment of \$3,500 through the financial incentive to support the start-up of a family child care home (*Incitatif financier visant le recrutement de personnes aptes à être reconnues comme personnes responsables d'un service de garde éducatif en milieu familial*). To qualify, the provider must agree to receive at least two children who do not normally live with them and provide care for them for a continuous period of at least one year. The provider must offer services at least four days a week and must not have received funding before. This program has been in place since June 1, 2021, and will remain in place until March 31, 2027.

#### PARTNER SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL CHILD CARE SERVICES

In the 2024 – 2025 financial year, [Partner Support Program for Access to Educational Child Care Services](#) (*Programme d'appui aux partenaires pour l'accessibilité aux services de garde éducatifs à l'enfance*) replaced the previous Program to Support Municipalities in Developing an Early Childhood Centre, which concluded March 31, 2024. It provided financial assistance to CPEs,

municipalities, and non-profit organizations for the development of new child care spaces, with the goal of offering more publicly funded child care as quickly as possible. This program was not renewed in 2025 – 2026.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING PROGRAM

The Infrastructure Funding Program (*Programme de financement des infrastructures*) provides CPEs with resources needed to complete capital projects that require substantial financial contributions while facilitating access to financing. Eligible projects include the construction of new facilities, acquisition and adaptation of properties, leasehold improvements, redevelopment or expansion to increase capacity for new funded spaces, urgent renovations of existing facilities, and acquisition of the building by tenant CPEs.

#### GRANT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PROJECTS

CPEs with net financing needs below \$50,000 may qualify for the Grant for Infrastructure Investment Projects (*Subvention pour les projets d'investissement en infrastructure*). The *Ministère de la Famille* issues an annual call for projects, also accepting other qualifying initiatives. Eligible projects include renovations aimed at improving the quality and lifespan of infrastructure, modifications necessitated by new laws or regulations, enhancements for accessibility for children with disabilities, and the development or redevelopment of outdoor play areas. Additionally, projects aimed at meeting lead water standards are also permissible.

### Fee subsidies

Quebec has not used a parent fee subsidy program since operational funding was introduced in 1997. See Quebec's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

## Other ELCC funding

### ATYPICAL DAYCARE PROJECTS

Two atypical daycare [pilot projects](#) were announced in 2022, highlighting non-standard hours child care. The projects were intended to last for two years.

### RESEARCH – FINANCIAL SUPPORT PROGRAM TO IMPROVE THE EDUCATIONAL QUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL CHILD CARE SERVICES

Research – Financial support program to improve the educational quality of Educational Child Care services (*Programme de soutien financier pour l'amélioration de la qualité éducative des services de garde éducatifs à l'enfance*) offers financial assistance to child care associations and non-profit organizations to enhance the educational quality of child care services and support children's educational success. An annual budget of \$2 million is available, with funding amounts determined by the application details and budget availability. Project eligibility conditions are outlined in the program's [regulatory framework](#).

### FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

Beginning in 2023, Quebec allocated \$7 million over five years to address local workforce shortages and facilitate recruitment of international early childhood educators. Financial support for international recruitment of early childhood educators (*Soutien financier au recrutement à l'international des éducatrices ou éducateurs de la petite enfance*) is available to CPEs, funded *garderies*, and unfunded *garderies*, and it can be used to reimburse costs related to participation in international recruitment initiatives through

*Journées Québec* and/or the temporary hiring of an early childhood educator from abroad. Costs for participation in *Journées Québec* recruitment activities can be reimbursed up to 35% per in-person activity (capped at \$4,000 per year per participant), and 50% per virtual activity (capped at one activity per year per participant). For costs related to hiring a temporary foreign worker, licensees can be reimbursed for 75% of costs related to the required labour market impact study, for a maximum of five new early childhood educators recruited abroad per year.

## ■ FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024)

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

### Operational funding

Program	Amount
CPEs and funded garderies	\$2,632,293,171
Home Child Care Coordinating Offices and family child care providers	\$706,176,318
Allowance for Integration into Childcare and Exceptional Assistance Measure for Integration into Child Care	\$226,286,853
Pension and group insurance plans for employees in child care	\$164,009,859
Financial incentive to offset the additional costs of up to nine children cared for by a recognized Educational Home Child Care Service with two providers	\$23,458,000
Preventive Withdrawal Plan for Operators of Educational Home Childcare Services	\$1,395,568
School-age child care – public	\$428,584,037
School-age child care – private	\$266,321
School-age child care fees	\$3,227,367
<b>Total operational funding</b>	<b>\$4,185,697,493</b>

*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, disability funding, and other grants/funding paid on a recurring basis.*

### One-time funding – capital (major and minor)

Program	Amount
Capital expenditures	\$5,550,892
CPE Infrastructure Funding Program	\$192,036,867
Financial incentive to support the start-up of a family child care home	\$7,270,417

### One-time funding – other

Program	Amount
Program to support municipalities in developing an early childhood centre	\$69,817
<b>Total one-time funding</b>	<b>\$204,927,993</b>

*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.*

### Fee subsidies

Program	Amount
Not applicable	Not applicable

*Note: Quebec has not used a parent fee subsidy program since operational funding was introduced in 1997. See Quebec's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.*

**TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, and fee subsidies)** **\$4,390,625,487**

---

### Other ELCC funding

---

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Atypical daycare projects	\$1,112,946
Research	\$1,992,205
Assessment, evaluation, and improvement of educational quality	\$4,978,142
Financial support program to improve educational quality	\$716,078
Professional development for family child care	\$972,825
Exceptional funding to replace defective faucets (lead testing)	\$89,447
Financial support for international recruitment of early childhood educators	\$122,614
Tax Credit for Child Care Expenses	\$994,859,000
Financial support for Stop-over Centre Initiatives	\$13,576,442
<b>Total other ELCC funding</b>	<b>\$1,018,419,698</b>

---

### Federal transfers to Quebec

---

<i>Federal transfer</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$1,236,926,434
Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care	\$121,482,411
Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$12,809,531

*Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to Quebec for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements, as they are updated annually in line with population estimates. 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 (2025).

---



# Ontario

Overview	181	<b>CHILD CARE FUNDING</b>	<b>206</b>
Provincial context	182	Eligibility for CWELCC funding	206
<b>KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA</b>	<b>185</b>	Child care services' eligibility for funding	206
Kindergarten for four- and five-year-olds	185	Types of funding	207
Curriculum framework	186	Funding for regulated child care (fiscal year 2023 – 2024)	210
Enrolment	186		
Financial	186		
<b>CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>187</b>		
Administration	187		
Curriculum framework	189		
Children with disabilities	189		
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care	190		
Parent fees	191		
Workforce	194		
Standards and regulations	197		
Of interest	200		
<b>CHILD CARE DATA</b>	<b>201</b>		
Regulated child care space statistics	201		
Regulated child care enrolment statistics	205		



# Ontario

## ■ OVERVIEW

In Ontario, the Ministry of Education is responsible for regulated child care centres, nursery schools, family child care, kindergarten, licensed school-age child care, and unlicensed Extended Day and Authorized Recreation and Skill Building before- and after-school programs.

Licensed child care includes full-day child care centres, part-day nursery schools, family child care, and licensed before- and after-school child care programs. Extended Day programs and Authorized Recreation and Skill Building programs are not required to be licensed.

Centre-based child care may be delivered by non-profit, for-profit, or public operators. Non-profit organizations operate a majority of centres. Public operators include Indigenous governing bodies, school boards, and municipal entities.

Ontario is the sole province or territory with a mandated role for municipal-level government entities. These 47 entities, termed Service System Managers (SSMs), have administrative responsibility for child care provision within provincial policy. They administer public funding, play a planning role, develop local initiatives, manage expansion, and may provide publicly delivered child care. The provincial government flows most funding to SSMs, which in turn direct it to service providers.

Family child care (termed Home Child Care) is agency-based. The majority of agencies are non-profit.

Ontario offers full school-day kindergarten for all four- and five-year-olds (termed junior kindergarten and kindergarten). Attendance is not compulsory in either year.

In January 2025, child care base fees were capped at a maximum of \$22/day for all children under age six in child care programs enrolled in the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWEELCC) program. Parent fee subsidies are available to cover all or part of the child care fee paid by eligible parents of children younger than 13 years old. Local SSMs administer the subsidy program.

Ontario does not have a provincial wage grid. It uses a wage floor, a wage ceiling, and a wage top-up.

Ontario signed the Canada-Ontario Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement in March 2022. It allocated \$10.2 billion over five years to the province.

In December 2025, Ontario extended its bilateral agreement by one year, until March 2027.

### Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)

	2021	2025	Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025
Non-profit and public	104,960	117,250	+12,290
For-profit	75,798	93,863	+18,065
<b>Total full-day spaces</b>	<b>180,758</b>	<b>211,113</b>	<b>+30,355</b>
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	42%	44%	+3%
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit	-	-	60%

## ■ PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded; however, the totals are based on exact figures. Therefore, totals may not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

### Number of children 0 – 12 years (2024 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	132,200
1	131,700
2	144,100
3	131,500
4	149,900
5	152,400
6	159,500
7	157,800
8	167,000
9	162,800
10	172,800
11	176,900
12	165,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,003,600</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	408,000
3 – 5	433,800
6 – 12	1,161,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,003,600</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0	87,400
1	87,200
2	100,700
3	86,500
4	99,200
5	102,300
6	105,700
7	105,000
8	112,800
9	108,100
10	111,400
11	121,800
12	110,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,338,800</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	275,300
3 – 5	288,000
6 – 12	775,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,338,800</b>

---

### 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	18,155	7,330	310	580	460
5 – 9	21,125	8,280	425	690	515
10 – 14	21,915	9,410	395	635	575
<b>Total</b>	<b>61,195</b>	<b>25,020</b>	<b>1,130</b>	<b>1,905</b>	<b>1,550</b>

### Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age of youngest child</i>	<i>Number of mothers</i>	<i>Participation rate (%)</i>
0 – 3	330,300	78.5
4 – 5	130,500	78.8
0 – 5	460,700	78.5
6 – 12	432,900	82.3

### Living arrangements by age of child (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Living with two parents</i>	<i>Living with one parent</i>			<i>Total</i>
		<i>Lone mother</i>	<i>Lone father</i>		
0 – 4	578,270	82,335	15,425		<b>97,760</b>
5 – 9	611,565	117,815	25,590		<b>143,405</b>
10 – 14	613,500	144,170	34,005		<b>178,180</b>

### Languages spoken most often at home (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Non-official</i>	<i>Multiple</i>
0 – 4	542,240	13,030	92,665	35,135
5 – 9	629,635	15,710	72,100	46,705
10 – 14	665,790	15,635	69,820	52,170
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,837,665</b>	<b>44,380</b>	<b>234,590</b>	<b>134,025</b>

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

<i>Two-parent families</i>	<i>Male lone parent</i>	<i>Female lone parent</i>
\$106,000	\$52,400	\$48,000

## KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA

### KINDERGARTEN FOR FOUR- AND FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

Ontario publicly funds both non-denominational and Catholic school systems and permits, but it does not fund private/independent schools.

Junior kindergarten and kindergarten are treated as a two-year kindergarten program in Ontario.

#### Provincial responsibility

Ministry of Education

Student Achievement Division

Phone: 416-325-2929 or 1-800-387-5514

Email: *Not available*

Website: [ontario.ca/page/kindergarten](http://ontario.ca/page/kindergarten)

#### Legislation

Ontario. Legislative Assembly. [Education Act](#). RSO 1990, c. E.2. Amended 2021, C- 25, s. 3. Ontario.

Legislative Assembly. [Education Act – Ontario Regulation 224/10 – Full Day Junior Kindergarten and Kindergarten](#). RSO 1990, c. E.2.

Ontario. Legislative Assembly. Ontario Regulation 132/12: Class Size under the [Education Act](#), RSO 1990, c. E.2.

#### Provision

##### Junior kindergarten (JK) and kindergarten (K)

**Definition** Full school-day program for all four- and five-year-old children.

**Eligibility** Four years old by December 31 for JK and five years old by December 31 for K.

**Compulsory schooling** Not compulsory, but most eligible children attend.

**Entitlement** All eligible children have access.

**Instructional hours per day** Full school-day (minimum five hours).

**Class size** Maximum 29 children, but up to 32 in some instances.

#### Teacher qualifications and certification

Two-year kindergarten program classrooms with 16 or more students are staffed by an educator team comprising a registered early childhood educator (RECE) and a certified teacher registered with the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) or another provincial/territorial certifying body. Schools that offer the integrated before- and after-school program commonly have two RECEs working in a kindergarten classroom. Classes with fewer than 16 students are not required to have an RECE if the class meets specific conditions as outlined in the regulations.

RECEs are required to have completed an early childhood education diploma from an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology or other approved education program. They must also be registered in good standing with the provincial College of Early Childhood Educators.

An OCT teaching certificate requires an undergraduate degree and two years of teacher education with qualifications in the primary/junior divisions, including training in the range of curriculum subjects for kindergarten to Grade 6. Kindergarten teachers are not required to have an early childhood qualification.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

*The Kindergarten Program* (2016) is a mandatory curriculum framework for the two-year kindergarten program in all schools in Ontario. An [addendum](#) was added in 2019. A revised curriculum is expected to be implemented in the 2026 – 2027 school year.

## ENROLMENT

---

### Kindergarten enrolment (2024 – 2025 school year)

#### *Enrolment in public and Catholic schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	131,894
Junior kindergarten for 4-year-olds	120,332

#### *Enrolment in private/independent schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	9,991
Junior kindergarten for 4-year-olds	9,003

---

**Total kindergarten enrolment** **271,220**

---

## FINANCIAL

---

### Financial (2024 – 2025 school year)

Estimated spending on kindergarten for 4- and 5-year-olds	\$3.88 billion
---	----------------

# CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

## ■ ADMINISTRATION

### Provincial responsibility

Ministry of Education  
Early Years and Child Care Division  
Phone: 416-325-2929  
Email: See [infogo.gov.on.ca/org?id=5519](http://infogo.gov.on.ca/org?id=5519)  
Website: [ontario.ca/page/find-and-pay-child-care](http://ontario.ca/page/find-and-pay-child-care)

### Legislation

Ontario. Legislative Assembly. [\*Child Care and Early Years Act\*](#). SO 2014, c. 11, sched. 1.  
Ontario. Legislative Assembly. [\*Child Care and Early Years Act – O. Reg. 137/15: General\*](#). O. Reg. 137/15.  
Ontario. Legislative Assembly. [\*Child Care and Early Years Act – O. Reg. 138/15: Funding, Cost Sharing, And Financial Assistance\*](#). O. Reg. 138/15.  
Ontario. Legislative Assembly. [\*Early Childhood Educators Act\*](#). – SO 2007, c. 7, sched. 8.

### Municipal role

Ontario is the only province or territory with a mandated role for municipalities in child care, a responsibility that dates back to World War II. Aspects of the municipal role have been amended multiple times since it was first mandated.

As outlined in the *Child Care and Early Years Act*, municipalities in Ontario serve as Service System Managers (SSMs), responsible for planning, funding, and overseeing local child care services within provincial policy and guidelines. SSMs have also [voluntarily assumed other roles](#), such as quality assessment and improvement, professional development, planning, and research. The 47 municipal entities may also directly operate child care centres and Home Child Care agencies, but this is discretionary. Over the years, the

municipally operated child care sector has declined significantly in Ontario.

The Ontario government mandates local SSMs' roles. Their responsibilities include:

- Developing a local child care service plan every five years;
- Administering most services, policies, and funding for service providers on behalf of the province;
- Setting local operational policies within parameters established by the provincial government; and
- Managing provincial funding allocations using a formula introduced in 2013, reviewed in 2019 – 2020, revised in 2022 following [Ontario's entry into the CWELCC Agreement](#), and transitioned to a provincially designed [cost-based funding model](#) in 2025.

In 2024, 36 Ontario municipalities (including SSMs and other municipality types) operated 176 child care centres for children 0 – 12 years. Municipal child care made up approximately 2.5% of Ontario's 516,455 total regulated centre spaces, accounting for 12,997 full-day, part-day, and before- and after-school care spaces.

### Service descriptions

#### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

There is no public oversight of unregulated child care (termed unlicensed child care) in Ontario. Unlicensed child care providers are not required to register with the government and are not regularly inspected like licensed child care. However, the Ministry of Education is responsible for enforcing the *Child Care and Early Years Act* and its regulations specific to unlicensed child



care, primarily the maximum number of children. The Ministry follows up on complaints about unlicensed child care that may be operating in contravention of the Act and/or regulations.

In unlicensed child care in Ontario, a provider can legally care for a maximum of five children under the age of 13, with no more than three children under two years at one time. The provider's own children under four years who are on the premises must be included in the total.

There are no requirements that unregulated child care be provided in the provider's home or a home-type residence in Ontario; an unlicensed child care provider may operate from a residential or commercial premises. However, an unlicensed provider may not operate child care in more than one premises.

Other forms of child care outside regular school hours in Ontario are not licensed but may be authorized and/or funded. See the "Regulated child care" section below for more information.

See the *Child Care and Early Years Act* for more information about exemptions. The Act also includes provisions for compliance orders, protection orders, administrative penalties, and prosecution of offenses regarding all child care arrangements and programs.

## REGULATED CHILD CARE

### Child care centre

Licensed child care centres include full-day, part-day (including nursery school), non-standard hours, and some child care outside regular school hours for children 4 – 12 years. Some kinds of centre-based child care for kindergarten-age and school-age children outside regular school hours are not required to be licensed, as outlined in "School-age child care" below.

### School-age child care

Before- and after-school programs are offered in public schools and other locations. School boards are required to ensure before- and after-school programs are provided in every elementary school serving students in junior kindergarten to Grade 6 where there is sufficient and viable demand. However, they are not required to meet the full demand.

School boards may operate unlicensed Extended Day programs or enter into an agreement with a third-party provider – either a licensed child care centre or an unlicensed Authorized Recreation and Skill Building provider – for after-school programs.

Several before- and after-school child care options are available for children 4 – 12 years. Three before- and after-school options require a licence to operate: licensed programs located in the community, licensed programs located in schools, and licensed Home Child Care providing before- and after-school care.

Two before- and after-school options are not required to be licensed: Extended Day programs operated by school boards in schools and Authorized Recreation and Skill Building programs providing child care in schools and other settings. The latter are permitted to operate once a day for up to three consecutive hours. In 2019, the age of the children for whom an unlicensed Authorized Recreation and Skill Building program may provide care changed from 6 – 12 years to 4 – 12 years. The change in age applies to both for-profit and non-profit child care operators.

### Family child care

Regulated family child care homes (termed licensed Home Child Care) are not licensed individually; individual providers are contracted by Home Child Care agencies that are licensed by the Ministry of Education and responsible for monitoring the provision of care under provincial



regulations. Family child care providers can care for a maximum of six children under the age of 13, including the provider's own children under four years old. Only three of these children are permitted to be under the age of two.

### **In-home Child Care**

In-home Child Care services are provided under the oversight of a Home Child Care agency in a child's home or at another place where residential care is provided for the child.

## **CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK**

*How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* (2014) is a mandatory curriculum framework (termed pedagogical framework) for all licensed child care and early years programs in Ontario, including EarlyON Child and Family Centres and Home Child Care providers contracted by licensed agencies. Its use is also a requirement for school board-operated before- and after-school programs. The framework focuses on children from birth to age eight.

## **CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

### **Terminology and approach**

Ontario uses the term “special needs” to encompass cognitive, physical, social, emotional, or communicative needs, or needs relating to overall development of such a nature that the child requires additional supports.

Licensed child care centres, licensed Home Child Care, camps, and Authorized Recreation and Skill Building programs are eligible to receive inclusion services. Providers must be enrolled in CWELCC or exclusively serve children 6 – 12 years to be eligible. Ineligible licensees may be supported indirectly by Service System Managers (SSMs) for services and supports such as consultants.

The province provides Special Needs Resourcing funding to SSMs to support the inclusion of children with disabilities in eligible child care programs. SSMs are required to spend a minimum of 8.5% of their Local Priorities Flex Funding allocation on Special Needs Resourcing.

### **Programs supporting inclusion in ELCC**

Support through Special Needs Resourcing enables Ontario children with “special needs” to participate in licensed child care programs with their peers. SSMs and First Nations may use Special Needs Resourcing funding for the following expenses:

- Hiring or acquiring the services of a resource consultant or supplemental staff (including salary and benefits);
- Providing professional development opportunities to support staff in licensed child care and early years settings to support inclusion; or
- Purchasing or leasing specialized/adaptive equipment and supplies.

Special Needs Resourcing support by resource teachers/consultants may include support for developmental screening, referrals to community agencies, individualized support plans, providing information and resources for parents, obtaining specialized equipment, and providing child care staff with program accommodation and modification strategies and/or professional development.

Resource consultants may work with several children in multiple locations and may also provide training and support to regular staff working with children with disabilities in licensed child care and approved recreation programs. The type and level of service can vary depending on each child's needs, the local service model, and available resources.



Section 55 of O. Reg. 137/15 of the *Child Care and Early Years Act* outlines the requirements for resource consultants directly employed by child care licensees.

An up-to-date individualized support plan is required for each child with “special needs.” A child care program must be structured so that it accommodates each child’s individualized support plan. The plan must be developed in consultation with the child (if appropriate), a parent of the child, and any regulated health care professional or other person working with the child who would be a helpful collaborator. The plan must include:

- A description of how the centre or Home Child Care provider will support the child to function and participate in a meaningful, purposeful manner;
- A description of any necessary supports, aids, adaptations, or other modifications to the physical, social, and learning environment; and
- Instructions relating to the child’s use of supports/aids or, if necessary, the child’s use of or interaction with the adapted or modified environment.

First Nations are allocated Special Needs Resourcing funding primarily based on licensed capacity. For First Nations, delivery of Special Needs Resourcing should be:

- Reflective and responsive to individual, family, and community strengths and needs;
- Accountable to the individual, family, and community;
- Sensitive to the social, linguistic, and cultural diversity of families and First Nations communities; and
- Staffed by individuals with the appropriate range of skills and abilities necessary to respond effectively to the needs of children, their families, and program staff.

The Ministry of Education does not track how many programs in Ontario are solely or primarily for children with disabilities.

## Access to inclusive ELCC

Ontario does not have provincial policies specifying whether child care programs are required to accept children with disabilities, whether a diagnosis is required for a child’s inclusion in Special Needs Resourcing, or regarding waitlists for funding. Individual SSMs have the discretion to make these determinations.

Licensed child care operators must provide evidence of compliance with the Ontario Building Code, which includes accessibility requirements designed to align with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

See [Ontario Child Care and Early Years Funding Guidelines Chapter 3: Local Priorities Guideline](#) for more information.

## FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE

In Ontario, 2.9% of the total population identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in the most recent census (2021). There are 207 reserves in the province, held by 127 First Nations. Approximately 32% of First Nations people live on reserve.

### First Nations child care on reserve

Ontario regulates child care located on First Nations reserves.

As of March 31, 2024, 58 First Nations and one non-First Nations provider operated 72 licensed centres on reserves in Ontario.



### Licensed First Nations centre spaces on reserve (March 31, 2024)

Program type	Number of spaces
Full-day	2,719
Before- and after-school	680
<b>Total licensed spaces</b>	<b>3,399</b>

*Note: Full-day spaces include a relatively small number of part-day nursery school spaces.*

As of March 31, 2024, two licensed Home Child Care agencies were overseeing 31 approved child care homes on First Nations reserves.

Ontario licenses Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (AHSOR) programs. In 2025, there were 123 AHSOR programs in Ontario.

### Indigenous child care other than on reserve

As of March 31, 2024, 41 off-reserve child care centres self-reported as Indigenous-led. Of these centres, 37 offered full-day child care, and 15 offered before- and after-school programs.

### Licensed Indigenous child care spaces not on reserve (March 31, 2024)

Program type	Number of spaces
Full-day	1,715
Before- and after-school	537
<b>Total licensed spaces</b>	<b>2,252</b>

*Note: Full-day spaces include a relatively small number of part-day nursery school spaces.*

In most cases, Ontario's Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) programs are licensed and Indigenous-led. In 2025, there were 14 AHSUNC programs in Ontario.

### Indigenous-specific resources/initiatives

The funding formula used to determine allocations to Service System Managers (SSMs) includes an Indigenous component to support Indigenous-led, culturally appropriate licensed child care and child and family programs for Indigenous families not living on reserve. This funding must be spent on the following priorities:

- Increasing access to culturally relevant licensed child care and child and family programs for Indigenous children and families; and
- Programming delivered by Indigenous-led organizations working with SSMs.

In Ontario, seven Indigenous institutes offer an early childhood education program in partnership with an Ontario College of Applied Arts and Technology.

Ontario also offers the early childhood educator (ECE) [Qualifications Upgrade Program](#), which supports eligible individuals in obtaining an ECE diploma. The program includes First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (including on-reserve) program components, and it prioritizes applicants living and/or working in these communities. First Nations, Métis, and Inuit applicants are prioritized through targeted outreach such as webinars and participation at conferences. Indigenous applicants are exempt from the requirement of having been employed in the sector for at least six months.

### PARENT FEES

In Ontario, fee reductions apply to both centres and licensed Home Child Care. Fee reduction funding primarily supports child care for children under six years of age.

Between 2022, when Ontario joined the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) program, and December 31, 2024, reduced

parent fees were based on pre-CWEELCC fees that individual operators had established.

Through 2024, each provider enrolled in CWEELCC was required to reduce base fees for children 0 – 5 years by the following percentages:

- On April 1, 2022, base fees were reduced by an average of 25%; and
- On December 31, 2022, base fees were further reduced by an additional 37% (average fee of \$23/day).

Beginning January 1, 2025, child care base fees were capped at a maximum of \$22/day for all children under age six in child care programs enrolled in CWEELCC.

Operators set their own fees for child care programs not enrolled in CWEELCC and those serving school-age children older than six years.

Ontario's target is an average of \$10/day for eligible children by March 31, 2026.

## AVERAGE FEE INFORMATION

### Average child care centre daily parent fees prior to the introduction of the \$22/day set fee (2022, 2024)

Age group	Average daily fee (2022)	Average daily fee (2024)
<18 months	\$75.01	\$36.95
18 – <30 months	\$62.76	\$31.97
30 months – <6 years	\$55.46	\$29.40
4 – 5 years (full-day)	\$49.29	\$20.74
4 – 5 years (before- and after-school)	\$26.07	\$13.18
6 – 12 years (before- and after-school)	\$23.58	\$23.57

*Note: These are average fees for all child care centres across Ontario, not just those enrolled in CWEELCC.*

### Average Home Child Care daily parent fees prior to the introduction of the \$22/day set fee (2022, 2024)

Age group	Average daily fee (2022)	Average daily fee (2024)
0 – <2 years	\$48.69	\$24.43
2 – 3 years	\$47.30	\$23.36
4 – 5 years (full day)	\$43.57	\$21.68
4 – 5 years (before- and after-school)	\$27.17	\$14.02
6 – 12 years (before- and after-school)	\$27.23	\$24.99

*Note: These are average fees for all Home Child Care across Ontario, not just homes enrolled in CWEELCC.*

## Additional fees

Operators are not permitted to charge waitlist fees or additional fees for food, extended hours, or other services required by regulation. They are permitted to charge optional fees in addition to the \$22/day set fee for transportation and field trips.

## Parent fee subsidies

Parent fee subsidies are available to cover all or part of the child care fee paid by eligible parents of children younger than 13 years old. The child care provider must have a service contract (“purchase of service agreement”) with the local Service System Manager (SSM), which administers the subsidy program. The SSM pays fee subsidies to the child care service provider on behalf of the family.

Subsidized parents are responsible for paying the service provider any fee balance not covered by the fee subsidy.

Since January 1, 2025, fee subsidies are no longer available for children 0 – 5 years if the centre/agency is not enrolled in CWEELCC.



Fee subsidies are determined by a provincial income test that uses a calculation between net family income and total child care fees charged for all children in the family. The amount a subsidized family is required to pay is determined on a whole family basis, not per child. The test has no upper limit on family income, and there is no maximum subsidy rate.

Eligibility and assessment for a fee subsidy does not guarantee the parent a subsidy. The supply of fee subsidies for eligible families is linked to availability of subsidy funding. This may result in waiting lists for fee subsidies in some SSMs.

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Until 2021, SSMs were able to set their own criteria (in addition to provincial criteria) for services receiving subsidized children or other funding. These criteria included having minimum quality ratings based on municipal quality assessment tools, meeting identified targets such as a salary scale, or having non-profit incorporation. Since 2022, SSMs no longer set such criteria.

As of January 1, 2025, to receive a fee subsidy, children must be enrolled in one of the following programs:

- CWELCC-enrolled centre/agency (fee subsidy available for children 0 – 12 years);
- A centre/agency exclusively serving children 6 – 12 years;
- Children’s camp or recreation program;
- Before- and after-school program offered directly by school boards;
- Before- and after-school program operated by a third-party program; or
- Unlicensed child care for Ontario Works participants.

Existing fee subsidy agreements at otherwise ineligible centres/agencies for children aged 0 – 5

years are exceptions to these criteria. Funding for existing fee subsidy agreements may continue until the benefiting child ages out of the program or leaves the centre/agency.

SSMs are required to make reasonable efforts to work together, or with eligible child care programs, to facilitate access for eligible families seeking subsidized child care outside their home region.

Parents are required to meet specified employment or social criteria to receive a fee subsidy. Criteria include employment, attendance at an educational/training program, medical needs, or other circumstances. A fee subsidy may also be provided based on special or social needs of the child, or disabilities of a parent. SSMs have discretion to determine the appropriate amount of subsidized child care.

Families in receipt of social assistance (Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support Program) are eligible for full subsidy without undergoing a financial eligibility test provided the parents are in approved employment assistance activities, unless the child or parent has a disability or the child has a social need.

Social criteria policies do not apply to First Nations on reserve; First Nations may establish their own criteria.

### FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for a fee subsidy in Ontario is determined by a provincial income test based on net income. In addition to the eligibility criteria noted above, the following rules apply:

- Fee subsidy is based on adjusted net family income and total actual or projected cost of child care for the family;
- If the parent/family has a total adjusted income of \$20,000 or less, the parent pays no child care costs (is fully subsidized);



- There is no specified upper net income limit;
- For families with adjusted income above \$20,000, the parental contribution is calculated based on 10% of adjusted income over \$20,000;
- When the family's annual adjusted income is above \$40,000, parental contribution is calculated at 10% of the amount over \$20,000 up to \$40,000, plus 30% of the amount over \$40,000; and
- If the calculated parental contribution exceeds the cost of child care, the family is not eligible for a fee subsidy.

SSMs may make an [online subsidy calculator](#) available to support parents' planning.

### **Additional programs that subsidize individual families**

The provincial government introduced the Ontario Child Care Tax Credit in 2019. Eligible families can claim up to 75% of their eligible child care expenses, including unlicensed arrangements and services provided by child care centres, family child care homes, and camps. The Ontario Child Care Tax Credit supports families with incomes up to \$150,000. In 2025, families could receive up to \$6,000 per child under the age of seven, \$3,750 per child ages 7 – 16, or \$8,250 per child with a severe disability.

[Ontario Works](#) is a provincial training and employment support program. An employed parent who is receiving Ontario Works may be eligible for a regular fee subsidy. In addition, [Ontario Works Child Care](#) also provides a temporary child care option to cover participants' licensed or unlicensed child care costs incurred while participating in an approved activity until a regular fee subsidy and a space in a licensed child care centre or Home Child Care becomes available.

## **WORKFORCE**

### **Child care staff wages**

Ontario does not have a provincial wage grid. It uses a wage floor, a wage ceiling, and a wage top-up.

Individual operators set the wages and benefits of registered early childhood educators (RECEs) and other child care staff. Operators must meet the requirements of the wage floor and annual wage increase, as well as other requirements related to wages detailed in [Chapter 3 of Ontario Child Care and Early Years Funding Guidelines](#).

In Ontario, public funding to increase child care staff wages has two main components: provincial wage enhancement and the CWELCC wage improvement program (including a wage floor and wage top-up, up to a wage eligibility ceiling). The funding is associated with the position, not the employee.

### **PROVINCIAL WAGE DATA**

Average wage data for staff in licensed child care centres are not available.

**Percent of full-time program staff in licensed child care centres by hourly wage ranges (2022)**

<i>Hourly wage range</i>	<i>RECE (%)</i>	<i>Director-approved (%)</i>	<i>Non-RECE/not director-approved (%)</i>
\$15.00 – \$17.50	10	14	40
\$17.51 – \$20.00	22	31	36
\$20.01 – \$22.50	21	26	15
\$22.51 – \$25.00	22	14	6
\$25.01 – \$27.50	11	6	2
\$27.51 – \$28.59	3	2	1
\$28.60 – \$30.00	2	2	-
\$30.01 – \$32.50	2	2	-
\$32.51 – \$35.00	2	1	-
\$35.01 – \$37.50	1	-	-
\$37.51 – \$40.00	1	-	-
\$40.01+	-	2	-

**Percent of full-time program staff in licensed child care centres by hourly wage ranges (2023)**

<i>Hourly wage range</i>	<i>RECE (%)</i>	<i>Director-approved (%)</i>	<i>Non-RECE/not director-approved (%)</i>
\$16.55 – \$19.99	8.7	22.2	47.8
\$20.00 – \$25.00	46.7	55.3	45.8
\$25.01 – \$28.59	29.9	14.5	4.4
\$28.60 – \$29.99	4.6	2.1	0.6
\$30.00 – \$32.49	3.9	1.9	0.6
\$32.50 – \$34.99	3.8	2	0.3
\$35.00 – \$37.49	1.2	0.9	0.1
\$37.50 – \$39.99	0.8	0.6	0.1
\$40.01+	0.6	0.6	0.3

## WAGE ENHANCEMENT

Ontario originally introduced [wage enhancement](#) (now called the Wage Enhancement Grant and Home Child Care Enhancement Grant) in 2015. A modification of the wage enhancement program is still in place at \$2/hour for eligible staff in licensed centres and for family child care providers. They must either be enrolled in CWELCC or exclusively serving children 6 – 12 years.

## WAGE FLOOR AND WAGE TOP-UP

In 2022, as part of CWELCC, Ontario introduced a wage floor and wage top-up to bring all RECEs up to at least the wage floor. It also introduced a wage ceiling – the level up to which a wage top-up will be paid.

For RECE centre staff and supervisors and RECE home visitors in family child care to be eligible for the wage floor top-up, the child care program must be enrolled in CWELCC. The funding is associated with the position, not the employee.

Ontario has committed an additional \$395 million for RECEs working in before- and after-school child care with children 6 – 12 years parallel to the wage increases for RECEs for the 0 – 5 age group, as the federal CWELCC funding covers only educators working with children 0 – 5 years.

## WAGE FLOOR FOR CENTRES AND FAMILY CHILD CARE AGENCY STAFF

In April 2022, Ontario introduced a wage floor for RECEs working in licensed child care centres and Home Child Care agencies with children 0 – 5 years.

In November 2023, Ontario increased the wage floor and wage ceiling for eligible RECEs, effective January 2024.

Between 2023 and 2026, the wage floor increased up to \$1/hour each year.

## WAGE CEILING

The wage ceiling represents the upper eligibility cut-off for wage top-up for RECE program staff, supervisors, and home visitors.

### Wage floor rates by job title (2022 – 2026)

Position	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
RECE program staff	\$18	\$19	\$23.86	\$24.86	\$25.86
RECE child care supervisors and RECE Home Child Care visitors	\$20	\$21	\$24.86	\$25.86	\$26.86

### Wage ceiling by job title (2022 – 2026)

Position	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
RECE program staff	\$25	\$25	\$26	\$27	\$28
RECE child care supervisors and RECE Home Child Care visitors	\$25	\$25	\$29	\$30	\$31

In 2025, wage ceiling eligibility for the top-up was expanded to include RECE program staff in centres earning less than \$27/hour, and in 2026 for those earning less than \$28/hour. RECE supervisors and Home Child Care visitors earning less than \$29/hour in 2024, less than \$30/hour in 2025, and less than \$31/hour in 2026 are also eligible.

### Staff benefits

There are no province-wide benefits, such as pension or medical benefits, for Ontario child care staff.

### Early childhood certification

The practice of early childhood education in Ontario, including the use of the titles “early childhood educator” and “registered early childhood educator,” is regulated by Ontario’s [College of Early Childhood Educators](#) (CECE). The CECE manages provincial certification of RECEs. The Ontario government created the CECE in 2009. It has a statutory mandate to govern and regulate the profession of early childhood education in Ontario under the [Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice](#). The CECE is governed by the [Early Childhood Educators Act](#).

According to the CECE’s [2023 – 2024 Annual Report](#), there were a total of 59,682 RECEs in Ontario, of whom 33,422 were working in licensed centres and family child care. In order to be considered “qualified” and use the RECE title, individuals must be registered with the CECE. Registration with the CECE requires successful completion of an early childhood education diploma or equivalent from a [CECE-approved program](#). There are no additional registration or certification levels in Ontario.

To maintain RECE designation, educators must take part in [continuous professional learning](#). The number of hours needed for professional development is not specified. CECE members must renew their membership annually.

“Early childhood assistant” is not a specified provincial category. Individuals without RECE certification may be termed “early childhood assistants” by their employer. There are no requirements for an early childhood assistant to have training or education in early childhood education. However, several community colleges and other training facilities across Ontario offer early childhood assistant programs.

## ■ STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Child care centres and family child care homes must adhere to standards and regulations regarding staffing requirements, grouping of children, and licensing. Some additional key elements of child care standards and regulations, such as physical environments and food provision, are covered in the comparative tables in this publication, while others may be found in the [Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014](#) and [Regulation 137/15: General](#).

### Regulated child care centres

Child care centres are licensed under the [Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014](#) and [Regulation 137/15: General](#). The Act and regulations were most recently amended in 2024.

### STAFF:CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZE

Ontario does not specify a maximum number of children permitted in a child care centre.

## Staff:child ratio and maximum group size

Age group	Staff:child ratio	Maximum group size
Infant (0 – <18 months)	3:10	10
Toddler (18 – 30 months)	1:5	15
Preschool-age (30 months – 6 years)	1:8	24
Kindergarten-age (44 months – <7 years)	1:13	26
Primary/junior school-age (68 months – <13 years)	1:15	30
Junior school-age (9 – <13 years)	1:20	20

Note: Mixed-age groupings are permitted with requirements specific to age groupings and mix of child ages in the group. See [Ratios of Employees to Children and Group Size](#) for more information.

Note: The Ministry of Education may give approval for a child care centre to use a mixed-age grouping for any licensed age group.

## Staff:child ratios for family-age grouping

Age group	Staff:child ratio
0 – <12 months	1:3
12 – <24 months	1:4
24 months – <13 years	1:8

Note: “Licensed family age group” permits a group of not more than 15 children, and no more than six children younger than 24 months.

## STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRES

### Qualification requirements for staffing a centre

In Ontario, staff qualification requirements are specified at the room or group level.

Employees who are registered early childhood educators (RECEs) in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators are considered qualified employees for any licensed age group under the *Child Care and Early Years Act* (CCEYA).

In licensed junior school-age groups or licensed primary/junior school-age groups, an employee who has a diploma or degree in child and youth care or recreation and leisure services, or who is a member in good standing with the Ontario College of Teachers, is also considered a qualified employee.

### Required proportions of qualified employees in each room/group

Age group	Proportion of employees that must be qualified
Infant (0 – <18 months)	1/3
Toddler (18 – 30 months)	1/3
Preschool-age (30 months – 6 years)	2/3
Kindergarten-age (44 months – <7 years)	1/2
Primary/junior school-age (68 months – <13 years)	1/2
Junior school-age (9 – <13 years)	1/1

There are no specified qualification requirements for staff not deemed to be qualified.



## Qualification requirements for on-site centre directors/supervisors

A licensed centre must have a supervisor who is an RECE in good standing with the College of Early Childhood Educators and has at least two years of experience providing licensed child care.

### Other requirements

Centre supervisors and all employees (qualified and unqualified) counted toward staff:child ratios must have standard first aid (including infant and child CPR) certification issued by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board.

All staff, volunteers, and students must have a criminal reference check, including vulnerable sector screening, updated every five years. Staff may begin working before a vulnerable sector check is completed; in these cases, they must apply for it as soon as possible, and licensees must have additional protection measures in place until the staff member obtains their screening.

All staff, volunteers, and students must also have a health assessment and immunization prior to employment or educational placement.

There is no minimum age for centre staff or volunteers.

## LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES

A child care centre licence may be approved for a period of between one and two years. Unannounced inspections are conducted at least once annually by Ministry of Education staff, who may also conduct additional monitoring inspections.

Centres that have been licensed for three years or more are assigned a tier under the tiered licensing system. The tiered approach is a risk-based system for inspections based on a centre's compliance history. The centre's tier determines the maximum length of the licence (up to two years), monitoring schedule, and type of inspection. See the

introduction of the [Child Care Centre Licensing Manual](#) for more information.

## Regulated family child care

Family child care (termed licensed Home Child Care) is regulated under the [Child Care and Early Years Act](#) (CCEYA) and [Regulation 137/15: General](#).

Licensed Home Child Care is not required to be provided in a personal residence or a home setting, as long as the premises where child care is provided complies with the requirements of the CCEYA.

## MODEL OF ORGANIZATION

Regulated Home Child Care in Ontario uses an agency model. Individual Home Child Care providers are not licensed but contracted by a licensed agency.

Home Child Care agencies may be publicly operated (municipal), non-profit, or for-profit. A Home Child Care agency is required to employ home visitors to provide support and monitor premises overseen by the agency.

## MAXIMUM CAPACITY

Under the CCEYA, up to six children under the age of 13 are allowed in a regulated child care home. Of those six, no more than three can be under two years old. The provider's own children are counted if those children are under four years old.

Home Child Care agencies may set out a maximum capacity that is lower than the CCEYA permits in the agreement with the provider. The Home Child Care agency is required to consider certain factors when determining how many children can be placed safely in a home (up to a maximum of six).

## FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

Home Child Care providers are not required to have specific training or educational qualifications.



Regulations require that each Home Child Care agency has written policies and procedures with respect to training for each provider.

Providers cannot have been convicted of an offence under the CCEYA, cannot have been convicted of any of the prescribed offences under the Criminal Code as detailed in the CCEYA, and cannot have been found guilty of professional misconduct and had a membership revoked under the *Early Childhood Educators Act*, *Ontario College of Teachers Act*, or *Social Work and Social Service Work Act*.

A provider must have a health assessment and public health-recommended immunizations, and hold valid certification in standard first aid, including infant and child CPR.

A Home Child Care provider must be at least 18 years old.

The provider and every person over 18 years old who is ordinarily a resident of or is regularly at the Home Child Care premises are required to have a vulnerable sector check, which must be updated every five years. An offence declaration is required in every calendar year where the person does not provide a vulnerable sector check.

### **LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES**

Home Child Care providers are defined as independent contractors who enter into an agreement with a licensed Home Child Care agency to provide regulated child care under the agency's oversight.

The agency is required to have a home visitor conduct unannounced quarterly visits to every Home Child Care provider and complete the Ministry Inspection Checklist.

At least once per year, the Ministry of Education inspects each licensed Home Child Care agency and a sample of child care homes to ensure

the agency complies with the CCEYA and its regulations.

Tiered licensing does not apply to regulated Home Child Care agencies.

See the [Home Child Care Licensing Manual](#) for more information.

### **■ OF INTEREST**

#### **EarlyON Child and Family Centres**

EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer free drop-in and registered programs for caregivers and children 0 – 6 years. The centres are open to all families in Ontario and offer a range of services, including:

- Play-based learning and development activities, such as reading, storytelling, games, and sing-alongs;
- Advice from professionals trained in early childhood development;
- Information about other family services in the community; and
- Opportunities to connect with other families with young children.

EarlyON Child and Family Centre programs and services are offered through a variety of service delivery methods to meet the unique needs of families in their communities, including mobile, virtual, and outdoor programs. As of June 28, 2024, there were 770 main EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations and 488 mobile/satellite locations. In addition, there were 108 locations offering virtual service supports to meet the needs of families across the province.

## CHILD CARE DATA

### ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

#### Number of spaces (2024, 2025)

Full-day centre spaces	2024	2025
Infant (<18 months)	16,142	16,753
Toddler (18 – <30 months)	56,314	59,405
Preschool-age (30 months – <6 years)	127,860	133,954
<b>Total full-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>200,316</b>	<b>210,112</b>

*Note: Full-day spaces include a relatively small number of part-day nursery school/preschool spaces.*

Part-day centre spaces	2024	2025
Nursery school/preschool	Not applicable	Not applicable

Other centre spaces	2024	2025
Family-age (multi-age grouping 0 – 12 years)	1,012	1,001

Before- and after-school care centre spaces (licensed, regulated, approved, or authorized)	2024	2025
Kindergarten-age (44 months – <7 years)	125,118	127,942
Grades 1 – 6	190,009	193,470
<b>Total before- and after-school care centre spaces</b>	<b>315,127</b>	<b>321,412</b>
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>516,455</b>	<b>532,525</b>

Full-day family child care enrolment	2024	2025
Not yet in kindergarten or school	18,960	18,451

Part-day family child care enrolment	2024	2025
Attending kindergarten or school	2,406	4,581

<b>Total family child care enrolment</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>21,366</b>	<b>23,032</b>	

<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care enrolment)</b>	<b>537,821</b>	<b>555,557</b>
---	----------------	----------------

## Number of child care centres and family child care homes (2024)

### Centre-based child care

<b>Total number of centres</b>	<b>5,836</b>
--------------------------------	--------------

### Centre-based programs

Centres providing a full-day program	3,575
Centres providing a part-day (nursery or preschool) program	753
Centres providing a licensed before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 4 – 12 years)	3,943
School-operated Extended Day programs for kindergarten-age children	187
Centres providing before- and after-school programs that are approved or recognized, not licensed	183
Centres providing infant care (<18 months)	1,521
Centres providing toddler care (18 – <30 months)	3,018
Centres providing preschool-age care (30 months – <6 years)	3,753
Centres providing a Francophone child care program	426
Centres providing non-standard hours care (as defined by the province)	552
Centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – Grade 12)	3,200

### Regulated family child care

Individual family child care homes (active)	4,426
Family child care agencies	151

### Participation in CWELCC

Centres providing a full-day program	3,147
Centres providing a part-day (nursery or preschool) program	564
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 4 – 12 years)	3,774

<b>Total number of child care centres receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>5,281</b>
--	--------------

<b>Total number of family child care agencies receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>139</b>
--	------------

## Auspice (2024)

---

### Centres by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit	1,495
Non-profit	3,900
Public	441

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>BASC<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	88,122	23,430	111,552
Non-profit	103,889	261,291	365,180
Public	9,317	30,406	39,723

<sup>1</sup> Includes a relatively small number of part-day nursery school/preschool spaces.

<sup>2</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 4 – 12 years).

---

### Family child care agencies by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of agencies</i>
For-profit	36
Non-profit	99
Public	16

## Auspice (2025)

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>BASC<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	93,863	24,221	118,084
Non-profit	107,757	263,691	371,448
Public	9,493	33,500	42,993

<sup>1</sup> Includes a relatively small number of part-day nursery school/preschool spaces.

<sup>2</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 4 – 12 years).

---

## Publicly operated child care (2024)

### Publicly operated child care

Entity type	Licence holders	Centres	Full-day spaces	BASC spaces <sup>1</sup>	Total spaces
Service System Managers	14	111	4,299	2,104	6,403
Other municipalities	22	65	2,193	4,401	6,594
School authority	6	191	175	23,221	23,396
Indigenous governing body	58	74	2,650	680	3,330
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>9,317</b>	<b>30,406</b>	<b>39,723</b>

<sup>1</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 4 – 12 years).

## Fee subsidies (2024)

### Number of children receiving fee subsidies

Full subsidy	42,133
Partial subsidy	37,081
<b>Total children receiving fee subsidies</b>	<b>79,214</b>

## Disability support (2023)

### Number of children receiving disability support

Children in licensed child care receiving disability/special needs support funding	44,092
--	--------

*Note: The latest available data for the number of children served through Special Needs Resourcing is for 2023.*



## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

### Number of children enrolled (2024)

---

#### Full-day centre enrolment

Infant (<18 months)	12,730
Toddler (18 – <30 months)	49,162
Preschool-age (30 months – <6 years)	93,806
<b>Total full-day centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>155,698</b>

#### Part-day centre enrolment

Infant (<18 months)	66
Toddler (18 – <30 months)	1,040
Preschool-age (30 months – <6 years)	10,072

#### Other centre enrolment

Family-age (multi-age grouping 0 – 12 years)	614
<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>167,490</b>

#### Before- and after-school care (licensed, regulated, approved, or authorized)

Kindergarten (44 months – <7 years)	65,446
Grades 1 – 6	99,443
<b>Total before- and after-school care enrolment</b>	<b>164,889</b>
<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>332,379</b>

#### Full-day family child care enrolment

Not attending kindergarten or school	18,960
--------------------------------------	--------

#### Part-day family child care enrolment

Attending kindergarten or school	2,406
<b>Total family child care enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>21,366</b>

<b>TOTAL REGULATED ENROLMENT (centre and family child care enrolment)</b>	<b>353,745</b>
---	----------------

## CHILD CARE FUNDING

The types of funding available for child care services in Ontario include operational funding, one-time funding, fee subsidies, and other ELCC funding programs. See [Child Care and Early Years Funding Guidelines](#) for more information.

### ■ ELIGIBILITY FOR CWELCC FUNDING

The CWELCC plan provides federal funds to provinces and territories for early learning and child care operational and one-time funding and fee subsidies for licensed child care for children aged 0 – 5. Funded new child care expansion is to be public and non-profit unless otherwise specified in the jurisdiction's agreement. Provinces and territories contribute their own funds and design their own policies and provision within this framework.

In Ontario, the following are eligible for operational funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools);
- Licensed before- and after-school centres that enrol children under age six; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres may be eligible for operational funding. Net new CWELCC spaces must align with each Service System Manager's (SSM's) Directed Growth Plan and guidance on auspice ratios and meet the requirements outlined in the Child Care and Early Years Funding Guidelines, [Part 1 of Chapter 2, Division 1: CWELCC Participation Guideline](#).

In Ontario, the following are eligible for capital funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools);
- Licensed before- and after-school centres that enrol children under age six; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres are eligible for capital funding. New CWELCC spaces must align with each SSM's Directed Growth Plan and guidance on auspice ratios.

### ■ CHILD CARE SERVICES' ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

All licensed non-profit, public, and for-profit child care services may be eligible for all available funding, including capital funding. See the [Child Care and Early Years Funding Guidelines](#) for more information.

#### **Municipal roles in child care funding**

Before CWELCC, the legacy funding formula for allocations to SSMs was based on publicly available data largely drawn from Statistics Canada, such as child population, low-income cut-off, cost-of-living indicators, Indigenous population data, Francophone populations, and measures related to rural and remote communities.

From 2022 to 2024, the funding allocations to SSMs also supported CWELCC-related commitments, such as parent fee reductions, compensation increases for qualified workers, operational costs for



net new child care spaces, and adjustments for cost escalation. These funding allocations had two parts:

- Routine allocation, based on the legacy child care funding formula; and
- CWELCC allocation, based on a revenue replacement approach (whereby government funding paid for the base fee reductions) and funding to support commitments related to wage increases, building operational capacity of child care centres, and contingencies for emerging issues.

Since January 1, 2025, operating funding to support CWELCC-enrolled centres/agencies is provided through cost-based funding.

Funding to support operating costs outside of cost-based funding is now provided to SSMs through Local Priorities funding and reflects the previous legacy funding apportioned to children 6 – 12 years (based on data from recent years such as survey data and licensed spaces by age group).

Local SSMs are required to contribute a share of the spending in cost-based funding, Local Priorities, and administration funding that is consistent with previous years' contributions of the cost. [Provincial guidelines](#), amendments, and regular updates outline the funding, program, and accountability requirements of local SSMs.

See Ontario's "[Administration](#)" section for more information about SSMs.

## TYPES OF FUNDING

### **Operational funding**

Operational funding in Ontario is shared out to the Service System Managers (SSMs) that are mandated to administer and maintain licensed child care. Operating funding for municipalities and First Nations includes funds for general operating expenses, Special Needs Resourcing, funds used for staff salaries and benefits, and

other operating costs. Funds to cover fee subsidies are also part of the base operating funding the province transfers to SSMs.

Through 2024, the provincial general child care allocation for each SSM was based on a funding formula introduced in 2013. This formula was based on data such as the low-income cut-off, population of Ontario, level of education attainment, and knowledge of either official language.

In August 2024, Ontario introduced a cost-based funding model to replace the previous revenue replacement model administered by SSMs to take effect January 1, 2025. This approach provides financial support to eligible licensed child care centres and agencies based on the typical (representative) costs of providing child care in Ontario, rather than on estimated revenue losses. The new model incorporates funding for program costs and wage enhancements under Ontario's Child Care Workforce Strategy.

Funding for operating costs outside cost-based funding is provided through Local Priorities funding, and reflects those expenses apportioned to children 6 – 12 years, based on SSM data from recent years (financial statements, survey data, licensed spaces by age group, etc.).

### **SPECIAL NEEDS RESOURCING**

Support through Special Needs Resourcing enables Ontario children with "special needs" to participate in licensed child care programs with their peers. See Ontario's "[Children with disabilities](#)" section for more information.

### **SMALL WATER WORKS**

Small Water Works funding is available to support regular ongoing water testing and maintenance expenses, including laboratory testing, chemicals, supplies/filters, courier costs, and maintenance of water treatment equipment including replacement



ultraviolet bulbs and training. Costs related to the purchase and installation of systems and equipment are not eligible. SSMs with child care centres that have historically received Small Water Works funding are provided with a notional allocation. There is no maximum amount indicated as part of the Transfer Payment Agreement with SSMs.

### **TERRITORY WITHOUT MUNICIPAL ORGANIZATION**

Territory Without Municipal Organization (TWOMO) funding for child care helps support the costs for eligible child care services provided in a territory without municipal organization, specifically for SSMs outside any municipality or First Nation. The funding calculation involves four stages:

- Stage 1: Calculate the municipal levy based on the total approved budget minus other revenue sources;
- Stage 2: Determine the TWOMO share of the municipal levy using a municipal attribution percentage;
- Stage 3: Subtract non-Ministry funding from the municipal levy to find the child care program allocation from the Ministry; and
- Stage 4: Calculate the province's portion of the TWOMO levy based on the percentage of the municipal levy represented by the child care program allocation.

### **One-time funding**

#### **CAPITAL FUNDING FOR SCHOOL-BASED CHILD CARE**

As part of the 2024 – 2025 Capital Priorities Program for infrastructure projects, Ontario allocated \$1.3 billion in January 2025 to support the construction of new schools, the expansion of existing ones, and renovations throughout the

province. This project aims to create over 25,000 new student spaces and more than 1,600 additional licensed child care spaces across 23 school boards.

#### **CAPITAL FUNDING FOR CHILD CARE IN FRENCH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS**

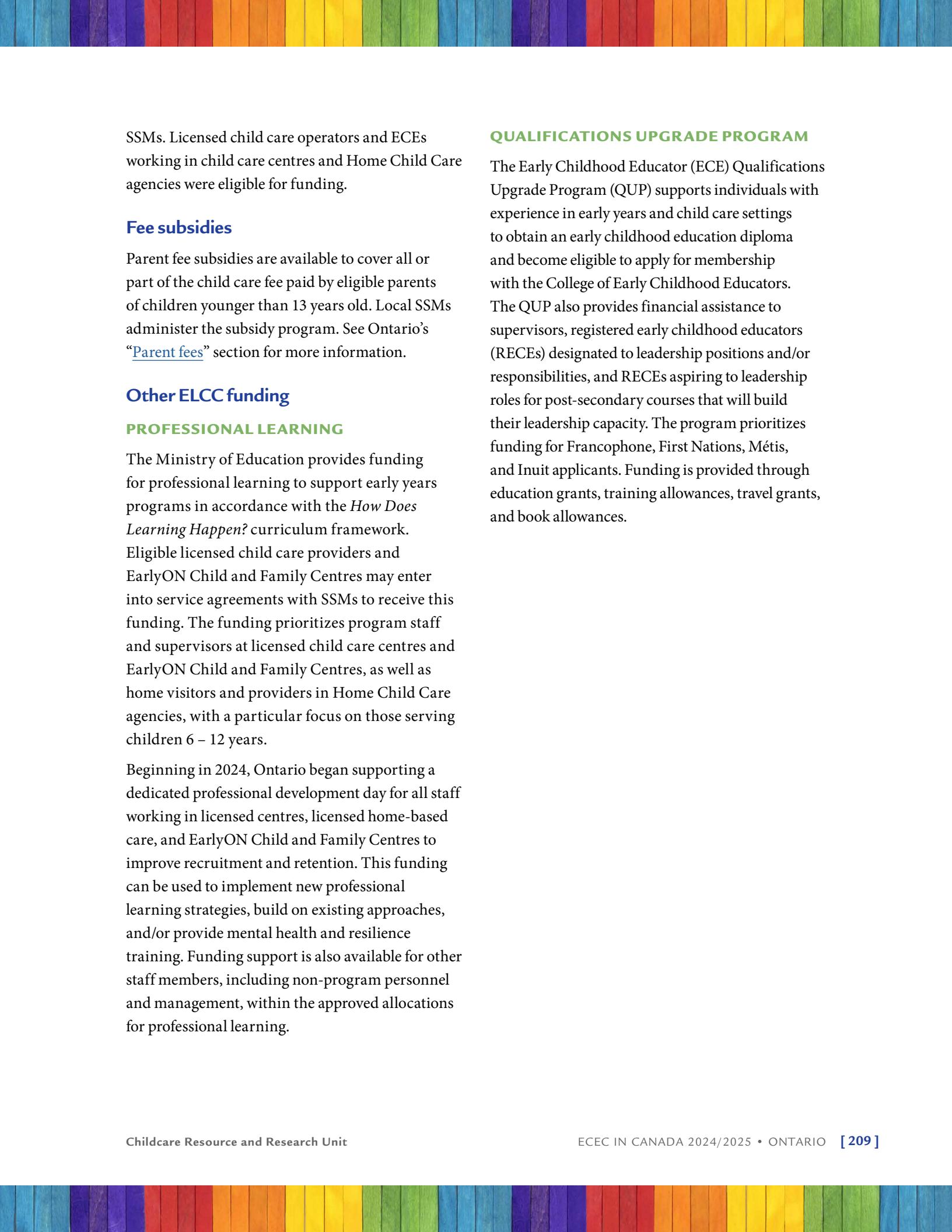
Capital funding for child care in French language schools supports construction and expansion of child care facilities in French language educational institutions, ensuring that Francophone children have access to culturally and linguistically appropriate early childhood education.

#### **EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE INFRASTRUCTURE FUND**

The Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund was implemented in 2025 to support infrastructure projects with a goal of increasing inclusion in child care for underserved communities through the creation of new, licensed child care spaces. The funding supports not-for-profit licensed child care centres in alignment with Ontario's Access and Inclusion Framework. The funds are dispersed by local SSMs under provincial criteria.

#### **CANADA-ONTARIO EARLY CHILDHOOD WORKFORCE AGREEMENT**

During the 2021 – 2022 fiscal year, Ontario received \$149.9 million in federal funding to support the recruitment and retention of the early childhood workforce. This one-time funding was to strengthen the workforce by providing financial incentives, enhancing access to professional training, and helping retain qualified ECEs and staff in licensed child care settings. As per the terms of the agreement, Ontario was allowed to carry forward to 2022 – 2023 up to 50% of any unspent federal funds. Ontario spent \$75 million in Early Childhood Workforce funding in 2021 – 2022 and the remaining \$75 million in 2022 – 2023. The funds were distributed through municipal



SSMs. Licensed child care operators and ECEs working in child care centres and Home Child Care agencies were eligible for funding.

### Fee subsidies

Parent fee subsidies are available to cover all or part of the child care fee paid by eligible parents of children younger than 13 years old. Local SSMs administer the subsidy program. See Ontario's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

### Other ELCC funding

#### PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

The Ministry of Education provides funding for professional learning to support early years programs in accordance with the *How Does Learning Happen?* curriculum framework.

Eligible licensed child care providers and EarlyON Child and Family Centres may enter into service agreements with SSMs to receive this funding. The funding prioritizes program staff and supervisors at licensed child care centres and EarlyON Child and Family Centres, as well as home visitors and providers in Home Child Care agencies, with a particular focus on those serving children 6 – 12 years.

Beginning in 2024, Ontario began supporting a dedicated professional development day for all staff working in licensed centres, licensed home-based care, and EarlyON Child and Family Centres to improve recruitment and retention. This funding can be used to implement new professional learning strategies, build on existing approaches, and/or provide mental health and resilience training. Funding support is also available for other staff members, including non-program personnel and management, within the approved allocations for professional learning.

#### QUALIFICATIONS UPGRADE PROGRAM

The Early Childhood Educator (ECE) Qualifications Upgrade Program (QUP) supports individuals with experience in early years and child care settings to obtain an early childhood education diploma and become eligible to apply for membership with the College of Early Childhood Educators. The QUP also provides financial assistance to supervisors, registered early childhood educators (RECEs) designated to leadership positions and/or responsibilities, and RECEs aspiring to leadership roles for post-secondary courses that will build their leadership capacity. The program prioritizes funding for Francophone, First Nations, Métis, and Inuit applicants. Funding is provided through education grants, training allowances, travel grants, and book allowances.

## **FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024)**

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

### **Operational funding**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Operating funds	\$775,982,802
Wage Enhancement Grant and Home Child Care Enhancement Grant	\$206,151,621
Special Needs Resourcing	\$138,675,299
Small Water Works	\$231,533
Territory Without Municipal Organization	\$1,258,428
CWELCC (fee reduction, workforce compensation, and professional learning)	\$1,957,320,079
<b>Total operational funding</b>	<b>\$3,079,619,762</b>

*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, disability funding, and other grants/funding paid on a recurring basis.*

### **One-time funding – capital (major and minor)**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Capital for communities (includes CWELCC Start-up Grant)	\$109,250,671
Capital funding for school-based child care	\$94,430,731
Capital funding for child care in French language schools	\$11,036,617

### **One-time funding – other**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Transitional grants	\$64,125,002
CWELCC (Emerging Issues)	\$35,898,055
<b>Total one-time funding</b>	<b>\$314,741,076</b>

*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.*

### **Fee subsidies**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Child care fee subsidies	\$513,087,219

*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 directly to service providers.*

### **Municipal contribution**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Funds contributed by Service System Managers to regulated child care	\$213,194,889
<b>TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, fee subsidies, and municipal contribution)</b>	<b>\$4,120,642,946</b>

### **Other ELCC funding**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Ontario Childcare Access and Relief from Expense Tax Credit	\$345,602,453
EarlyON Child and Family Centre funding	\$174,718,422
Qualifications Upgrade Program	\$9,500,000
Funding for child care associations and research	\$3,614,021
<b>Total other ELCC funding</b>	<b>\$533,434,896</b>

---

## Federal transfers to Ontario

---

<i>Federal transfer</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$212,139,963
Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care	\$2,078,596,741
Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$20,178,131

---

*Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to Ontario for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements, as they are updated annually in line with population estimates. 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 (2025).

---



# Manitoba

Overview	213	<b>CHILD CARE FUNDING</b>	<b>234</b>
Provincial context	214	Eligibility for CWELCC funding	234
<b>KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA</b>	<b>217</b>	Child care services' eligibility for funding	234
Kindergarten for five-year-olds	217	Types of funding	234
Kindergarten for four-year-olds (nursery)	217	Funding for regulated child care (fiscal year 2023 – 2024)	241
Curriculum framework	217		
Enrolment	218		
Recent or anticipated developments	218		
Other early childhood programs	218		
<b>CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>219</b>		
Administration	219		
Curriculum framework	220		
Children with disabilities	220		
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care	221		
Parent fees	222		
Workforce	224		
Standards and regulations	227		
Of interest	229		
<b>CHILD CARE DATA</b>	<b>230</b>		
Regulated child care space statistics	230		
Regulated child care enrolment statistics	233		



# Manitoba

## ■ OVERVIEW

In Manitoba, the Ministry of Education and Early Childhood Learning is responsible for regulated child care centres, nursery schools, family child care, group child care homes, kindergarten, and before- and after-school child care.

Licensed child care includes child care centres, nursery schools, family child care, group child care homes, and some before- and after-school child care programs. Before- and after-school programs operated by schools are not required to be licensed.

Centre-based child care is delivered by non-profit and for-profit operators, with non-profits making up almost all child care provision. There are no publicly operated child care programs in Manitoba.

Family child care and group child care homes (more than one provider) are individually licensed.

Manitoba offers non-compulsory part-day kindergarten for all five-year-olds. The provincial government does not provide kindergarten for four-year-olds. Some school divisions operate full school-day kindergarten and part-day programs for four-year-olds (termed nursery), but these programs are not provincially funded.

Manitoba has had set parent fees and operating grants in licensed funded centres and homes since the 1970s. Manitoba began operationally funding child care in 2000, with non-profit centres and family child care eligible for operating funding. In April 2023, Manitoba introduced a set fee of \$10/day for children 0 – 6 years in full-day care in funded centres and homes. The Child Care Subsidy Program provides provincial support to eligible families to help with the cost of child care. For-profit centres may accept fee subsidies, but they do not receive provincial operating funding.

In 2022, the province introduced a wage floor with minimum starting points and target wages based on job position and classification. Target hourly wages were updated for 2025 – 2026. Use of the targets is optional for centres.

Manitoba signed the Canada-Manitoba Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement in August 2021. It allocated \$1.2 billion over five years to the province.

In March 2025, Manitoba accepted the federal offer to extend its bilateral agreement until 2031.

### Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)

	2021	2025	Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025
Non-profit	19,372	22,157	+2,785
For-profit	1,349	1,934	+585
<b>Total full-day spaces</b>	<b>20,721</b>	<b>24,091</b>	<b>+3,370</b>
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	6.5%	8%	+1.5%
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit	-	-	17%

## ■ PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded; however, the totals are based on exact figures. Therefore, totals may not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

### Number of children 0 – 12 years (2024 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	13,900
1	14,900
2	15,400
3	14,500
4	17,400
5	15,500
6	18,900
7	17,400
8	17,100
9	17,600
10	16,000
11	16,100
12	15,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>210,500</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	44,200
3 – 5	47,400
6 – 12	118,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>210,500</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0	8,500
1	9,500
2	10,400
3	9,500
4	11,300
5	10,900
6	12,400
7	11,300
8	11,500
9	11,500
10	11,100
11	11,100
12	11,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>140,000</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	28,400
3 – 5	31,700
6 – 12	80,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>140,000</b>

---

### 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	14,855	7,425	60	360	220
5 – 9	15,500	8,160	60	345	170
10 – 14	15,935	8,300	70	355	175
<b>Total</b>	<b>46,290</b>	<b>23,885</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>1,060</b>	<b>565</b>

### Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age of youngest child</i>	<i>Number of mothers</i>	<i>Participation rate (%)</i>
0 – 3	32,300	76.0
4 – 5	14,000	81.4
0 – 5	46,300	77.6
6 – 12	41,900	85.5

### Living arrangements by age of child (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Living with two parents</i>	<i>Living with one parent</i>			<i>Total</i>
		<i>Lone mother</i>	<i>Lone father</i>		
0 – 4	62,355	11,915	2,480		14,390
5 – 9	63,630	14,085	3,695		17,780
10 – 14	60,875	15,235	4,245		19,485

### Languages spoken most often at home (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Non-official</i>	<i>Multiple</i>
0 – 4	65,260	1,000	10,955	3,170
5 – 9	72,325	1,105	8,945	3,845
10 – 14	73,495	1,005	7,810	3,835
<b>Total</b>	<b>211,075</b>	<b>3,105</b>	<b>27,705</b>	<b>10,855</b>

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

<i>Two-parent families</i>	<i>Male lone parent</i>	<i>Female lone parent</i>
\$90,000	\$46,000	\$42,000

## KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA

### KINDERGARTEN FOR FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

#### Provincial responsibility

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning  
Student Achievement and Inclusion Division  
Phone: 204-945-0435  
Email: [SAI-ADM@gov.mb.ca](mailto:SAI-ADM@gov.mb.ca)  
Website: [edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/index.html](http://edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/index.html)

For French and French Immersion school programs:

*Bureau de l'éducation française*  
Phone: 204-945-6916  
Email: [BEF@gov.mb.ca](mailto:BEF@gov.mb.ca)  
Website: [edu.gov.mb.ca/m12/index.html](http://edu.gov.mb.ca/m12/index.html)

#### Legislation

Manitoba. Legislative Assembly. *Education Administration Act*. 1987- C.C.S.M, C-E10.  
Manitoba. Legislative Assembly. *Public Schools Act*. 1987, C.C.S.M, C-P250.

#### Provision

##### Kindergarten provision

<b>Definition</b>	Part-day program for all five-year-olds.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Five years old by December 31.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Not compulsory.
<b>Entitlement</b>	No entitlement, but all school boards offer it, and almost all children attend.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Minimum of 2.5 hours. Full-day is offered in some school divisions that fund it.
<b>Class size</b>	Maximum 23 children.

#### Teacher qualifications and certification

The academic requirement for a permanent professional teaching certificate is a Bachelor of Education from a Manitoba or otherwise approved university or equivalent.

Kindergarten teachers do not have specific early childhood qualification requirements.

### KINDERGARTEN FOR FOUR-YEAR-OLDS (NURSERY)

The provincial government does not provide kindergarten for four-year-olds. However, some school divisions fund and offer part-day programs for four-year-olds (termed nursery). These programs are different from nursery schools licensed under child care legislation. The province has no responsibility or guidance for nursery programs delivered by school divisions.

### CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The *kindergarten curriculum* is a mandatory curriculum framework for kindergarten in all public schools and publicly funded independent schools in Manitoba.

*A Time for Learning, A Time for Joy: A Resource for Kindergarten Teachers* (2015) is a voluntary but recommended pedagogical guide to play-based learning based on Manitoba's kindergarten curriculum.

## ■ ENROLMENT

### Kindergarten enrolment (2024 – 2025 school year)

#### *Enrolment in public schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	12,982
Kindergarten for 4-year-olds (nursery)	1,462

#### *Enrolment in funded and non-funded private/independent schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	1,350
Kindergarten for 4-year-olds (nursery)	434

#### *Enrolment in school division-administered First Nations schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	297
Kindergarten for 4-year-olds (nursery)	237

**Total kindergarten enrolment for 5-year-olds** 14,535

**Total kindergarten enrolment for 4-year-olds (nursery)** 2,133

## ■ OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

### *Centres de ressources éducatives à l'enfance*

*Centres de ressources éducatives à l'enfance* are staffed French language family resource centres for children to attend with their families, featuring educational resources and programs in French. These centres are open to members of the *Fédération des parents de la francophonie manitobaine*; the public may purchase a membership for \$25 annually.

## ■ RECENT OR ANTICIPATED DEVELOPMENTS

### *Prématernelle*

*Prématernelle* is a full school-day pilot project program for four-year-olds to promote the acquisition of French language skills. The full school-day (5.5 hours) program is offered in five *Division scolaire franco-manitobaine* schools and has a maximum class size of 23 children.

# CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

## ■ ADMINISTRATION

### Provincial responsibility

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning Early Learning and Child Care Division

Phone: 204-945-0776

Email: [cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca](mailto:cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca)

Website: [gov.mb.ca/education/childcare/](http://gov.mb.ca/education/childcare/)

In January 2022, responsibility for early learning and child care (ELCC) in Manitoba moved from the Department of Families to the Department of Education, which was then renamed Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning.

### Legislation

Manitoba. Legislative Assembly. [\*The Community Child Care Standards Act\*](#). CCSM c. C158.

Manitoba. Legislative Assembly. [\*Child Care Regulation\*](#). MR 62/86.

Manitoba. Legislative Assembly. [\*Child Care Worker Retirement Benefits Regulation\*](#). MR 20/2011.

Manitoba. Legislative Assembly. [\*The Early Learning and Child Care Act\*](#). SM 2021, c. 41.

(not yet in force)

*The Early Learning and Child Care Act* received royal assent in June 2021 and will replace *The Community Child Care Standards Act*. The new act will come into force upon proclamation at the same time as new ELCC regulations are finalized.

### Service descriptions

#### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

There are no health, safety, or training requirements or provision for public oversight in unregulated child care. There may be attention by public officials on a complaint basis. See the [\*Child Care Regulation\*](#) for more information.

An unlicensed provider can care for a maximum of four children under the age of 12, including no more than two children under the age of two. These numbers include the caregiver's own children.

Child care on school premises for children in kindergarten to Grade 6 and nursery school programs during school hours provided by schools or other organizations under contract with a school are not required to be licensed.

Nursery schools operated as early intervention programs by school boards are not required to be licensed. These programs are different from nursery schools licensed as part-day child care centres (see below).

#### REGULATED CHILD CARE

##### Child care centre

Full-day child care centres provide child care for more than four continuous hours per day for three or more days per week to more than three infants, four preschool-age children, or four children who are enrolled in school from kindergarten to Grade 6.

##### Nursery school

Nursery schools are part-day centres that provide child care for up to four continuous hours per day or, when more than four continuous hours per day, for less than three days per week to more than three infants or four preschool-age children. These licensed nursery schools under child care aegis are different from school board-provided "nurseries," which are not required to be licensed, but may choose to be.

##### School-age child care

School-age centres provide child care to more than four children ages 6 – 12 years before- and after-school or full-day when school is not in session.

## Family child care

A family child care home is located in the home of a licensed provider who cares for up to eight children 12 years of age or less, including the provider's own children.

## Group child care homes

A group child care home is in a licensed private home in which two or more caregivers care for 8 – 12 children aged 12 or younger. The care must be provided in the home of a licensee. The resident provider's own children must be included in the maximum number of children.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

*Early Returns: Manitoba's Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Preschool Centres and Nursery Schools* (2011) and its companion document, *Early Returns: Manitoba's Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Infant Programs* (2013), are voluntary curriculum frameworks in Manitoba. The frameworks outline what to include in regulation-required curriculum statements for each type of program. They focus on children 2 – 6 years and 12 weeks – 2 years, respectively.

## CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

### Terminology and approach

Manitoba uses the terms “children with additional support needs” and “children with exceptional additional support needs” to encompass children with disabilities.

All licensed facility types are eligible to receive inclusion services.

The province provides inclusion funding specific to the individual child.

## Programs supporting inclusion in ELCC

The [Child Care Inclusion Support Program](#) assists licensed, non-profit child care centres, nursery schools, and licensed family and group child care homes to reduce or remove barriers to allow a child with additional or exceptional additional support needs to participate in daily programming activities. Funded services are determined through eligibility, assessed need, and available program resources.

Child Development Services, delivered by department staff, provide short-term interventions, programming recommendations, behavioural strategies, and resources and training for facility staff to ensure inclusive practices for all children in ELCC environments. Child Development Services focus on the environment, programming, and staff-child interactions. Child Development Services are intended to build staff capacity and adapt the environment and programming to better meet the needs of all children.

If eligible facilities do not have the capacity to effectively support a child's inclusion in programming and activities, they may receive funds to support a service response for an identified need, such as:

- Training for regular staff;
- Behavioural interventions;
- Equipment/modifications;
- Modification to the premises to support mobility needs; and
- Guaranteed space payments or enhanced staffing ratios to support inclusion.

The [Guaranteed Space Payment](#) pays an eligible family or group child care home provider to keep an open, subsidized space within the total number of licensed spaces in order to accommodate a child with additional support needs. While receiving the Guaranteed Space Payment, the provider must ensure that one space remains unused.



In Manitoba, there is no child care service solely or primarily for children with disabilities.

### Access to inclusive ELCC

All non-profit licensed child care centres and family child care homes are required to accept children with disabilities.

A diagnosis by a qualified professional is not required to receive inclusion support.

Newly constructed or renovated facilities are required to meet the [Manitoba Building Code](#) and the accessibility standards in the [National Building Code](#).

In Manitoba, there is no wait or delay for inclusion support services, but time may be required to review the application and implement the services.

Child care programs providing inclusive child care must have a written inclusion policy, provide inclusive programming, and ensure individual program plans are in place.

If the facility is licensed as a non-profit and meets all regulated licensing requirements, it is eligible to receive the same types of provincial grant funding available to all other licensed facilities in the province.

In 2025, there was one licensed centre on reserve, with 35 full-day spaces. Ka-Ka-Kwe-Ke-Ong Daycare, located on Ebb and Flow First Nation, is a non-profit organization. There was no licensed family child care on reserve.

The number of unregulated child care centres on reserve is not available.

Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (AHSOR) programs may be licensed at their request. In 2025, 42 unlicensed AHSOR programs operated on reserves.

### Indigenous child care other than on reserve

Licensed child care facilities in Manitoba may self-declare as Indigenous programs. In 2024, 44 facilities – 25 centres, 11 homes, and eight part-day nursery schools – self-declared as having First Nations, Inuit, or Métis components/programming.

#### Licensed spaces in self-declared Indigenous programs not on reserve (2024)

Program type	Number of spaces
Full-day (infant)	251
Full-day (preschool-age)	748
Part-day (nursery school)	194
Before- and after-school (school-age)	284
<b>Total licensed spaces</b>	<b>1,477</b>

In 2025, Manitoba had three licensed Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) programs providing 66 spaces, along with 18 unlicensed AHSUNC programs.

## FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE

In Manitoba, 18% of the total population identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in the most recent census (2021). There are 63 First Nations and 376 reserves in Manitoba. Approximately half of First Nations people in the province live on reserve.

### First Nations child care on reserve

Child care on reserves in Manitoba is regulated by the First Nations governing bodies and is not required to be provincially licensed. However, any child care centre in a First Nations community that wants to be licensed by the province may apply to become licensed. Manitoba provides ELCC consultation and guidance to First Nations communities at their request.

## Indigenous-specific resources/initiatives

Nine Manitoba post-secondary early childhood educator (ECE) diploma programs include a three-credit (40-hour) course based on Indigenous history and worldviews. Every program is expected to have Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing woven throughout their curriculum. For example, the University College of the North has integrated Indigenous-based learning outcomes into every course offered in their ECE diploma program.

The Child Care Qualifications and Training Committee, which provides recommendations to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning regarding ECE pre-service and certifications, has revised the competencies required for an ECE II classification in Manitoba. All ECE diploma programs must weave Indigenous ways of being, knowing, and doing into their curriculum for their graduates to receive the ECE II classification.

Louis Riel Vocational College offers Indigenous-focused ECE diploma programs. Many of Manitoba's post-secondary institutions work in collaboration with Indigenous governments, communities, or organizations to provide training cohorts in or for the community.

The Early Learning and Child Care Division has developed a partnership with the Manitoba First Nations Education and Resource Centre (MFNERC), including enhancing early childhood education in the North and in First Nations communities. MFNERC offers support and resources to licensed and unlicensed child care across the province.

Under Manitoba's Action Plan in the Canada-Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (Multilateral Framework), Manitoba increased funding for the Indigenous Programming Grant by 600%, increasing the total funding allocation from \$50,000 in previous years to \$300,000 in 2021 – 2022.

In 2015, the *Community Child Care Standards Act* was amended, directing the Minister to establish a First Nations, Inuit, and Métis ELCC policy framework to support positive outcomes for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children within three years of the amendment coming into force.

## PARENT FEES

Manitoba has had set parent fees in licensed funded centres and homes since the 1970s. Historically, the set fees varied by age of the child and hours of care. Manitoba began operationally funding child care in 2000, with non-profit centres and family child care eligible for operating funding.

On April 2, 2023, Manitoba introduced a set fee of \$10/day for children 0 – 6 years in full-day care in funded centres and homes.

Beginning December 8, 2024, the province reduced parent fees for school-age child care on non-school days, including in-service days and school holidays, to \$10/day.

Until 2025, family child care providers classified as ECE II or III could charge higher maximum daily fees, equal to child care centres' fees. In 2025, parent fees for all funded licensed full-day child care were set at \$10/day.

## Provincially set fees in funded centres and family child care homes (2022, 2024)

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Hours of care/day</i>	<i>Centres and homes where licensee is ECE II or III (2022)</i>	<i>Homes where licensee is not ECE II or III (2022)</i>	<i>Centres and homes (2024)</i>
<i>Infant and preschool-age</i>	<4 hours	\$15.00	\$11.10	\$5.00
	4 – 10 hours	\$30.00	\$22.20	\$10.00
	>10 hours	\$45.00	\$33.30	\$15.00
<i>School-age (in-service days and school holidays)</i>	<4 hours	\$10.40	\$9.10	\$5.00
	4 – 10 hours	\$20.80	\$18.20	\$10.00
	>10 hours	\$31.20	\$27.30	\$15.00
<i>School-age (regular school days)</i>	1 period	\$6.15	\$6.15	\$6.15
	2 periods	\$8.60	\$8.60	\$8.60
	3 periods	\$10.30	\$10.30	\$10.00

Unfunded non-profit centres, unfunded regulated family child care, and for-profit centres (unfunded) may set their own fees.

Licensed child care facilities that receive provincial operating grant funding for any of their licensed spaces are known as funded facilities (centres and home child care). Some non-profit facilities choose not to receive provincial funding and may set their own fees. Funded facilities that have expanded spaces may have mainly funded spaces but may be temporarily waiting for funding approval of new/expanded spaces.

Manitoba does not report on average fees in unfunded centres.

### Additional fees

Operators are not permitted to charge waitlist fees. They may charge optional fees for food, transportation, and field trips. However, families must have the option to supply their own food and transportation, and child care must be provided for families who choose to opt out of a field trip.

Facilities licensed and operationally funded to provide extended hours are not permitted to charge more than the maximum daily fees.

### Parent fee subsidies

The [Child Care Subsidy Program](#) provides provincial support to eligible families to help with the cost of child care by paying all or part of parent fees. There is no waitlist for fee subsidies. All eligible families are entitled to receive a subsidy.

Regulated non-profit and for-profit centres, family child care homes, and group child care homes are eligible to provide child care for subsidized children. For-profit centres may accept fee subsidies, but they do not receive provincial operating funding.

The provincial government sets maximum parent fees for all children in funded child care facilities and for those receiving a fee subsidy in a for-profit centre.

Non-profit centres receiving provincial operating grants are required to accept children whose



parents/guardians receive a fee subsidy and cannot charge those subsidized families more than the maximum fees.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Two requirements must be met to qualify for the Child Care Subsidy Program: family net income must fall within a range to qualify for a partial or full subsidy, and there must be a reason for care.

Reasons an applicant requires care include:

- Being employed;
- Seeking employment;
- Attending school or an approved training program;

- Having a medical need and undergoing treatment;
- Having a child with a medical or special support need; or
- Enrolling your child in a nursery school.

See the [Child Care Subsidy Program Overview for Applicants](#) for more information.

## FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

Approval for the Child Care Subsidy Program depends on several factors, including income, family composition, type of care required, reason for care, and deductions.

### Examples of financial eligibility for fee subsidy (2024)

	<i>Maximum income for full subsidy</i>	<i>Income at which partial subsidy ends</i>
<b><i>For families living south of the 53rd parallel in Manitoba</i></b>		
One parent, one preschool-age child	\$23,883	\$37,542
Two parents, two preschool-age children	\$32,705	\$60,023
<b><i>For families living north of the 53rd parallel in Manitoba</i></b>		
One parent, one preschool-age child	\$27,023	-
Two parents, two preschool-age children	\$38,277	-

*Note: These figures are examples provided in the [Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning Annual Report 2023 – 2024](#) based on two different family compositions; they do not capture all scenarios.*

Parents who qualify for a full subsidy are required to pay a non-subsidized daily fee of \$1/child for less than 4 hours/day, \$2/child for 4 – 10 hours/day, and \$3/child for more than 10 hours/day.

## SUBSIDY RATES

Unfunded centres and homes may not charge a subsidized family more than the maximum daily fees outlined in the [Child Care Regulation](#) (M.R. 62/86).

The [Subsidy Eligibility Estimator](#) is available to estimate the subsidy amount based on income.

## WORKFORCE

### Child care centre staff wages

#### PROVINCIAL WAGE DATA

Individual child care operators set the wages for their ECEs and child care workers.

<b>Average hourly rate of pay by position (2023 – 2025)</b>			<b>Supervisor</b>	<b>Starting point</b>	<b>Target wage</b>
<b>Position</b>	<b>2023 – 2024</b>	<b>2024 – 2025</b>			
Child care assistant (CCA)	\$17.59	\$18.16	ECE III	\$28.17	\$28.43
ECE II	\$24.71	\$25.71	ECE II	\$25.43	\$25.69
ECE III	\$32.52	\$34.34	<b>Frontline staff</b>	<b>Starting point</b>	<b>Target wage</b>

### **PROVINCIAL WAGE GRID FOR CENTRES AND FAMILY CHILD CARE AGENCY STAFF**

Manitoba committed to an hourly wage grid in its Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care agreement.

In 2022, the province introduced a wage floor with minimum starting points and target wages based on job position and classification to “provide guidance to the non-profit early learning and child care sector in developing equitable and competitive salary scales.” Its use is optional for centres.

### **Early learning and child care wage floor and target wage (2024 – 2025)**

<b>Position/classification</b>	<b>Hourly wage</b>			
<b>Director ECE III</b>	<b>Starting point</b>	<b>Target wage</b>		<b>Target hourly wage</b>
151 – 200 spaces	\$36.81	\$37.85		\$39.41
51 – 150 spaces	\$33.06	\$33.43		\$36.91
50 or fewer spaces	\$29.75	\$30.03		\$34.66
<b>Director ECE II</b>	<b>Starting point</b>	<b>Target wage</b>	<b>Supervisor</b>	<b>Target hourly wage</b>
151 – 200 spaces	\$34.57	\$34.57	ECE III	\$30.97
51 – 150 spaces	\$31.01	\$31.42	ECE II	\$29.06
50 or fewer spaces	\$27.90	\$28.15	<b>Frontline staff</b>	<b>Target hourly wage</b>
<b>Assistant director</b>	<b>Starting point</b>	<b>Target wage</b>	ECE III	\$29.41
ECE III	\$29.66	\$30.05	ECE II	\$27.56
ECE II	\$26.76	\$27.02	CCA in ECE II Training	\$22.37
			CCA (with 40-hour course)	\$19.40

*Note: Effective July 1, 2024.*

### **Early learning and child care target wage (2025 – 2026)**

#### **Position/classification**

<b>Director ECE III</b>	<b>Starting point</b>	<b>Target wage</b>	<b>Target hourly wage</b>	
151 – 200 spaces	\$36.81	\$37.85	\$39.41	
51 – 150 spaces	\$33.06	\$33.43	\$36.91	
50 or fewer spaces	\$29.75	\$30.03	\$34.66	
<b>Director ECE II</b>	<b>Starting point</b>	<b>Target wage</b>	<b>Target hourly wage</b>	
151 – 200 spaces	\$34.57	\$34.57	\$37.56	
51 – 150 spaces	\$31.01	\$31.42	\$35.06	
50 or fewer spaces	\$27.90	\$28.15	<b>Supervisor</b>	<b>Target hourly wage</b>
<b>Assistant director</b>	<b>Starting point</b>	<b>Target wage</b>	ECE III	\$32.81
ECE III	\$29.66	\$30.05	ECE II	\$32.66
ECE II	\$26.76	\$27.02	<b>Frontline staff</b>	<b>Target hourly wage</b>
			ECE III	\$30.81
			ECE II	\$30.81
<b>Assistant director</b>	<b>Starting point</b>	<b>Target wage</b>	ECE III	\$29.41
ECE III	\$29.66	\$30.05	ECE II	\$27.56
ECE II	\$26.76	\$27.02	CCA in ECE II Training	\$22.37
			CCA (with 40-hour course)	\$19.40

*Note: Effective April 1, 2025.*

## Staff benefits

Since December 2010, Manitoba has provided funding for registered pension plans for centre-based staff and matched registered retirement savings plan (RRSP) contributions for funded family child care providers. Child care centres and nursery schools as employers are reimbursed for their contributions to employee pension plans and retirement supports, which are regulated under the [Child Care Worker Retirement Benefits Regulation](#).

See [Registered Pension Plans and Retirement Supports for Manitoba's Early Learning and Child Care Workforce](#) for more information.

## Early childhood certification

Manitoba uses a provincial classification system for the child care workforce, based on education in early childhood. All staff in centre-based licensed child care must be classified by the provincial government at one of three certification levels: child care assistant (CCA), early childhood educator II (ECE II), or early childhood educator III (ECE III). The requirements for the three levels are as follows:

### Child care assistant (CCA)

- 40 hours of approved early childhood training within the first year of employment.

### Early childhood educator II

- Two-year ECE diploma program; or
- Completion of ECE II assessment program offered by the provincial government.

### Early childhood educator III

- Completion of one of the following programs recognized by the Child Care Qualifications and Training Committee:
  - Advanced Diploma in Leadership in Early Childhood Care and Education, offered by Professional, Applied and Continuing Education at the University of Winnipeg;

- Early Childhood Management Certificate, offered by Assiniboine Community College;
- Early Learning and Child Care Certificate in Administration, offered by University College of the North;
- Bachelor of Arts from the University of Winnipeg, major in Developmental Studies: Stream C – Child Development and Child Care.
- Post-diplôme en gestion dans le domaine de l'éducation de la jeune enfance from Université de Saint-Boniface

There are no requirements for renewal or ongoing professional learning.

## Number of centre staff by classification (2024 – 2025)

Number of CCAs	5,760
Number of ECE IIs (diploma required for classification)	2,604
Number of ECE IIIs (post-diploma education required for classification)	999

See [Information on the Classification of Early Childhood Educators and Child Care Assistants](#) for further details.

## ECE II ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Manitoba offers the [ECE II Assessment Program](#) (including Competency Based Assessment and Prior Learning Assessment programs), which allows eligible child care staff working in licensed centres to demonstrate their skills, knowledge, and judgment according to required standards. Successful completion results in an ECE II classification level.

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRE STAFF

All centre staff were required to complete the Commit to Kids Child Sexual Abuse Prevention program offered by the Canadian Centre for Child

Protection by March 31, 2025. They are required to complete the program every four years thereafter.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Individually licensed family child care providers are required to take a 40-hour course within their first year of operation.

Providers were required to complete the Commit to Kids Child Sexual Abuse Prevention program offered by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection by March 31, 2025. They are required to complete the program every four years thereafter.

elements of child care standards and regulations, such as physical environments and food provision, are covered in the comparative tables in this publication, while others may be found in [The Community Child Care Standards Act](#) and [Child Care Regulation](#).

## Regulated child care centres

Child care centres are licensed under [The Community Child Care Standards Act](#) and [Child Care Regulation](#). The Act and regulations were most recently amended in 2024.

[The Early Learning and Child Care Act](#) will replace [The Community Child Care Standards Act](#), coming into force upon proclamation at the same time as new ELCC regulations are finalized.

## STAFF:CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZE

The maximum centre size in Manitoba is not specified. A maximum of two groups of children are permitted in one room.

### Staff:child ratio and maximum group size

Program type	Age group	Staff:child ratio	Maximum group size
<b>Full-time centre</b>	12 weeks – 1 year	1:3	6
	1 – 2 years	1:4	8
	2 – 3 years	1:6	12
	3 – 4 years	1:6	16
	4 – 5 years	1:9	18
	5 – 6 years	1:10	20
	6 – 12 years	1:15	30
	12 weeks – 2 years (mixed age group)	1:4	8
	2 – 6 years (mixed age group)	1:8	16
<b>Nursery school</b>	12 weeks – 2 years	1:4	8
	2 – 6 years	1:10	20
<b>School-age</b>	6 – 12 years	1:15	30

*Note: Ratio of 1:10 for children aged 5 – 6 years includes kindergarten-age children.*

## STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRES

### Qualification requirements for staffing a centre

In Manitoba, staff qualification requirements are specified at both centre and group levels.

In a full-time centre, two thirds of the staff included in staff-to-child ratios must meet the requirements of an ECE II or ECE III classification. Additionally, at least one staff person per group of children in a full-time centre must meet the requirements of an ECE II or III classification.

In a nursery school (part-time centre) operating four or more part-days per week, one half of the staff included in staff-to-child ratios must be classified as an ECE II or ECE III. At least one staff person per group of children must meet the requirements of an ECE II or III classification. In a nursery school operating three or fewer part-days per week, at least one person for every 30 licensed spaces must have at least ECE II certification.

In a school-age centre, one half of the staff included in staff:child ratios must meet the requirements of an ECE II or III classification. At least one staff person per group of children must meet the requirements of an ECE II or III classification.

### Qualification requirements for on-site centre directors/supervisors

A full-time centre must have a designated director to be responsible for daily operation. The director of a full-time child care centre must have an ECE III classification and at least one year of experience working with children in child care or a related setting.

The director of a nursery school operating more than three part-days per week or of a school-age child care centre must have an ECE II classification and one year experience working with children in child care or in a related setting, or meet the requirements of an ECE III.

### Other requirements

All staff must be at least 18 years old before they can be left alone with a child or group of children. The licence holder must ensure that no volunteer is left alone with a child, unless the person is a nursery school volunteer, and aged 18 or older.

All staff, prior to being employed or within a period of time approved by the provincial director, must complete a first aid course that includes CPR.

All staff and volunteers are required to have a criminal record check, child abuse registry check, and criminal disclosure statement.

## LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES

A regular child care centre licence may be issued for up to one year and renewed for up to three years. Relicensing inspection and monitoring visits are required annually.

### Regulated family child care

In Manitoba, family child care (termed family child care home) is regulated under [The Community Child Care Standards Act](#) and [Child Care Regulation](#).

Family child care must be provided in the provider's personal residence.

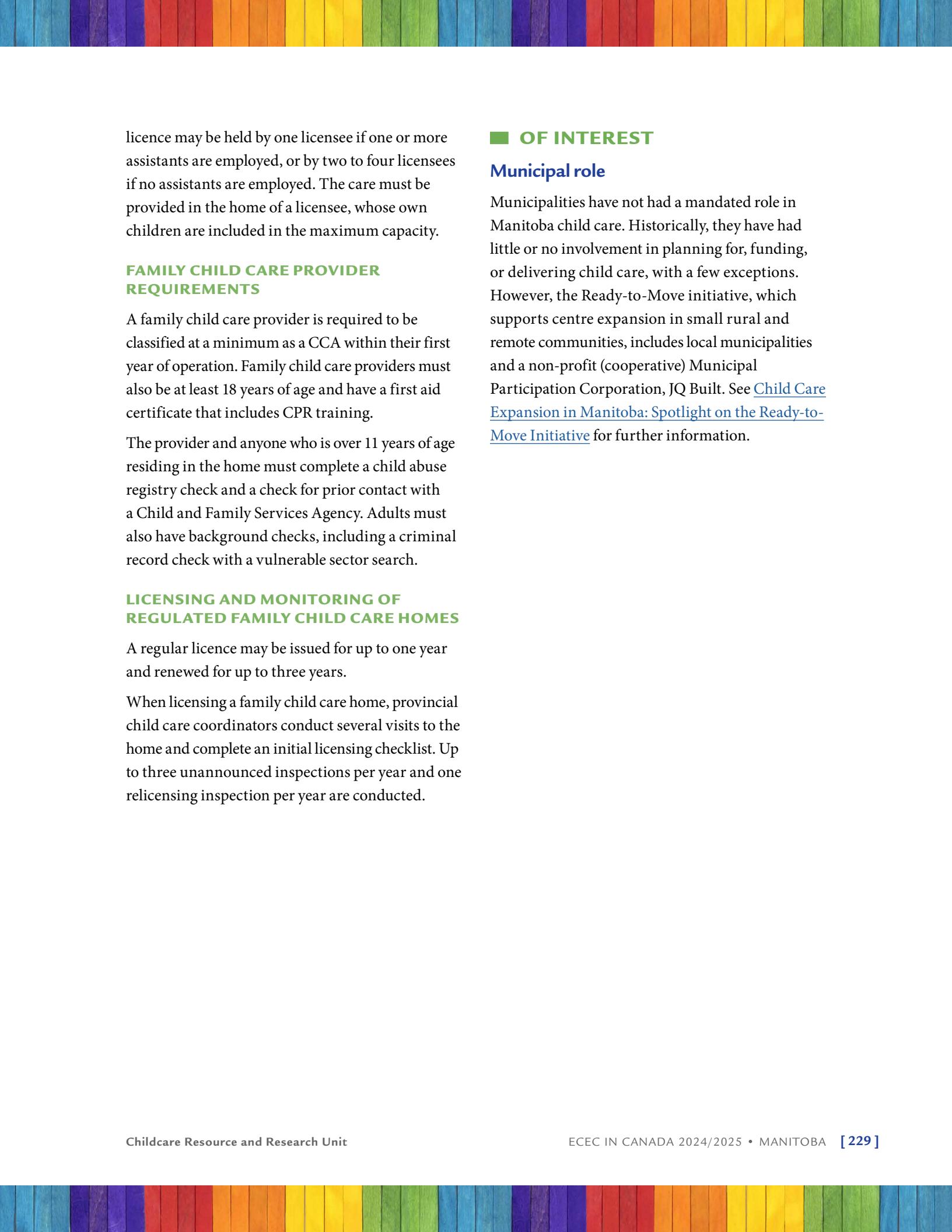
## MODEL OF ORGANIZATION

In Manitoba, family child care homes, including group child care homes, are individually licensed.

## MAXIMUM CAPACITY

Up to eight children, including the provider's own children, may be cared for in a licensed family child care home. No more than five children can be less than six years old, of whom no more than three can be less than two years old.

Group child care homes provide care for nine to 12 children under the age of 12. No more than three of the children may be less than two years of age. The



licence may be held by one licensee if one or more assistants are employed, or by two to four licensees if no assistants are employed. The care must be provided in the home of a licensee, whose own children are included in the maximum capacity.

### **FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS**

A family child care provider is required to be classified at a minimum as a CCA within their first year of operation. Family child care providers must also be at least 18 years of age and have a first aid certificate that includes CPR training.

The provider and anyone who is over 11 years of age residing in the home must complete a child abuse registry check and a check for prior contact with a Child and Family Services Agency. Adults must also have background checks, including a criminal record check with a vulnerable sector search.

### **LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES**

A regular licence may be issued for up to one year and renewed for up to three years.

When licensing a family child care home, provincial child care coordinators conduct several visits to the home and complete an initial licensing checklist. Up to three unannounced inspections per year and one relicensing inspection per year are conducted.

## **■ OF INTEREST**

### **Municipal role**

Municipalities have not had a mandated role in Manitoba child care. Historically, they have had little or no involvement in planning for, funding, or delivering child care, with a few exceptions. However, the Ready-to-Move initiative, which supports centre expansion in small rural and remote communities, includes local municipalities and a non-profit (cooperative) Municipal Participation Corporation, JQ Built. See [Child Care Expansion in Manitoba: Spotlight on the Ready-to-Move Initiative](#) for further information.

## CHILD CARE DATA

### ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

#### Number of spaces (2024, 2025)

Category	2024	2025
<b>Full-day centre spaces</b>		
Infant (<2 years)	3,452	3,700
Preschool-age (2 – 5 years)	19,413	20,391
<b>Total full-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>22,865</b>	<b>24,091</b>
<b>Part-day centre spaces</b>		
Nursery schools (2 – 5 years)	2,734	2,815
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>25,599</b>	<b>26,906</b>
<b>Before- and after-school care centre spaces (licensed or regulated)</b>		
Children in Grade 1 – <13 years	13,221	13,639
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>38,820</b>	<b>40,545</b>
<b>Family child care licensed capacity</b>		
<i>Family child care</i>		
Full-day (children 0 – <6 years not yet in school)	1,723	1,723
Part-day (children 6 – <13 years attending school)	933	939
<i>Group child care homes (more than one provider)</i>		
Full-day (children 0 – <6 years not yet in school)	380	431
Part-day (children 6 – <13 years attending school)	14	11
<b>Total family child care spaces</b>	<b>3,050</b>	<b>3,104</b>
<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)</b>	<b>41,870</b>	<b>43,649</b>

## Number of child care centres and family child care homes (2024)

### Centre-based child care

<b>Total number of centres</b>	<b>759</b>
--------------------------------	------------

### Centre-based programs

Centres providing a full-day program	539
--------------------------------------	-----

*Note: This figure is not comparable to previous versions of ECEC in Canada. Manitoba previously included programs licensed to provide full-day care for school-age children only (for example, during summer holidays) in this category. It now includes only full-day programs for children 0 – 5 years.*

Centres providing a part-day (nursery school) program	100
---	-----

*Note: This is the number of licensed nursery schools. Manitoba does not make a distinction between, or report on, full-day centres that may also offer a part-day nursery school program.*

Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending school (Grade 1 – 12 years)	364
---	-----

Centres providing infant care (<2 years)	340
--	-----

Centres providing preschool-age care (2 – 5 years)	669
--	-----

*Note: This number represents the total number of licensed centres and nursery schools with nursery school spaces.*

Centres providing a Francophone child care program	47
--	----

Centres providing non-standard hours care (as defined by the province)	23
--	----

Centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – Grade 12)	340
---	-----

### Regulated family child care

Number of individually licensed family child care homes (active)	365
--	-----

Number of group child care homes (active)	35
---	----

<b>Total number of family child care homes</b>	<b>400</b>
--	------------

### Participation in CWELCC

Centres providing a full-day program	539
--------------------------------------	-----

Centres providing a part-day (nursery school) program	93
---	----

Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending school (Grade 1 – 12 years)	355
---	-----

<b>Total number of child care centres receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>632</b>
--	------------

Individually licensed family child care homes	297
---	-----

Group child care homes	28
------------------------	----

<b>Total number of regulated child care homes receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>325</b>
--	------------

## Auspice (2024)

---

### Centres by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit	41
Non-profit	718

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>Part-day</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	1,657	136	230	2,023
Non-profit	21,208	2,598	12,991	36,797

<sup>1</sup> Including kindergarten-age.

<sup>2</sup> Nursery school.

<sup>3</sup> Before- and after-school care (Grade 1 – 12 years).

---

## Auspice (2025)

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>Part-day</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	1,934	152	331	2,417
Non-profit	22,157	2,663	13,308	38,128

<sup>1</sup> Including kindergarten-age.

<sup>2</sup> Nursery school.

<sup>3</sup> Before- and after-school care (Grade 1 – 12 years).

---

## Publicly operated child care (2024)

There are no publicly operated child care programs in Manitoba.

## Fee subsidies (2024)

---

### Number of children receiving fee subsidies

Child Care Subsidy Program	6,343
----------------------------	-------

*Note: This figure represents the average number of children receiving subsidized child care per four-week period.*

---



## Disability support (2024)

---

### Number of children receiving disability support

Children in licensed child care receiving disability support funding	1,262
--	-------

*Note: This figure represents only those children served under the Inclusion Support Program.*

---

## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

Manitoba does not currently report on enrolment.



## CHILD CARE FUNDING

The types of funding available for child care services in Manitoba include operational funding, one-time funding, fee subsidies, and other ELCC funding programs. See [Grant Funding](#) for more information.

### ■ ELIGIBILITY FOR CWELCC FUNDING

The CWELCC plan provides federal funds to provinces and territories for early learning and child care operational and one-time funding and fee subsidies for licensed child care for children aged 0 – 5. Funded new child care expansion is to be public and non-profit unless otherwise specified in the jurisdiction's agreement. Provinces and territories contribute their own funds and design their own policies and provision within this framework.

In Manitoba, the following are eligible for operational funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools);
- Licensed before- and after-school centres that enrol children under age six; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres are not eligible for operational funding.

In Manitoba, the following are eligible for capital funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres.

New or expanded for-profit centres are not eligible for capital funding.

### ■ CHILD CARE SERVICES' ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

Licensed non-profit child care centres, nursery schools, family child care, and group child care homes are eligible for all forms of funding.

For-profit child care centres in operation prior to April 18, 1991, are eligible to continue receiving a guaranteed daily fee payment.

### ■ TYPES OF FUNDING

#### **Operational funding**

##### **ANNUAL OPERATING GRANTS**

Non-profit centres, nursery schools, family child care homes, and group child care homes can receive annual operating grants.

Manitoba's set fees are based on a system of annual operating grants as the main funding source for regulated child care. To be eligible for annual operating grants, a facility must:

- Be provincially licensed;
- Be non-profit;
- Be open and provide child care services to families;
- Accept subsidized families;
- Enrol children with additional needs if requested; and
- Meet financial reporting requirements as outlined by the Early Learning and Child Care Program.

##### **Annual Operating Grant for funded non-profit centres**

Manitoba uses a unit funding model for the annual operating grants to fund non-profit child care

centres. The unit funding model is based on the regulated staff:child ratios for different age groups; a “unit” is four infant, eight preschool-age, or 15 school-age spaces. A unit of infant, preschool-age, or school-age spaces generates a similar amount of revenue from the Base Operating Grant, Wage Grid Supplement, Reduced Parent Fee Revenue Grant, and parent fees.

The maximum annual grants depend on the care type and the number of licensed spaces that are funded, as well as the specific months and days of service provided. Grants are distributed in four installments each year.

**Maximum annual operating grant rates in full-time centres per space by age group (effective July 1, 2024)**

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Annual amount per approved funded space</i>
Infant	\$16,610
Preschool-age	\$6,667
School-age	\$2,940

See [Funding Policies and Procedures: Centres](#) for more information.

**Nursery School Annual Operating Grant**

Beginning July 1, 2021, all funded nursery school spaces generated revenue based upon a common funding model for both the operating grants and maximum regulated parent fees. The grants are based on the number of funded spaces, the number of sessions offered per week, and the number of operating months. A base grant rate of \$1,045 per nursery school space that operates for one to five sessions per week for 12 months of the year was established. For nursery school spaces that operate for six to ten sessions per week, a pro-rated amount of \$209 per space was provided for each additional session offered per week.

In 2023, the maximum Nursery School Annual Operating Grant was \$1,778 per space for one to five sessions each week, with an additional \$356 per space for every additional session, up to a maximum of 10 sessions per week.

As of July 1, 2024, Manitoba introduced a standardized annual grant rate of \$1,966 per space for nursery schools operating one to five sessions per week, with an additional \$393 per space for each additional six to ten sessions per week. Funding is disbursed quarterly, reflecting the number of licensed spaces, sessions, utilization rates, and operational months.

**Maximum annual operating grant<sup>1</sup> for nursery schools per space (2021 – 2024)**

	<i>2021</i>	<i>2022</i>	<i>2023</i>	<i>2024</i>
1 – 5 session(s)/week	\$1,045	\$1,495	\$1,778	\$1,966

<sup>1</sup>Up to July 2022, this may be termed “regular grant” to distinguish from the former enhanced nursery school grant.

## Family/Group Child Care Home Annual Operating Grant

The Family/Group Child Care Home Annual Operating Grant is provided based on the type of care offered, the number of licensed group child care home spaces, utilization of those spaces, and the actual months and days of service. To qualify, child care homes must be licensed in Manitoba, comply with the reporting and accounting requirements set by Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning, and enrol families who are eligible for the Child Care Subsidy Program and Inclusion Support Program. Additionally, participating providers must charge uniform fees that do not exceed the regulated maximum parent fees.

### Maximum annual operating grants rate for family/group child care homes per space by age and type of child care (effective July 1, 2024)

Age group	Annual operating grant per space
Infant	\$4,802
Preschool-age	\$3,754
School-age	\$1,915

See [Funding Policies and Procedures: Family/Group Child Care Homes](#) for more information.

## GRANTS FOR EXTENDED OPERATING HOURS

Licensed facilities that regularly provide child care exceeding the normal operating hours of a child care facility (operating evenings or weekends) may receive increased operating funding equal to one-and-a-half times the number of spaces licensed for the extended operating hours.

## INCLUSION SUPPORT GRANTS

The Child Care Inclusion Support Program funds child care centres, nursery schools, family

child care, and group child care homes to reduce or eliminate barriers to allow a child with additional support needs to fully participate in an ELCC program. See Manitoba's "[Children with disabilities](#)" section for more information.

## GUARANTEED DAILY FEE PAYMENT TO FOR-PROFIT CENTRES

For-profit centres licensed before April 18, 1991, are eligible for the amounts in the table below.

For-profit centres licensed after April 18, 1991, are not eligible for this operating funding.

### Daily funding amounts per space for for-profit centres licensed before April 18, 1991

Age group	Hours of care per day	Daily amount per space
Infant	<4 hours	\$3.40
	4 – 12 hours	\$6.80
	>12 hours	\$10.20
Preschool-age	<4 hours	\$2.30
	4 – 12 hours	\$4.60
	>12 hours	\$6.90
School-age (in service and school holidays)	<4 hours	\$1.50
	4 – 12 hours	\$3.00
	>12 hours	\$4.50
School-age (regular school days)	1 period/2 or more periods	\$1.50/\$3.00

## PENSION REIMBURSEMENT

The Pension Reimbursement program offers financial support to eligible child care centres for employer contributions to pension plans. To qualify for reimbursement, child care centres must have a pension plan that meets ELCC program requirements and must have made employer contributions at a minimum rate of 4% of employee gross salary. Reimbursement covers actual



employer contributions and is issued quarterly from April 1 to March 31. Centres can apply for reimbursement after each quarter by submitting documentation of contributions.

#### **WAGE GRID OPERATING SUPPLEMENT**

In July 2022, the Wage Grid Operating Supplement was introduced to improve wages for the child care workforce. Eligible not-for-profit child care centres, nursery schools, and funded family child care and group child care homes receive funding to support wage increases, with the goal of reaching at least the starting wages and ideally the target wages set by the wage grid. The supplement provides equitable compensation for staff, including those in school-age programs.

In July 2023, Manitoba increased funding to support higher wages, and further enhancements were made in July 2024, including a 2.75% increase to the Wage Grid Supplement and a 5% increase to base operating grants.

#### **REVENUE SUPPLEMENT TO LOWER PARENT FEES**

To maintain average parent fees at \$10/day or less, Manitoba introduced new regulated maximum fees for funded child care as of April 2, 2023. To offset these reductions, funded child care centres received a Reduced Parent Fee Revenue Grant, which covers the difference between the old and new fee limits. This grant ensures that facilities maintain their prior revenue levels despite the fee changes.

#### **IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION OF MANITOBA EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT HUB**

The Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba (IRCOM) Early Childhood Development Hub receives government funding to provide licensed child care, respite care, and parenting support for refugee and newcomer families.

### **One-time funding**

#### **EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE BUILDING FUND**

Under Manitoba's Early Learning and Child Care Building Fund, eligible organizations may be approved for a grant to offset the costs of constructing new community-based licensed non-profit child care centres or expanding the number of spaces in existing centres. Eligible projects must focus on the development or expansion of child care centres; funding is not available for relocating existing spaces.

In 2021, the fund provided reimbursement of up to 40% of paid eligible capital expenses, up to a maximum of \$600,000 per capital project, for approved community-based child care centres.

As of June 2024, the fund provides up to 60% of total eligible construction costs for new infant and preschool spaces, with no set maximum. For new school-age spaces, the funding is capped at \$1.2 million.

Between 2021 and February 2025, 16 projects, with over \$11 million in capital funding support, were completed under this stream, adding over 700 licensed child care spaces. Over \$4.7 million has been committed to three additional projects that are currently underway, which will add over 130 new spaces.

#### **MUNICIPALITIES AND INDIGENOUS GOVERNING BODIES READY-TO-MOVE CHILD CARE INITIATIVE**

The Municipalities and Indigenous Governing Bodies Ready-to-Move Child Care Initiative provided capital grants to establish new non-profit child care centres in partnership with municipalities and Indigenous governing bodies. This initiative leveraged modular building technologies under expedited timelines in areas with a demonstrated



need for child care to create licensed spaces for infants and preschool-age children.

As of February 2025, Manitoba had invested nearly \$120 million to develop new child care centres across 25 rural and First Nations communities. A total of 20 facilities were open as of February 2025, adding over 1,450 new spaces. The remaining five facilities are expected to open between 2025 and 2027 and will add 400 new child care spaces.

### **CHILD CARE RENOVATION EXPANSION GRANT**

Manitoba provides up to \$2 million in capital funding to eligible applicants to increase the number of spaces for children under age seven in non-profit child care centres, with the goal of increasing their licensed capacity. From 2021 to 2025, more than \$18 million in grants was allocated to 27 licensed non-profit centres for renovations, resulting in nearly 550 new child care spaces. As of July 2025, 14 of the 27 projects were complete and open, adding over 175 spaces for infants and preschool-age children. The 13 other projects underway will add over 375 child care spaces to Manitoba's system. Approved project constructions are to be completed by 2026.

### **HEALTH AND CHILD CARE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT**

The Health and Child Care Infrastructure Project provides capital funding to health authorities and non-profit child care operators to create new child care centres in healthcare facilities across the province. Manitoba has committed \$20.9 million to create over 300 new child care spaces for children under the age of seven in high-demand health regions.

### **CHILD CARE CENTRES IN NEW SCHOOLS**

Manitoba's Child Care in Schools Policy mandates the inclusion of new child care spaces in the

construction of all new schools or major renovations of existing ones. Since 2021, five projects have been completed and opened (representing over 360 new spaces), six projects are in the design or construction phase, and 11 projects are committed/in pre-design. The latter 17 projects will create over 1,970 child care spaces. In early 2025, 10 additional schools were announced as part of this initiative, each incorporating a child care centre in their design.

### **SCHOOL-BASED CHILD CARE CENTRE EXPANSION PROJECT**

Manitoba provides capital grant funding to school divisions for the development and expansion of on-site child care facilities for infants, preschool-age children, and school-age children. In 2023, Manitoba announced the creation of over 2,600 spaces for children under age seven in 42 public schools, along with the development of more than 550 school-age spaces for before- and after-school care through non-capital provincial funding.

### **POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION CHILD CARE EXPANSION PROJECT**

The Post-Secondary Child Care Expansion Project provides funding to post-secondary institutions for the development or expansion of on-campus child care facilities, which include spaces for infants, and preschool-age and school-age children. This project aims to improve access for students and faculty while also creating Learning Labs to support practical training in early childhood education programs. Manitoba has allocated over \$60.5 million to establish more than 800 new child care spaces across six post-secondary institutions, in addition to \$3.9 million for 60 school-age spaces at *Université de Saint-Boniface*. Eight new Learning Labs will be built to facilitate early childhood education training.

## STAFF REPLACEMENT GRANT

The Staff Replacement Grant pays the cost of substitute staff for CCAs enrolled in a workplace training program, which is an accelerated post-secondary diploma level ECE program that allows eligible students to attend class two days per week while continuing to work in a licensed ELCC program for the remainder of the week. The amount of the grant paid to facilities is based on an assessment of the centre's application.

## EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE START-UP GRANTS

A one-time start-up grant of \$300 per child care space is available to home child care providers at the time of licensing to assist with the purchase of age-appropriate equipment or furnishings. Centres are eligible to receive up to \$450 per space, and nursery schools are eligible to receive up to \$245 per space.

### Maximum per space start-up grants (March 31, 2021)

Licensed facility	Maximum amount
Full-day child care centre	\$450
Nursery school	\$245
Family or group child care home	\$300

## CHILD CARE SUSTAINABILITY TRUST

The Child Care Sustainability Trust, managed by The Winnipeg Foundation, provides one-time funding for licensed child care facilities to support infrastructure improvements, program enhancements, and professional development. The trust seeks to improve the long-term sustainability, flexibility, accessibility, and quality of child care services. It allocates a portion of its annual interest earnings to eligible applicants, which include licensed child care centres, nursery schools, family child care, and group child care home providers.

Grant amounts differ based on the size of the facility, with a maximum of \$5,000 available for family child care and group child care home providers, \$20,000 for facilities with 50 or fewer spaces, and \$25,000 for those with more than 51 spaces.

Funding is provided through three categories:

- Infrastructure improvement, which supports both minor and major repairs to improve health, safety, and aging facilities;
- Program enhancement, which finances innovative and inclusive programming such as extended hours, accessibility upgrades, and mental health support; and
- Professional development, which includes funding for training, workshops, and conferences on subjects like diversity, leadership, curriculum development, and mental health.

Eligible facilities need to submit an application that details their project and budget to obtain funding that suits their specific needs.

## Fee subsidies

The Child Care Subsidy Program provides provincial support to eligible families to help with the cost of child care by paying all or part of parent fees. There is no waitlist for fee subsidies. All eligible families are entitled to receive a subsidy. See Manitoba's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

## Other ELCC funding

### TRAINING GRANTS FOR CCAS AND ECE IIS

Licensed non-profit centres, nursery schools, and family child care home providers are able to access training grants of up to \$400 per calendar year for CCAs and ECE IIs who are enrolled in approved early childhood education courses to upgrade their classification.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

The [Early Childhood Education Tuition Reimbursement](#) program provides up to \$5,000 per school year to support individuals pursuing recognized early childhood education programs at post-secondary institutions in Manitoba, leading to ECE II or ECE III certification. This funding aims to enhance access to ECE education for those entering or upgrading their qualifications. Eligibility criteria include enrolment in a part-time or full-time recognized ECE program in Manitoba for the 2023 – 2024 to 2025 – 2026 academic years, Canadian citizenship or permanent residency, a commitment to working in Manitoba’s licensed ELCC sector for two years after graduation, and the ability to provide proof of tuition payment.

## CHILD CARE CENTRE DEVELOPMENT TAX CREDIT

The [Child Care Centre Development Tax Credit](#) was introduced in 2018 to provide a refundable tax credit for private corporations that invest in the creation of new child care spaces for their employees and the surrounding community. Eligible corporations may receive \$10,000 per newly created infant or preschool-age space (maximum of 74 spaces) over five years.

## SCIENCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

The Science of Early Childhood Development (SECD) program offers a comprehensive range of resources, including readings, videos, links, interactive activities, and reflective questions. These materials support various purposes such as independent study, personal learning, post-secondary education, staff orientation, and parent education, and are accessible in Manitoba only. The SECD Resource Portal provides access to current interactive research on early experiences and their effects on lifelong health and wellbeing.

Additionally, the SECD Self-Study Professional Development Module Portal features free one-hour professional development sessions focused on early child development.

## CHILDCARE ATTACHMENT AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION

The Childcare Attachment and Relationship Education (CARE) program, offered by New Directions, provides training for educators to create quality early learning environments. The CARE program is based on the Circle of Security model of attachment and aims to strengthen the relationship between caregivers and children. The program equips child care providers to help children with their emotions and behaviours, benefiting both families and child care facilities. Funding from the Manitoba and Canadian governments allows licensed child care facilities in Manitoba to access this training at no cost.

## ABECEDARIAN APPROACH AND PROGRAM EXPANSION

The Abecedarian Approach is an early childhood intervention intended to improve developmental learning and outcomes for children in high-risk communities. Manitoba’s first Abecedarian centre was established in 2012. In 2022 and 2023, funding was allocated to four additional centres to implement the Abecedarian approach.

## ABECEDARIAN PROGRAM SUPPORT AND RESEARCH

To enhance the implementation of the Abecedarian approach, Red River College Polytechnic (RRC Polytech) provides an Abecedarian Support Program, which includes training for child care staff, along with ongoing mentorship and support. RRC Polytech collaborates with facilities to carry out data collection, analysis, and reporting to illustrate the impact of this approach on children’s developmental outcomes.

## CIRCLE OF SECURITY INTERNATIONAL

Circle of Security International is an organization that offers training and resources centred around the Circle of Security model. This model aims to strengthen secure attachments between caregivers and children. It is used worldwide to promote early childhood development and enhance the relationships between children and their caregivers. Licensed child care providers and early childhood educators in Manitoba may qualify for training and resources related to the Circle of Security approach.

## FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024)

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

### Operational funding

Program	Amount
Operating grants for child care centres	\$132,998,182
Family/Group Child Care Home Annual Operating Grant	\$5,071,840
Inclusion support grants	\$16,946,385
IRCOM Early Childhood Development Hub	\$91,300
Lord Selkirk Park Child Care Abecedarian	\$362,000
Pension Reimbursement	\$8,228,922
Revenue Supplement to Lower Parent Fees	\$66,923,806
Wage Grid Operating Supplement	\$54,143,231
<b>Total operational funding</b>	<b>\$284,765,665</b>

*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, disability funding, and other grants/funding paid on a recurring basis.*

### One-time funding – capital (major and minor)

Program	Amount
Early Learning and Child Care start-up grants	\$348,952
Early Learning and Child Care Building Fund	\$1,443,462
Municipalities and Indigenous Governing Bodies Ready-to-Move Child Care Initiative	\$26,000,000
Child Care Renovation Expansion Grant	\$14,870,658

### One-time funding – other

Program	Amount
Staff Replacement Grant	\$2,169,601
Child Care Sustainability Trust	\$379,106
Quality Early Learning and Environments Grant	\$56,875
Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion Grant	\$36,500
Innovative Recruitment and Retention Grant	\$11,904
<b>Total one-time funding</b>	<b>\$45,317,058</b>

*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.*

### Fee subsidies

Program	Amount
Child Care Subsidy Program	\$14,130,598
<b>TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, and fee subsidies)</b>	<b>\$344,213,320</b>

## Other ELCC funding

Program	Amount
Training grants for CCAs and ECE IIs	\$250,807
Family resource programs	\$321,500
Science of Early Childhood Development	\$831,073
Leadership and Governance Training	\$100,000
Workforce Training and Development	\$100,000
Wage Grid Consultant and Implementation Plan	\$47,749
Certification Modernization Consultant and Implementation	\$114,900
Workforce Engagement and Recognition	\$6,095
Rural and Northern Workforce Strategies	\$7,610
Circle of Security International	\$195,887
St. Amant Applied Behaviour Analysis Training	\$280,000
Indigenous Programming Grant	\$81,166
New Directions – CARE Program	\$65,900
Abecedarian Program Support and Research	\$51,000
Abecedarian Program Expansion	\$1,941,596
Early Childhood Education Tuition Reimbursement	\$1,925,941
Early Childhood Training Expansion	\$9,290,148
Partnerships with Indigenous Governing Bodies	\$500,000
Francophone Program	\$300,000
Emergency Funding	\$25,000
Inclusion Workshop Series	\$22,000
Health and Post-Secondary Education Tax Levy	\$773,576
Threshold Increases	\$22,342
<b>Total other ELCC funding</b>	<b>\$17,254,290</b>

## Federal transfers to Manitoba

Federal transfer	Amount
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$21,587,764
Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$239,639,220
Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$4,099,575

*Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to Manitoba for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements, as they are updated annually in line with population estimates. 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 (2025).



# Saskatchewan

Overview	244	<b>CHILD CARE FUNDING</b>	<b>265</b>
Provincial context	245	Eligibility for CWELCC funding	265
<b>KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA</b>	<b>248</b>	Child care services' eligibility for funding	265
Kindergarten for four- and five-year-olds	248	Types of funding	265
Curriculum framework	249	Funding for regulated child care (fiscal year 2023 – 2024)	271
Enrolment	249		
Other early childhood programs	249		
<b>CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>251</b>		
Administration	251		
Curriculum framework	252		
Children with disabilities	252		
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care	253		
Parent fees	254		
Workforce	256		
Standards and regulations	258		
Of interest	260		
<b>CHILD CARE DATA</b>	<b>261</b>		
Regulated child care space statistics	261		
Regulated child care enrolment statistics	264		



# Saskatchewan

## ■ OVERVIEW

In Saskatchewan, the Ministry of Education is responsible for regulated full-day child care centres, family child care, group family child care, prekindergarten, kindergarten, and before- and after-school child care.

Licensed child care in Saskatchewan includes full-day child care 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 do not require a licence.

Most centre-based child care is delivered by non-profit operators, with a small but growing number of publicly operated and for-profit programs. Almost all public funding is available only to non-profit and public programs.

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

Part-day prekindergarten is operated in schools and intended for vulnerable three- and four-year-olds in targeted communities. In 2025, there were 316 prekindergarten programs. Kindergarten for five-year-olds is a part or full school-day program, depending on the school division; all eligible children have access. Prekindergarten and kindergarten are not compulsory.

Since April 1, 2023, parent fees have been set at \$10/day (\$217/month) for children under age six in licensed non-profit and public centres, family child care homes, and for-profit centres opened before January 1, 2023. For-profit centres that opened after January 1, 2023, are not eligible for reduced parent fee funding. Fees for school-age children six years or older are set by the operator. The Child Care Subsidy Program ended on March 31, 2025, and the province no longer has a stand-alone child care subsidy program. Eligible families can use the Saskatchewan Employment Incentive program benefit toward child care costs. Administered by the Ministry of Social Services, these funds are paid directly to parents as part of a broader program for low-income families.

Saskatchewan does not have a wage grid. Wages and benefits of early childhood educators and child care workers are set by each employer, with additional compensation through wage enhancement for all certified early childhood educators and assistants working in group family child care homes.

Saskatchewan signed the Canada-Saskatchewan Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement in August 2021. This agreement allocated \$996 million over five years to the province.

In November 2025, Saskatchewan extended its bilateral agreement until 2031.

<b>Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)</b>			
	<b>2021</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025</b>
Non-profit and public	13,472	16,624	+3,152
For-profit	263	851	+588
<b>Total full-day spaces</b>	<b>13,735</b>	<b>17,475</b>	<b>+3,740</b>
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	1.9%	4.9%	+3%
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit	-	-	16%

## ■ PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded; however, the totals are based on exact figures. Therefore, totals may not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

### Number of children 0 – 12 years (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0	11,000
1	10,900
2	13,600
3	12,800
4	13,100
5	14,600
6	14,000
7	16,100
8	15,700
9	15,100
10	15,500
11	15,800
12	15,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>183,500</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	35,500
3 – 5	40,500
6 – 12	107,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>183,500</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0	7,300
1	7,500
2	9,000
3	8,100
4	8,700
5	9,400
6	10,100
7	11,000
8	11,600
9	10,100
10	11,800
11	11,000
12	10,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>126,200</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	23,800
3 – 5	26,200
6 – 12	76,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>126,200</b>

---

### 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
<b>Total</b>	<b>41,245</b>	<b>16,665</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>715</b>	<b>355</b>

### Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age of youngest child</i>	<i>Number of mothers</i>	<i>Participation rate (%)</i>
0 – 3	26,700	77.8
4 – 5	11,500	79.9
0 – 5	38,200	78.4
6 – 12	39,000	86.9

### Living arrangements by age of child (2021)

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

### Languages spoken most often at home (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Non-official</i>	<i>Multiple</i>
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
<b>Total</b>	<b>198,865</b>	<b>695</b>	<b>15,860</b>	<b>7,235</b>

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

<i>Two-parent families</i>	<i>Male lone parent</i>	<i>Female lone parent</i>
\$100,000	\$46,000	\$46,000

# KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA

## KINDERGARTEN FOR FOUR- AND FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

### Provincial responsibility

Ministry of Education  
Early Years Branch  
Phone: 306-787-2004  
Email: [learning.inquiry@gov.sk.ca](mailto:learning.inquiry@gov.sk.ca)  
Website: [saskatchewan.ca/residents/education-and-learning/prek-12-education-early-learning-and-schools](http://saskatchewan.ca/residents/education-and-learning/prek-12-education-early-learning-and-schools)

### Legislation

Saskatchewan. Legislative Assembly. [Education Act](#). SS1995, C E-0.2. Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly. [Education Regulations](#), 2019. Chapter E-0.2 Reg 29. Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly, [Registered Teachers Act](#). Amended 2020 c.9.

### Provision

#### Kindergarten provision

<b>Definition</b>	Part or full school-day program for five-year-old children.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Five years old by December 31, with some variation across school divisions.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Not compulsory, but almost all eligible children attend.
<b>Entitlement</b>	All eligible children have access.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Part-day every day (approximately two hours and 50 minutes), full school-day every other day, or full school-day every day, depending on the school division. Minimum 475 hours per year.
<b>Class size</b>	No set class sizes.

#### Prekindergarten provision

<b>Definition</b>	Part-day program operated in schools and intended for vulnerable three- and four-year-old children in targeted communities. In 2025, there were 316 programs.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Three- and four-year-olds in targeted communities or those who meet specified <a href="#">eligibility criteria</a> .
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Not compulsory.
<b>Entitlement</b>	No entitlement. School divisions use the eligibility criteria to select children, prioritizing four-year-olds.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Part-day (minimum 12 hours per week for 10 months of the year; usually three hours per day), but full school-day Monday to Thursday in some cases.
<b>Class size</b>	Maximum 16 children, or maximum 18 children if the program also has Early Learning Intensive Support spaces with the accompanying support.

#### Teacher qualifications and certification

To be a qualified kindergarten teacher in Saskatchewan requires a valid teacher's certificate issued by the Saskatchewan Professional Teachers Regulatory Board (SPTRB) and annual registration with the SPTRB. To become certified, a teacher must obtain a degree in education through a university or a teacher education program approved by the SPTRB. Kindergarten teachers do not have specific early childhood qualification requirements.

The prekindergarten program requires both a qualified teacher, preferably with specialized knowledge in early childhood education, and a prekindergarten associate, who is required to have completed Grade 12 and preferably has an early childhood education background.

## ■ CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

*Saskatchewan Curriculum: Kindergarten* (2010) is a mandatory curriculum framework for kindergarten in all schools in Saskatchewan.

*Children First: A Resource for Kindergarten* (2009) is a supporting document to accompany *Saskatchewan Curriculum: Kindergarten* for kindergarten in all schools in Saskatchewan.

*Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide* (2008) is a voluntary curriculum framework for child care services and prekindergarten programs in Saskatchewan, but all early learning programs are intended to reflect the vision, principles, and quality elements it describes. It focuses on children ages 3 – 5. *Jouer et explorer: Guide du programme d'apprentissage pour la petite enfance* (2008) is the same curriculum framework in French.

*Essential Learning Experiences for Three-, Four- and Five-Year Olds* is a voluntary supporting document to *Play and Exploration*.

## ■ ENROLMENT

### Kindergarten enrolment (2024 – 2025 school year)

#### *Enrolment in public schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	13,078
------------------------------	--------

Prekindergarten for 3- and 4-year-olds	5,529
--	-------

#### *Enrolment in private/independent schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	176
------------------------------	-----

Prekindergarten for 3- and 4-year-olds	36
--	----

#### *Enrolment in Band Schools/First Nations*

Kindergarten and prekindergarten	881
----------------------------------	-----

<b>Total kindergarten enrolment</b>	<b>14,135</b>
-------------------------------------	---------------

## ■ OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

### Early Learning Intensive Support

Introduced March 1, 2018, the Early Learning Intensive Support (ELIS) program creates additional spaces targeted to children experiencing significant disability in existing prekindergarten programs. The program provides the opportunity for children requiring intensive support to attend prekindergarten. The support includes an educational assistant and funding for specialized services to meet the needs of the children and enhance the knowledge and skills of the classroom educators. In 2018, the program was piloted with 120 ELIS spaces available in Regina and Saskatoon school divisions; it has grown to 632 spaces available in 26 school divisions throughout the province. The total cost for the ELIS program in 2024 – 2025 was \$7.9 million.

### Specialized prekindergarten program

Established in 2018 – 2019, specialized prekindergarten programs are intended to serve three- and four-year-old children with significant social-emotional, communication, and behavioural challenges that are beyond the capacity of supports available in the ELIS program or prekindergarten placement. A specialized prekindergarten program provides a tailored response for preschool-age children with intensive needs. There are five specialized prekindergarten programs, located in Regina and Saskatoon, with capacity to serve up to 46 children.

### Children Communicating, Connecting, and in the Community

Developed in 2018 – 2019, the Children Communicating, Connecting, and in the Community (4C) program supports the attainment and development of language and communication



skills for prekindergarten-age children who are deaf and hard of hearing. The program provides bilingual instruction in both signed and oral language. There are two 4C programs, located in Regina and Saskatoon, with capacity to serve up to 27 children. Funding for 4C was \$269,000 in 2024 – 2025.

# CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

## ■ ADMINISTRATION

### Provincial responsibility

Ministry of Education  
Child Care Operations  
Phone: 1-855-824-9419  
Email: [childcare@gov.sk.ca](mailto:childcare@gov.sk.ca)  
Website: [saskatchewan.ca/residents/family-and-social-support/child-care](http://saskatchewan.ca/residents/family-and-social-support/child-care)

### Legislation

Saskatchewan. Legislative Assembly. [Child Care Act, 2014](#). SS 2014, c. C-7.31.  
Saskatchewan. Legislative Assembly. [Child Care Regulations, 2015](#). RRS C-7.31 Reg 1.

The *Child Care Amendment Act, 2024* and accompanying regulations came into force in July 2025. The *Child Care (New Facilities) Amendment Act, 2025* is in process and scheduled to come into force in 2026.

### Service descriptions

#### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

There are no health, safety, or training requirements or provision for public oversight in unregulated child care. There may be attention by public officials on a complaint basis. See the [Child Care Regulations](#) for more information.

#### Family child care

In unregulated family child care, the caregiver may care for a maximum of eight children under the age of 10 years. Five of these children may be infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children, of which only two may be infants and toddlers. If three infants and toddlers are in care, all other children must be school-age. These numbers include the caregiver's own children under 10 years.

#### Preschool

Children attend part-day preschools for no more than three hours per day. Historically, part-day preschools were not regulated. Amendments to the legislation, scheduled to come into force in 2026, specify that preschools may become licensed, although it will not be required. Newly licensed preschools may be operated by non-profit boards, cooperatives, and private individuals.

#### School-age child care

Child care programs located in schools for kindergarten-age and school-age children (Grade 1 and higher) are not regulated.

#### REGULATED CHILD CARE

##### Child care centre

Full-day child care centres provide care to children in a group setting three or more days per week for more than five continuous hours per day.

##### Extended hours

Extended hours child care centres provide services for 80 hours or more per week.

#### School-age child care

Regulated school-age child care is provided outside school hours for children who are under 13 years old and enrolled in Grade 1 or higher, or who have completed kindergarten but have not yet entered Grade 1. It can be provided in a mixed-age centre, family child care home, or a program solely for school-age children not located in a school.

#### Family child care

A family child care home is operated by an individual in a residential premises. A provider may care for up to eight children. The premises may be an owned or rented residential property in which the provider does not live. The licensee can



provide a total of no more than 100 child hours of care in one 24-hour period.

### **Group family child care**

A group family child care home is operated by an individual and an assistant in a residential premises. Group family child care homes may care for up to 12 children. When new legislation takes effect in 2026, they may care for up to 16 children. The licensee can provide a total of no more than 150 child hours of care in one 24-hour period.

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

Teen student support family child care homes were discontinued when the new regulations came into force in July 2025. Prior to July 2025, teen student support homes were family child care homes formally associated with a high school that provided child care to children of parents attending the high school. Providers cared for up to six children. The licensee could provide no more than a total of 75 child hours of care in one 24-hour period.

### **Teen student support centres**

Teen student support centres are located in or near high schools. They provide child care for three or more days per week for more than five hours per day, primarily to infants and toddlers of parents who are younger than 22 years old and attending high school or a high school equivalency program.

## **CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK**

*Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide* (2008) is a curriculum framework for Saskatchewan's child care services and prekindergarten programs. It is voluntary, but all early learning programs are intended to reflect the vision, principles, and quality elements it describes. It focuses on children ages 3 – 5 years.

*Jouer et explorer: Guide du programme d'apprentissage pour la petite enfance* (2008) is the same curriculum framework in French.

*Essential Learning Experiences for Three-, Four- and Five-Year Olds* is a supporting document to *Play and Exploration*.

*Play and Exploration for Infants and Toddlers* (2010) is a voluntary companion booklet focused on children ages 0 – 3 years.

## **CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

### **Terminology and approach**

Saskatchewan uses the term “children with diverse needs” to encompass children with disabilities.

All licensed child care is eligible to receive inclusion funding.

The province provides inclusion funding specific to the individual child.

### **Programs supporting inclusion in ELCC**

The Child Care Inclusion Program provides support to families and child care facilities to include children with disabilities in child care programs. Inclusion funding is available to child care centres and regulated child care homes providing child care for a child with disabilities. Funding is available to support the inclusion of all eligible children. It covers additional staff, additional training or professional development for regular staff, assistive devices and equipment, and modification of the premises or equipment to support mobility needs.

The Individual Inclusion Grant, the Enhanced Accessibility Grant, the Adapted Equipment Grant, and the Training and Resource Grant are available to support children with disabilities in Saskatchewan.

The Individual Inclusion Grant is provided to an operator (centre, home, or group family home) to support an individual child with “additional needs.” It provides up to \$300 per month to assist



with the additional cost of supervising a child with disabilities.

The Enhanced Accessibility Grant is available to assist with the additional cost of supervising a child with “exceptionally high diverse needs.” Effective December 1, 2024, the maximum monthly grant amount was increased from \$2,000 to \$3,200.

Individual Inclusion Grants and Enhanced Accessibility Grants are approved for a maximum of 12 months, at which point the program must be reviewed and the facility must reapply for funding. Regulated non-profit child care centres are approved to apply for Individual Inclusion Grant and Enhanced Accessibility Grant funding for children in up to 15% of their regulated spaces; approval may be requested to a maximum of 25% of regulated spaces. Regulated child care homes may apply for funding for one Individual Inclusion Grant or Enhanced Accessibility Grant for an enrolled child with diverse needs. Approval for an increased number of Inclusion Grants may be requested, to a maximum of two in family child care homes and a maximum of three in a group family child care home.

The Adapted Equipment Grant assists with the cost of purchasing adapted equipment required to meet the needs of a child with disabilities. It provides up to \$600 a year or \$1,200 a year in exceptional circumstances.

The Training and Resource Grant provides up to \$100 in a year (\$200 for Enhanced Accessibility) to support participation in training and resources for child care professionals working with children with disabilities.

The Building Inclusive Practices initiative provides on-site support to create inclusive spaces and programs for all children. Child care centres participating in the initiative are paired with an inclusion coach who works with centre staff to build capacity and promote inclusivity in the centre.

Hope’s Home is a non-profit organization funded by the Saskatchewan government. It operates five medically inclusive child care centres in Saskatchewan, providing services for children with complex medical needs and their families. Children who are developing typically and their families also use these services.

### **Access to inclusive ELCC**

Child care programs are not required to accept children with disabilities.

A referring professional must verify that a child requires additional supports in order to access funding through the Child Care Inclusion Program.

Newly constructed or renovated facilities are not required to be fully accessible and barrier-free.

In Saskatchewan, there may be some administrative delays in the application process for receiving inclusion funding, but typically the process is quite responsive.

## **FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE**

In Saskatchewan, 17% of the total population identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in the most recent census (2021). There are 70 First Nations in Saskatchewan; some First Nations manage multiple reserves including urban satellite reserves. Almost 48% of First Nations people in Saskatchewan live on reserve.

### **First Nations child care on reserve**

Saskatchewan does not typically regulate First Nations child care programs on reserve. Since 2001, at the request of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, First Nations have been responsible for monitoring child care on reserves. However, in 2016, the Child Care Regulations were amended to



allow licensing of a child care centre on reserve at their request and through agreement between an Indian Band and the Minister.

Licensed child care centres on reserve are eligible to receive the same funding as other provincially licensed centres, including operating grants, inclusion funding, and parent fee subsidies.

Current provincially regulated child care agreements with First Nations are with:

Cowessess First Nation (on reserve and urban reserve), Whitecap Dakota First Nation, and Star Blanket Cree Nation (First Nations University of Canada, urban reserve). These agreements provide 146 operational regulated centre-based child care spaces with an additional 130 spaces under development, for a total of 276 regulated child care spaces.

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. In 2025, there were 77 AHSOR programs in Saskatchewan.

### **Indigenous child care other than on reserve**

There are five licensed child care centres not on reserve operated by an Indigenous organization that 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. In 2025, there were 15 AHSUNC programs in Saskatchewan.

### **Indigenous-specific resources/initiatives**

Under the Canada-Saskatchewan Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, Saskatchewan has committed to develop and fund a plan to ensure that new space creation ensures spaces for diverse and/or vulnerable children and families, and includes a provision that Indigenous children have spaces equivalent to or greater than their share of the population in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan collaborates with the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology (SIIT) and Dumont Technical Institute (DTI) to offer tuition-free Early Childhood Educator training, professional learning opportunities, and bursaries for Indigenous learners under the Canada-Saskatchewan Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. This includes the development and delivery of an advanced certificate in Indigenous ECE at SIIT. These training and professional development seats support Indigenous and Métis ECEs to receive training that reflects cultural values; they also build the knowledge base of the sector to understand and reflect Indigenous and Métis ways of knowing through their work.

### **PARENT FEES**

Since April 1, 2023, parent fees have been set at \$10/day (\$217/month) for children under age six in licensed non-profit and public centres, family child care homes, and for-profit centres opened before January 1, 2023. For-profit centres that opened after January 1, 2023, are not eligible for reduced parent fee funding. The \$10/day fee applies to children under six years enrolled in an infant, toddler, preschool-age, or school-age space.

The operator sets fees for school-age children six years or older.

---

### Monthly child care centre parent fees (2021, 2022, 2024)

Age group	Full-time average monthly fee (2021)	Full-time average monthly fee (2022)	Full-time set or average monthly fee (2024)
Infant	\$790	\$414	\$217
Toddler	\$666	\$351	\$217
Preschool-age	\$612	\$327	\$217
School-age (school year)	\$440	\$439	\$455 (average, not set fee)

---

### Monthly family child care home parent fees (2021, 2022, 2024)

Age group	Full-time average monthly fee (2021)	Full-time average monthly fee (2022)	Full-time set or average monthly fee (2024)
Infant	\$786	\$434	\$217
Toddler	\$734	\$405	\$217
Preschool-age	\$667	\$371	\$217
School-age (school year)	\$469	\$472	\$515 (average, not set fee)

---

### Additional fees

Operators are not permitted to charge waitlist fees. They are permitted to charge optional fees for food, transportation, extended hours, field trips, and other services.

### Parent fee subsidies

Saskatchewan does not have a stand-alone child care subsidy program. The Child Care Subsidy Program, which assisted eligible Saskatchewan families with the cost of child care, ended on March 31, 2025. Monthly subsidies were available for services provided by licensed child care facilities and were paid directly to service providers to reduce the fees charged for eligible families.

In January 2024, Saskatchewan included child care under the [Saskatchewan Employment Incentive](#) (SEI) program. Eligible families can use the SEI benefit toward child care costs. Administered by the Ministry of Social Services, these funds are paid directly to parents as part of a broader program

for low-income families. Working families with employment income of \$500 per month may be eligible for this financial benefit of up to \$600, depending on the number of eligible children. The SEI benefit can be used by the parent in any type of child care setting – licensed/unregulated, non-profit/for-profit, centre/home, or full-day/part-day. Parents with monthly family incomes between \$500 and \$2,200 are eligible for the maximum SEI benefit. For every dollar earned over \$2,200, the benefit amount is reduced by 30 cents.

---

### Maximum monthly family income per number of eligible children for the Saskatchewan Employment Incentive (2025)

Number of eligible children	Maximum monthly family income
1	\$3,533.34
2	\$3,866.67
3+	\$4,200.00

---

---

**Maximum monthly Saskatchewan Employment  
Incentive financial benefit (2025)**

<i>Number of eligible children</i>	<i>Benefit</i>
1	\$400
2	\$500
3	\$600

---

## ■ WORKFORCE

### Child care centre staff wages

Saskatchewan does not have a wage grid. Wages and benefits of early childhood educators and child care workers are set by each employer, with additional compensation through wage enhancement for all certified early childhood educators and for assistants working in group family child care homes.

### PROVINCIAL DATA ON AVERAGE WAGES

---

#### Mean hourly wages for full-time positions in child care centres by position (June 30, 2024)

<i>Position</i>	<i>Mean hourly wage</i>
Director/acting director	\$33.25
Assistant director	\$29.37
Supervisor	\$25.76
Child care	\$23.72
Enhanced accessibility	\$22.85
All positions	\$25.25

*Note: An additional wage enhancement took effect in September 2024; it is not reflected in these figures.*

---

### PROVINCIAL ECE WAGE ENHANCEMENT FOR CENTRES AND GROUP FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

In November 2021, Saskatchewan and the federal government introduced a [wage increase](#) of up to \$3/hour for qualified ECEs as part of the one-time federal workforce funding through the extension of the [Canada-Saskatchewan Early Learning and Child Care Agreement](#) (2017).

The wage increase, retroactive to July 1, 2021, varied by staff certification level, with up to \$1/hour for ECE certification Level I, \$2/hour for Level II, and \$3/hour for Level III.

On September 15, 2022, the government announced an additional \$2/hour increase for ECEs. This increase is capped at \$3, \$4, or \$5 above the average provincial wages on March 31, 2021, for certification level and position type.

Effective October 1, 2023, wages were further increased up to \$1.50/hour for ECE Level I, \$2/hour for Level II, and \$2.50/hour for Level III. The wage enhancement grant was expanded to include assistants working in group family child care homes who have an ECE certification.

Effective September 1, 2024, the ECE Wage Enhancement Grant increased for certified staff in child care centres and certified assistants in group family child care homes whose wages were below the specified provincial thresholds. The increased grant provided these staff at ECE Level I, II, and III up to \$1/hour.

---

**Average wages (March 31, 2021) and cumulative wage enhancements (September 1, 2024)**

<b>Position</b>	<b>ECE Level I average wage (2021)</b>	<b>Total ECE Level I Wage Enhancement Grant</b>	<b>ECE Level I threshold (2024)</b>
Director	\$19.93	\$5.50	\$25.43
Assistant director	\$19.94	\$5.50	\$25.44
Supervisor	\$16.90	\$5.50	\$22.40
Early childhood educator	\$15.56	\$5.50	\$21.06
<b>Position</b>	<b>ECE Level II average wage (2021)</b>	<b>Total ECE Level II Wage Enhancement Grant</b>	<b>ECE Level II threshold (2024)</b>
Director	\$24.75	\$7.00	\$31.75
Assistant director	\$21.25	\$7.00	\$28.25
Supervisor	\$20.19	\$7.00	\$27.19
Early childhood educator	\$18.06	\$7.00	\$25.06
<b>Position</b>	<b>ECE Level III average wage (2021)</b>	<b>Total ECE Level III Wage Enhancement Grant</b>	<b>ECE Level III threshold (2024)</b>
Director	\$27.03	\$8.50	\$35.53
Assistant director	\$24.12	\$8.50	\$32.62
Supervisor	\$21.57	\$8.50	\$30.07
Early childhood educator	\$20.43	\$8.50	\$28.93

*Note: The position type for group family child care home assistants is early childhood educator.*

---

## Staff benefits

Saskatchewan does not provide or fund province-wide staff benefits to child care programs.

## Early childhood certification

Provincial certification is required for all staff who work with infants, toddlers, preschool-age children, and school-age children for 65 hours or more per month in a regulated child care centre.

The Ministry of Education oversees applications and issues certificates. Certification does not have to be renewed unless the staff person is applying for a higher certification level.

## ECE CERTIFICATION LEVELS

Saskatchewan has three levels of [Early Childhood Educator Certification](#).

ECE Level III is required for directors of child care centres.

Within the first three years of becoming regulated, the licensee of a group family child care home must meet ECE Level I requirements.

## Education requirements for certification levels

Certification level	Requirements
ECE Level I	A post-secondary ECE orientation course or three courses/nine credit units in ECE (one course from each of three areas: child development, programming, and relationships).
ECE Level II	One-year ECE certificate or an equivalent combination of post-secondary coursework.
ECE Level III	Two-year ECE diploma or an equivalent combination of post-secondary coursework.

Centre staff, family child care providers, and assistants in group family child care are required to participate in a minimum of six hours per year of continuing education related to working with children.

## STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Child care centres and family child care homes must adhere to standards and regulations regarding staffing requirements, grouping of children, and licensing. Some additional key elements of child care standards and regulations, such as physical environments and food provision, are covered in the comparative tables in this publication, while others may be found in the [Child Care Act, 2014](#) and [Child Care Regulations, 2015](#).

### Regulated child care centres

Child care centres are licensed under the [Child Care Act, 2014](#) and [Child Care Regulations, 2015](#). New regulations came into effect in July 2025.

### STAFF:CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZE

The maximum centre size is 90 spaces, with no more than 18 infant spaces.

## Staff:child ratio and maximum group size

Age group	Staff:child ratio	Maximum group size
Infant (0 – <18 months)	1:3	6
Toddler (19 – 29 months)	1:5	10
Preschool-age (30 months – 6 years)	1:10	20
School-age (Grade 1 – 12 years)	1:15	30

*Note: Maximum group sizes do not apply before 9:00 am, during the last hour of operation in a day, during meal times, during nap times for children who are resting, or during special activities such as parties or concerts.*

For a group of mixed-age children, the staff:child ratio is 1:15, where:

- One infant is deemed to be equivalent to five children;
- One toddler is deemed to be equivalent to three children;
- One preschool child is deemed to be equivalent to 1.5 children; and
- One school-age child counts as one child.

## STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRES

### Qualification requirements for staffing a centre

In Saskatchewan, staff qualification requirements are specified at the centre level.

In a centre, 20% of staff who work 65 hours or more per month must meet or exceed the qualifications of an ECE Level III, and an additional 30% of staff must meet or exceed the qualifications of an ECE Level II. The remainder of staff employed 65 hours or more per month must meet or exceed the qualifications of an ECE Level I. These percentages include the centre director and supervisor.

### Qualification requirements for on-site centre directors/supervisors

A centre director must have ECE Level III certification. A centre supervisor must have at least



an ECE Level I certification. Centres must have both a director and supervisor.

### Other requirements

All centre staff must be at least 16 years of age. A centre director or centre supervisor must be at least 18 years of age.

Centre directors, supervisors, or child care workers working 65 hours or more per month must have completed a first aid course and a CPR course. At least one staff person who has completed a first aid course must be on the premises during operating hours.

All staff must complete a criminal record check, including a vulnerable sector check, before employment.

As of June 30, 2025, all centre staff are now required to participate in a minimum of six hours per year of continuing education related to working with children.

See the [Child Care Licensee's Manual](#) for more information.

### LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES

A licence to operate a centre is usually issued for a period of one year and is not transferable. Child care facilities receive two unscheduled visits per year. Licences are renewed annually as part of an annual assessment of licensing standards for facilities.

### Regulated family child care

Regulated family child care is regulated under the [Child Care Act, 2014](#) and [Child Care Regulations, 2015](#).

Family child care must be provided in a residential premises, but it does not have to be the provider's personal residence.

### MODEL OF ORGANIZATION

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

### MAXIMUM CAPACITY

In any family child care setting, the provider's own children under 10 years old are included in the capacity limits.

Family child care providers are permitted to care for up to eight children between six weeks and 12 years old. Of the eight children, only five may be infants, toddlers, or preschool-age children (younger than six years). Of these five, only two may be infants or toddlers (younger than 30 months).

Group family child care providers are permitted to care for up to 12 children. When the new legislation takes effect in 2026, they will be permitted to care for up to 16 children. Of the 12 children, only 10 may be infants, toddlers, or preschool-age children. Of these 10, only five may be infants or toddlers, and of these five, only three may be infants. An assistant must be present when the number and ages of children permitted in a family child care home are exceeded.

### FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

Within the first year of becoming regulated, family child care and group family child care providers must complete a 40-hour introductory course in early childhood education. Within the first three years of becoming regulated, the licensee of a group family child care home must meet ECE Level I requirements.

Family child care providers and assistants must be at least 18 years of age and must have completed a criminal records search, including a vulnerable sector check.

A family child care provider must have completed a first aid course including CPR training, and an



assistant must do so within six months of being employed.

Other residents of the family child care home who are 18 years or older are required to have a criminal records search, including a vulnerable sector check.

Family child care providers and assistants in group family child care are required to participate in a minimum of six hours per year of continuing education related to working with children.

### **LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES**

A licence to operate a family child care home is usually issued for a period of one year and is not transferable.

Early Learning and Child Care consultants from the Ministry conduct annual visits to renew the licence, in addition to a minimum of two unscheduled/drop-in visits throughout the year.

See the [Child Care Licensee's Manual](#) for more information.

## **■ OF INTEREST**

### **Municipal role**

While there is no mandated role in child care for municipalities in Saskatchewan, a number of small and rural municipalities have voluntarily taken on the responsibility of supporting and/or operating child care centres. In 2022, three municipalities operated child care centres. The number of municipal licence holders increased to four by 2023, and six by 2024 (Bredenbury, Carlyle, Carnduff, Vibank, Rural Municipality of Pittville, and Regina Beach). In May 2025, two others were in development (Lashburn and Ebenezer).

### **Family resource centres**

The Ministry of Education provides funding through the Canada-Saskatchewan Bilateral Early Learning and Child Care Agreement for [Early Years Family Resource Centres](#). Twenty-one programs operate across the province, offering families a single location where they can access information, programs, and services to support their children's development and family wellness. Services include play-based activities, family groups, and other early learning programming, as well as parent education through formal and informal learning opportunities, drop-in programs, seminars, and more.

## CHILD CARE DATA

### ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

#### Number of spaces (2024, 2025)

Full-day centre spaces	2024	2025
Infant (6 weeks – <18 months)	1,629	1,703
Toddler (18 – <30 months)	4,499	4,778
Preschool-age (30 months – 5 years, not yet in Grade 1)	10,053	10,994
<b>Total full-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>16,181</b>	<b>17,475</b>
Before- and after-school care centre spaces (licensed or regulated)	2024	2025
Kindergarten-age and Grades 1 – 6	1,645	1,635
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>17,826</b>	<b>19,110</b>
Family child care licensed capacity	2024	2025
Family child care	912	1,056
Group family child care (more than one provider)	3,996	6,378
<b>Total family child care spaces</b>	<b>4,908</b>	<b>7,434</b>
<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)</b>	<b>22,734</b>	<b>26,544</b>

## Number of child care centres and family child care homes (2024)

---

### Centre-based child care

<b><i>Total number of centres</i></b>	<b>400</b>
---------------------------------------	------------

### Centre-based programs

Centres providing a full-day program	400
Centres providing a part-day licensed program for children attending school (Grades 1 – 6)	248
Centres providing infant care (6 weeks – <18 months)	242
Centres providing toddler care (18 – <30 months)	368
Centres providing preschool-age care (30 months – 5 years)	382
Centres providing a Francophone child care program	12
Centres providing non-standard hours care (as defined by the province)	2
Centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – Grade 12)	148

### Regulated family child care

Individual family child care homes (active)	127
Group family child care homes (active)	355
<b><i>Total number of family child care homes</i></b>	<b>482</b>

### Participation in CWELCC

<b><i>Total number of child care centres receiving CWELCC funding</i></b>	<b>399</b>
<b><i>Total number of family child care homes receiving CWELCC funding</i></b>	<b>482</b>

---

## Auspice (2024)

---

### Centres by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit	17
Non-profit	377
Public	6

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>BASC<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	711	26	737
Non-profit and public	15,470	1,619	17,089

<sup>1</sup> Before- and after-school care (Grades 1 – 6).

---

## Auspice (2025)

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>BASC<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	851	25	876
Non-profit and public	16,624	1,610	18,234

<sup>1</sup> Before- and after-school care (Grades 1 – 6).

---

## Publicly operated child care (2024)

---

### Publicly operated child care

<i>Entity type</i>	<i>Licence holders</i>	<i>Centres</i>
Municipality	6	6

*Note: The municipalities of Bredenbury, Carlyle, Carnduff, Vibank, Rural Municipality of Pittville, and Regina Beach each operate one centre.*

*Note: Several First Nations in Saskatchewan operate regulated child care centres, but the province reports that this data is not tracked.*

---

## Fee subsidies (2024)

### Number of children receiving fee subsidies

Full subsidy	255
Partial subsidy	100
<b>Total children receiving fee subsidies</b>	<b>355</b>

*Note: The Child Care Subsidy Program ended on March 31, 2025.*

## Disability support (2024)

### Number of children receiving disability support funding

Children in licensed child care receiving disability support funding	355
--	-----

## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

### Number of children enrolled (2024)

#### Full-day centre enrolment

Infant (6 weeks – <18 months)	243
Toddler (18 – <30 months)	524
Preschool-age (30 months – 5 years, including kindergarten-age children)	11,751
<b>Total full-day centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>12,518</b>

#### Before- and after-school care (licensed)

Kindergarten-age and Grades 1 – 6	<i>Not available</i>
-----------------------------------	----------------------

#### Full-day family child care enrolment

Not attending full-day school (6 weeks – 6 years, including kindergarten-age children)	3,826
--	-------

<b>TOTAL REGULATED ENROLMENT (centre and family child care enrolment)</b>	<b>16,344</b>
---	---------------

## CHILD CARE FUNDING

The types of funding available for child care services in Saskatchewan include operational funding, one-time funding, fee subsidies, and other ELCC funding programs. See [Grants for Child Care Centres](#) and [Grants for Regulated Family Child Care Homes](#) for more information.

### ■ ELIGIBILITY FOR CWELCC FUNDING

The CWELCC plan provides federal funds to provinces and territories for early learning and child care operational and one-time funding and fee subsidies for licensed child care for children aged 0 – 5. Funded new child care expansion is to be public and non-profit unless otherwise specified in the jurisdiction's agreement. Provinces and territories also contribute their own funds and design their own policies and provision within this framework.

In Saskatchewan, the following are eligible for operational funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres are not eligible for operational funding.

In Saskatchewan, the following are eligible for capital funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres are not eligible for capital funding.

### ■ CHILD CARE SERVICES' ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

Almost all public funding – including operating (base) funding, capital and start-up funding, and fee subsidies – is available only to non-profit and public programs. See Saskatchewan's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

Family child care providers are eligible to receive fee subsidies, start-up grants, and some operational grants.

### ■ TYPES OF FUNDING

#### **Operational funding**

##### **EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES GRANT**

The Early Childhood Services Grant is provided to regulated, non-profit centres operating outside the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District to support ongoing operating and staffing costs. This grant assists with the monthly costs of child care centre operations, primarily staff wages and benefits. It represents the major grant to child care centres and supports approximately 30 – 35% of the operational costs of the centre at the following amounts per month:

- \$690 per infant space;
- \$414 per toddler space;
- \$207 per preschool-age space; and
- \$138 per school-age space.

##### **EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES GRANT – NORTHERN CENTRES**

Early Childhood Services Grant – Northern Centres assists with the monthly costs of child care centre operations, primarily staff wages

and benefits. This includes funding to support equipment and training in the North. The grant is paid once the centre is operational. This grant translates to the following amounts per month:

- \$720 per infant space;
- \$432 per toddler space;
- \$216 per preschool-age space; and
- \$144 per school-age space.

#### PARENT FEE REDUCTION GRANT

On November 19, 2021, the Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan [announced new funding](#) for parent fee reduction. The Parent Fee Reduction Grant provides operating funding directly to regulated facilities to reduce fees for all families with children under six years. The initial commitment was to reduce parent fees by an average of 50%. The grant was retroactive to July 1, 2021, with families receiving retroactive reimbursement of eligible fees paid. Parents began paying reduced fees to child care facilities starting February 1, 2022. Grant amounts were increased to further reduce parent fees on September 1, 2022, representing a 70% average fee reduction.

On April 1, 2023, parent fees were reduced to a maximum of \$10/day (\$217.50/month), and grant amounts increased again. Since April 1, 2023, and the introduction of \$10/day fees, there is no maximum monthly Parent Fee Reduction Grant amount; amounts provided to regulated facilities are tailored to ensure that parent contributions are only \$10/day.

#### WAGE ENHANCEMENT GRANT

Since 2021, Saskatchewan has enhanced the early childhood educator Wage Enhancement Grant several times to improve compensation for certified ECEs and address workforce challenges in the early learning and child care sector. Effective September 1, 2024, the ECE [Wage Enhancement Grant](#) has been increased for certified staff working in child care centres and certified assistants working in group family child care homes. The increased grant provides up to \$1 more per hour for staff with ECE Level I, II, or III. This increase builds upon previous ECE Wage Enhancement Grants announced in November 2021, October 2022, and October 2023.

#### Adjustments to the Wage Enhancement Grant (2021 – 2025)

ECE Level	2021 – 2022		2022 – 2023		2023 – 2024		2024 – 2025	
	Implemented September 2021	Increase September 2022	Maximum top-up	Increase October 2023	Maximum top-up	Increase September 2024	Maximum top-up	
ECE Level I	\$1.00	+\$2.00	\$3.00	+\$1.50	\$4.50	+\$1.00	\$5.50	
ECE Level II	\$2.00	+\$2.00	\$4.00	+\$2.00	\$6.00	+\$1.00	\$6.00	
ECE Level III	\$3.00	+\$2.00	\$5.00	+\$2.50	\$7.50	+\$1.00	\$8.50	

## INDIVIDUAL INCLUSION GRANT

Individual Inclusion Grants are provided to an operator (centre, home, or group family home) to support an individual child with “additional needs.” See Saskatchewan’s “[Children with disabilities](#)” section for more information.

## ENHANCED ACCESSIBILITY GRANT

The Enhanced Accessibility Grant is available to assist with the additional cost of supervising a child with “exceptionally high diverse needs.” See Saskatchewan’s “[Children with disabilities](#)” section for more information.

## NORTHERN TRANSPORTATION GRANT

This funding is available to non-profit centres located within the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District for transportation of children where public transportation is not available. The maximum grant is \$20/month for a child who is provided with transportation to the centre.

## EQUIPMENT AND PROGRAM GRANT

The Equipment and Program Grant is available to family child care homes and group family child care homes to purchase toys, equipment, furnishings, craft supplies, and activities. The maximum grant per space is \$300/year. A maximum of 15% of the funding can be spent on children’s activities (bus fare and admission fees for museums, parks, leisure centres, festivals, and science facilities).

## GROUP FAMILY CHILD CARE GRANT

This funding is for ongoing costs associated with centres and group family child care for teen parents. The maximum grant for centres is \$810/month for an infant space and \$680/month for a toddler space. The maximum grant for a group family child care home is \$350/month.

## SUPPORT SERVICES GRANTS – TEEN STUDENT SUPPORT CENTRES

Support Services Grants for non-profit teen student support centres assist with the ongoing costs associated with the provision of services and programs. The maximum grant is \$810 per month per infant space and \$680 per month per toddler space.

## NUTRITION GRANT

The Nutrition Grant for family child care homes assists with provision of well-balanced, nutritious meals and snacks. As of June 2021, the maximum grant per month for regulated homes located outside the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District was increased from \$60 to \$80 per space, and within the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District it increased from \$80 to \$100 per space. The maximum relates to the transitional grant for centres established prior to June 30, 1991.

## One-time funding

### START-UP GRANT – CENTRES

Start-up funds are available to assist with the cost of opening a new centre, increasing the number of spaces in an existing centre, and designing an enriched learning environment. The maximum amount is \$1,360/space, paid prior to the centre opening.

### START-UP GRANT – FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES AND GROUP FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

The Start-up Grant assists with the cost of opening a family child care home or group family child care home and design of an enriched learning environment. The maximum amount of the grant is higher in the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District due to the higher start-up costs.

## Start-up Grant funding amount based on type of family child care home and location (2021 – 2024)

Type of home	Location	Before June 2021	After June 2021	As of June 2024
<i>Family child care homes</i>	Saskatchewan	\$2,825	\$3,325	\$3,525
	Northern Saskatchewan Administration District	\$3,275	\$3,775	\$3,975
<i>Group family child care homes</i>	Saskatchewan	\$3,025	\$3,525	\$3,725
	Northern Saskatchewan Administration District	\$3,525	\$4,025	\$4,225

In addition, providers who change their licence from a family child care home to a group family child care home are eligible to receive a total of \$400.

### SPACE DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL FUNDING

Space Development Capital Funding is a one-time capital grant available to assist centre operators with the costs of developing, renovating, or constructing new child care spaces in a centre. The funding increased from a maximum of \$10,000 per space to \$13,360 per space in 2024 – 2025. Funding is distributed through an agreement prior to centre opening and upon receipt of a budget and timeline for completion.

### FIRE, HEALTH, AND SAFETY GRANT

The Fire, Health, and Safety Grant assists new operators of family child care homes and group family child care homes with the costs of meeting fire, health, and safety requirements as part of the initial licensing process. The maximum amount of this one-time grant is \$2,400 per new licence. The grant is provided during the licensing and regulation process.

### PLAY AND EXPLORATION GRANT

The Play and Exploration Grant is a one-time grant for new child care centres and regulated family child care homes to purchase equipment

and resources to enhance their early learning environments in alignment with the guidelines of *Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide*. Family child care homes receive \$600, group family child care homes receive \$900, and centres receive \$2,500 for the first 30 spaces plus \$75 per additional space.

### ACTIVE PLAY GRANT

The one-time Active Play Grant is for new child care centres and regulated family child care homes to purchase equipment and resources that support indoor and outdoor active play. The grants are disbursed prior to the facility's opening. Family child care homes receive \$500, group family child care homes receive \$750, and centres receive \$1,900 for the first 30 spaces plus \$60 per additional space.

### CHANGE MANAGEMENT GRANT

The Change Management Grant was a one-time grant available in October 2022 for regulated and operational child care centres and homes to respond to changes emerging from the Canada-Saskatchewan Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. The grant was calculated at \$200 per regulated child care space.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE WORKFORCE ENHANCEMENT GRANT

Introduced in 2021 – 2022, the Early Childhood Care Workforce Enhancement Grant is a one-time grant for regulated and operational child care centres to support the recruitment and retention of qualified early childhood educators. The grant is calculated at \$145 per licensed child care space. It is intended to be flexible to enable boards to use funding to meet their centre's needs.

## PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR GRANT

The Preventative Maintenance and Renewal Grant is no longer in place. It allowed regulated ELCC centres to address infrastructure deficiencies. The one-time grant was intended to assist in the proactive maintenance of centres to inspect, detect, and correct the possibility of infrastructure deterioration before it occurs or develops into major defects.

### Preventative Maintenance and Repair Grant funding (2022 – 2023)

Type of eligible space	Amount allocated per eligible space	
	Outside Northern Saskatchewan Administration District	Northern Saskatchewan Administration District
Infant (with adjustment)*	\$2,718	\$3,261
Toddler	\$1,676	\$2,011
Preschool-age	\$1,676	\$2,011
School-age	\$1,676	\$2,011

*Note: Infant adjustment is calculated at 1.6216 the amount allocated to toddler, preschool-age, and school-age children due to the space requirement as stated in the Child Care Regulations, 2015.*

## WINTER SEASON GRANT

The Winter Season Grant (2022 – 2023) is no longer in place. The one-time grant supported regulated child care centres and homes to purchase equipment and materials to encourage active outdoor winter play. The grant was calculated at \$100 per regulated space.

## Fee subsidies

Eligible families can use the Saskatchewan Employment Incentive program benefit toward child care costs. See Saskatchewan's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

## Other ELCC funding

### TUITION REIMBURSEMENT GRANT

On July 31, 2025, the Tuition and Book Reimbursement Grant and the Tuition Reimbursement Top-up Grant were merged into the Tuition Reimbursement Grant. The merged grant provides funding to licensees to reimburse tuition fees paid and required books purchased for early childhood education courses that are successfully completed by the licensee or a person employed in the facility, up to a maximum of \$1,500 per course completed.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANT

The Professional Development Grant is available to assist with costs associated with participating in professional development events delivered,



sponsored/funded, or supported by the Early Years Branch of the Ministry of Education. Professional development can be in person or online. All regulated facilities are eligible to receive a maximum grant based on the number of spaces and type of care. The maximum grant amounts are:

- \$1,500 per centre for centres with 30 or fewer spaces;
- \$2,500 per centre for centres with 31 – 60 spaces;
- \$3,500 per centre for centres with 61 – 90 spaces;
- \$300 per family child care provider; and
- \$300 per provider and \$300 per assistant for group family child care.

### TRAINING SUPPORT GRANT

The Training Support Grant ended on June 30, 2025. Through the grant, child care facilities with educators participating in a formal education training program were eligible to receive up to \$500 per month for each course an educator was enrolled in, to a maximum of \$1,500 per month per educator. The grant was intended to support costs for a substitute or alternate child care provider while an educator pursued studies leading to an ECE certification at Level I, II, or III. The grant enabled educators to receive their regular wages while they were provided time off to pursue formal education, and the facility was supported with wage replacement costs (e.g., hourly wage and employer deductions) for substitutes or alternate child care providers.

### PRESCHOOL SUPPORT GRANT

The Preschool Support Grant supports two long-standing Preschool Support Programs in Regina and La Loche and a third program in Swift Current that was added in September 2024. The programs are aimed at providing part-day integrated programming for at-risk preschool-age children.

These are preventive programs to improve health, social skills, and potential for success in school.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES

Through Early Childhood Initiatives, the Early Years Branch provides support to the Odyssey Community Childcare Society located on the Alberta side of Lloydminster in support of Saskatchewan children attending the facility.

### EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM GUIDE

The Ministry of Education provides a range of resources and supports to assist the child care and prekindergarten sector to implement *Play and Exploration: Early Learning Program Guide* and enhance early learning programming. These include companion resources, professional development workshops, demonstration sites, and mentorship services.

### FUNDING TO SASKATCHEWAN EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATION

The [Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association](#) (SECA) is a non-profit, membership-based organization. The Ministry of Education has provided grant and service agreement funding to SECA since 1996. The Ministry regularly supports ECE professional development at SECA's annual conference and directors' retreats. Additionally, \$250,000 was provided to SECA under the Canada-wide agreement in 2022 – 2023 for ECE recruitment and retention. Funding of \$561,000 has also been provided under the Canada-wide agreement to host leadership-focused professional development opportunities for the regulated child sector from February 2024 to March 2026.

### OPERATIONAL SUPPORT GRANT

The Operational Support Grant was a one-time grant for regulated child care centres and family child care homes to help offset inflation and lessen financial pressures associated with operations,

allowing facilities to maintain high-quality early learning environments. The grant was calculated at \$750 per child care space in 2022 – 2023, and \$850 per child care space in 2023 – 2024.

### EARLY LEARNING INTENSIVE SUPPORT

Introduced March 1, 2018, the Early Learning Intensive Support program creates additional spaces targeted to children experiencing significant disability in existing prekindergarten programs. See Saskatchewan's "[Kindergarten policy, programs, and data](#)" section for more information.

### CHILDREN COMMUNICATING, CONNECTING, AND IN THE COMMUNITY

The Children Communicating, Connecting, and in the Community program supports the attainment and development of language and communication skills for prekindergarten-age children who are deaf and hard of hearing. See Saskatchewan's "[Kindergarten policy, programs, and data](#)" section for more information.

## ■ FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024)

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

### Operational funding

Program	Amount
Northern Transportation Grant	\$15,000
Equipment and Program Grant	\$943,000

Early Childhood Services Grant	\$58,477,000
Support Services Grants – Teen student support centres and family child care homes	\$1,163,000
Nutrition Grant	\$3,788,000
Individual Inclusion Grant	\$118,000
Minority Inclusion Grant	\$308,000
Enhanced Accessibility Grant	\$7,410,000
Parent Fee Reduction Grant	\$115,176,000
Wage Enhancement Grant	\$24,761,000
<b>Total operational funding</b>	<b>\$212,149,000</b>

*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, disability funding, and other grants/funding paid on a recurring basis.*

### One-time funding – capital (major and minor)

Program	Amount
Start-up Grant	\$2,496,000
Space Development Capital Funding	\$22,655,000
Play and Exploration Grant	\$298,000

### One-time funding – other

Program	Amount
Fire, Health, and Safety Grant	\$401,000
Adaptive Equipment	\$13,000
Active Play Grant	\$244,000
Preventative Maintenance and Repair Grant	(\$178,000) <sup>1</sup>
Winter Season Grant	(\$1,000) <sup>1</sup>
Change Management Grant	\$12,000
<b>Total one-time funding</b>	<b>\$25,940,000</b>

*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.*

<sup>1</sup> Negative amounts reflect the repayment of one-time grants issued in the previous year. These were recovered from facilities as a result of closures or ineligible expenses.

## Fee subsidies

Program	Amount
Child Care Subsidy Program	\$1,032,325
<i>Note: The Child Care Subsidy Program ended on March 31, 2025. See Saskatchewan's "<a href="#">Parent fees</a>" section for more information.</i>	
<i>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 directly to service providers.</i>	
<b>TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, and fee subsidies)</b>	<b>\$239,121,325</b>

## Other ELCC funding

Program	Amount
Tuition and Book Reimbursement Grant	\$1,005,000
Tuition Reimbursement Top-up Grant	\$183,000
Professional Development Grant	\$1,517,000
Training Support Grant	\$1,206,000
Workforce Enhancement Grant	\$3,048,000
Early Childhood Education Training	\$10,288,000
Funding to Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association	\$138,000
Operational Support Grant	\$18,593,000
Preschool Support Grant	\$498,000
Children Communicating, Connecting, and in the Community	\$242,000
Early Learning Intensive Support and Specialized Prekindergarten Grant	\$5,325,000
Building capacity	\$248,000
Early Childhood Initiatives	\$84,000
Early Learning Program Guide	\$115,000
<b>Total other ELCC funding</b>	<b>\$42,490,000</b>

## Federal transfers to Saskatchewan

Federal transfer	Amount
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$18,278,555
Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care	\$208,322,327
Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$3,847,521

*Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to Saskatchewan for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements, as they are updated annually in line with population estimates. 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 (2025).



# Alberta

Overview	274	<b>CHILD CARE FUNDING</b>	<b>297</b>
Provincial context	275	Eligibility for CWELCC funding	297
<b>KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA</b>	<b>278</b>	Child care services' eligibility for funding	297
Kindergarten for five-year-olds and prekindergarten	278	Types of funding	298
Curriculum framework	279	Funding for regulated child care (fiscal year 2023 – 2024)	302
Enrolment	279		
Recent or anticipated developments	279		
<b>CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>280</b>		
Administration	280		
Curriculum framework	281		
Children with disabilities	281		
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care	282		
Parent fees	283		
Workforce	285		
Standards and regulations	287		
Of interest	290		
<b>CHILD CARE DATA</b>	<b>292</b>		
Regulated child care space statistics	292		
Regulated child care enrolment statistics	295		



# Alberta

## ■ OVERVIEW

In February 2024, responsibility for child care moved from the Ministry of Children and Family Services to the Ministry of Jobs, Economy, and Trade. In May 2025, it moved again when Alberta's Ministry of Education became the Ministry of Education and Childcare. The Ministry of Education and Childcare is responsible for regulated child care centres, preschools, family child care, group family child care, kindergarten, prekindergarten, and school-age child care.

Licensed child care includes full-day child care centres, part-day preschools, family child care, and before- and after-school programs (termed Out-Of-School Care).

Centre-based child care is delivered by for-profit and non-profit operators, with a number of publicly operated spaces. A majority of full-day spaces are for-profit.

Family child care homes (termed Family Day Homes) are agency-based. Licensed Family Day Home agencies may be non-profit, but a majority of agencies were for-profit in 2025. The province individually licenses group family child care homes (more than one provider); new group family child care homes are no longer being opened.

Prekindergarten is targeted to children who require additional or specialized support prior to entering kindergarten. Kindergarten for five-year-olds is part-day and not compulsory. Some school divisions offer full school-day kindergarten, but it is not provincially funded beyond the half day.

In April 2025, Alberta introduced a set fee of \$15/day for licensed child care and ended the Child Care Subsidy program. Fee subsidies remain in place for school-age children. Prior to this change, operators set their own fees, with fee increases limited by the provincial government, and parent fee subsidies for eligible low-income parents could be used in any licensed child care program.

Alberta does not have a wage grid or scale. The province provides long-standing wage top-up funding to licensed child care programs to support eligible certified staff and Family Day Home providers for eligible hours of work, up to 181 hours per month.

Alberta signed onto the first Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) agreement on November 14, 2021. This allocated nearly \$3.8 billion to the province over five years.

In March 2025, Alberta did not accept the federal government's offer to extend its bilateral agreement to 2031.

### Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)

	2021	2025	Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025
Non-profit and public	15,578	26,400	+10,822
For-profit	49,132	71,700	+22,568
<b>Total full-day spaces</b>	<b>64,710</b>	<b>98,100</b>	<b>+33,390</b>
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	76%	73%	-2.8%
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit	-	-	68%

## ■ PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded; however, the totals are based on exact figures. Therefore, totals may not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

### Number of children 0 – 12 years (2024 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	43,400
1	46,700
2	57,000
3	47,600
4	56,200
5	60,000
6	58,600
7	56,300
8	60,200
9	60,500
10	57,100
11	63,200
12	59,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>726,200</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	147,100
3 – 5	163,800
6 – 12	415,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>726,200</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0	25,000
1	26,800
2	35,900
3	29,200
4	35,500
5	37,400
6	36,800
7	36,300
8	43,700
9	40,800
10	38,300
11	44,400
12	40,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>470,300</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	87,700
3 – 5	102,100
6 – 12	280,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>470,300</b>

---

### 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	13,015	8,965	200	515	280
5 – 9	14,765	10,750	360	475	290
10 – 14	16,070	11,530	355	550	330
<b>Total</b>	<b>43,850</b>	<b>31,245</b>	<b>915</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>900</b>

### Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age of youngest child</i>	<i>Number of mothers</i>	<i>Participation rate (%)</i>
0 – 3	105,300	71.2
4 – 5	48,500	79.2
0 – 5	153,800	73.6
6 – 12	147,800	83.0

### Living arrangements by age of child (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Living with two parents</i>	<i>Living with one parent</i>			<i>Total</i>
		<i>Lone mother</i>	<i>Lone father</i>		
0 – 4	214,625	24,255	5,605		<b>29,860</b>
5 – 9	224,815	37,080	10,325		<b>47,405</b>
10 – 14	214,955	45,085	13,145		<b>58,230</b>

### Languages spoken most often at home (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Non-official</i>	<i>Multiple</i>
0 – 4	204,570	1,410	33,780	10,305
5 – 9	238,550	1,575	26,585	11,915
10 – 14	241,570	1,575	24,595	12,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>684,685</b>	<b>4,565</b>	<b>84,965</b>	<b>34,805</b>

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

<i>Two-parent families</i>	<i>Male lone parent</i>	<i>Female lone parent</i>
\$105,000	\$58,400	\$47,600

## KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA

Kindergarten in Alberta is part of Early Childhood Services (ECS). ECS includes educational programming for children as young as 2 years 8 months.

Public, separate, public charter, private schools, and private/independent (non-profit) ECS operators may offer ECS programs. ECS programs offered by any school authority or approved ECS operator are fully funded. Private/independent ECS operators and accredited funded private schools must be non-profit entities and may only charge fees for ECS programming for hours of instruction above 475 instructional hours per school year.

### KINDERGARTEN FOR FIVE-YEAR-OLDS AND PREKINDERGARTEN

#### Provincial responsibility

Ministry of Education and Childcare  
Program and System Support Division  
Phone: 780-427-7235  
Email: [edc.privateschools@gov.ab.ca](mailto:edc.privateschools@gov.ab.ca)  
Website: [alberta.ca/early-childhood-education](http://alberta.ca/early-childhood-education)

#### Legislation

Alberta. Legislative Assembly. *Education Act*. – SA2012, C E-0.3.  
Alberta. Legislative Assembly. *Education Act – Early Childhood Services Regulation*. RA 87/2019.  
Amended 44/2020.  
*Ministerial Order: Student Learning*. 028/2020.

### Provision

#### Kindergarten provision

<b>Definition</b>	Part-day ECS program for children in the year before Grade 1.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Five years old by December 31 and less than six years old as of September 1.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Not compulsory.
<b>Entitlement</b>	All eligible children may attend, but schools are not required to offer it.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Where provided, there must be a minimum of 475 instructional hours per school year.
<b>Class size</b>	No set class sizes.

#### Prekindergarten provision

<b>Definition</b>	Targeted ECS program for children who require additional support before kindergarten. Fees may be charged for hours of instruction above 475 hours per school year.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Age two years eight months for children with a severe disability or a moderate or severe language delay. Age three years eight months for all other eligible children. Children are eligible if they are learning English as a second language, require francization, are gifted and talented, or are diagnosed with a mild, moderate, or severe disability or delay.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Not compulsory.
<b>Entitlement</b>	No entitlement; schools are not required to offer it.

<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Minimum of 300 hours per school year for children two years eight months to three years seven months.  Minimum of 400 hours per school year for children three years eight months to four years seven months.  Minimum of 475 hours per school year for children four years eight months and older.  A school may operate a full-day educational program for a minimum of 800 hours of instruction per year.
<b>Class size</b>	No set class sizes.

### Teacher qualifications and certification

Kindergarten and prekindergarten teachers in Alberta must hold a valid Alberta teaching certificate based on a four-year university degree that includes a basic teacher preparation program (Bachelor of Education) or a bachelor's degree supplemented with a teacher preparation program (two-year post-degree for teacher course work and practicum).

Kindergarten teachers are not required to have an early childhood qualification.

### CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

*Alberta's K – 6 Curriculum* is a mandatory curriculum framework for all kindergarten and prekindergarten programs in Alberta.

## ENROLMENT

### Kindergarten enrolment (2024 – 2025 school year)

#### *Enrolment in public schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	47,591
Prekindergarten for 2 – 4 year olds	5,146

#### *Enrolment in private/independent schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	4,256
Prekindergarten for 2 – 4 year olds	1,061

#### *Enrolment in privately operated ECS programs*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	2,305
Prekindergarten for 2 – 4 year olds	5,910

<b>Total kindergarten enrolment</b>	<b>66,269</b>
-------------------------------------	---------------

## RECENT OR ANTICIPATED DEVELOPMENTS

### Home education kindergarten pilot

The [home education kindergarten pilot](#) has been extended to the 2025 – 2026 school year. It is available to parents choosing a home education program that is supervised by a school authority.

# CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

## ■ ADMINISTRATION

### Provincial responsibility

Ministry of Education and Childcare  
Childcare Strategy and Policy Division  
Childcare Delivery Division  
Phone: See [alberta.ca/contacts-for-child-care-programs-and-educators](http://alberta.ca/contacts-for-child-care-programs-and-educators)  
Email: [childcare@gov.ab.ca](mailto:childcare@gov.ab.ca)  
Website: [alberta.ca/child-care.aspx](http://alberta.ca/child-care.aspx)

### Legislation

Alberta. Legislative Assembly. [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#). SA 2007, c. E-0.1.

Alberta. Legislative Assembly. [Early Learning and Child Care Act – Early Learning and Child Care Regulation](#). Alta Reg 143/2008.

### Service descriptions

#### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

There are no health, safety, or training requirements or provision for public oversight in unregulated child care. There may be attention by public officials on a complaint basis.

Six children, not including the provider's own, can be cared for in unregulated child care.

#### REGULATED CHILD CARE

Under February 2021 regulations, there are two types of licence: facility-based programs and Family Day Homes (approved by a licensed Family Day Home agency).

Facility-based licences include Daycares, preschools, and Out-Of-School Care programs.

Since February 1, 2021, Alberta no longer licenses new group family child care programs and Innovative Child Care programs. However,

existing Innovative Child Care programs were granted open-ended licences and allowed to operate indefinitely under the former *Child Care Licensing Act* and Child Care Licensing Regulation.

#### Child care centre

Child care centres (termed facility-based Daycares) are licensed child care programs providing care to infants, preschool-age children, and kindergarten-age children for four or more consecutive hours each day that the program is provided. Daycares may serve children from birth to kindergarten.

#### Preschool

Preschools are licensed child care programs providing care to preschool-age and kindergarten-age children for no more than four hours per child each day that the program is provided. Preschools may serve children from 19 months old to kindergarten-age.

#### School-age child care

School-age child care (termed Out-Of-School Care) is a licensed child care centre program providing care to kindergarten-age and school-age children in any or all of the following periods: before- and after-school, during the lunch hour, or when schools are closed. Out-Of-School Care programs may serve children from kindergarten up to 13 years of age, or a child of 13 or 14 years of age who requires care because of a special need.

#### Family child care

Family child care (termed a Family Day Home) is provided by an individual in their private residence. A Family Day Home program provides child care to no more than six children, not including the educator's own children. Family Day Homes may serve children from 0 – 12 years.

## Group family child care

Since February 1, 2021, Alberta no longer licenses new group family child care programs. Group family child care homes are licensed child care programs providing care in the private residence of the licence holder to infants, preschool-age children, kindergarten-age children, and school-age children ages 0 – 12. Group family child care homes are required to have two providers. Group family child care is provided in the private residence of the license holder to a maximum of 10 children.

## Innovative Child Care

Since February 1, 2021, Alberta no longer licenses new Innovative Child Care programs. However, existing Innovative Child Care programs were granted open-ended licences and allowed to operate indefinitely under the former *Child Care Licensing Act* and Child Care Licensing Regulation. Innovative Child Care programs are centre-based child care programs approved by the provincial government statutory director designed to meet the unique child care needs of the community in which it is provided.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

[Flight: Alberta's Early Learning and Care Framework](#) (2014) is a voluntary curriculum framework for licensed facility-based child care and Family Day Homes in Alberta. It focuses on children from birth to school entry.

## CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

### Terminology and approach

Alberta uses the term “children requiring additional support” to encompass children with disabilities.

All types of licensed child care programs are eligible to receive inclusion funding.

Two programs are available for children requiring additional support: The Inclusive Child Care program provides inclusion funding to the whole centre, and the Family Support for Children with Disabilities program provides funding specific to the individual child.

There are no specific qualifications or requirements for staff who work with children with disabilities.

### Programs supporting inclusion in ELCC

The [Inclusive Child Care](#) program was implemented in 2021, replacing regional Supported Child Care services. Delivered by community agencies, it assists child care programs and educators with building their capacity and confidence to include children with extra support needs, increasing families' access to inclusive child care, and preventing exclusion or removal of children from child care programs. It provides a range of resources and supports to licensed child care programs, including on-site consultation, professional development delivered with coaching support, and short-term funding for staff engagement.

The [Family Support for Children with Disabilities](#) program, administered by the Ministry of Assisted Living and Social Services (previously named the Ministry of Seniors, Community, and Social Services), works with families to develop a service plan that identifies strategies, services, and supports to address each child's and family's unique circumstances. The funding can address extraordinary child care needs, such as aide support in licensed child care programs.

Alberta also provides Early Childhood Services for children in kindergarten and prekindergarten who require additional supports. See Alberta's [Kindergarten policy, programs, and data](#) section for more information.

## Access to inclusive ELCC

Child care programs are not required to accept children with disabilities.

A diagnosis is required to access Early Childhood Services and the Family Support for Children with Disabilities program. A diagnosis is not required to attend a child care program that accesses Inclusive Child Care program supports.

Newly constructed or renovated facilities are not required to be fully accessible and barrier-free. However, in 2024 – 2025, Alberta launched the Inclusive Spaces Program Grant, which provides funding for renovations, equipment, and resources to support inclusion and improve the accessibility of existing child care programs. See Alberta's ["Types of funding"](#) section for more information.

In Alberta, there is no wait for supports through the Inclusive Child Care program, although there may be a wait, delay, or administrative barrier for receiving some types of disability-specific inclusion funding. For example, aide funding through the Family Support for Children with Disabilities program is determined through the application process and may take time to put in place.

Licensed centres are eligible for the same funding as other provincially licensed centres.

A First Nation may request licensing staff to assess an unlicensed program. If the program meets provincial licensing standards, it is eligible to receive federal funding.

The provincial government reported that as of April 17, 2025, there were six licensed centres on First Nations reserves in Alberta, including four full-day, two part-day, and one before- and after-school centre-based program.

### Licensed spaces on reserve

Program type	Number of spaces
Full-day	157
Part-day (children 0 – 5 years)	48
Before- and after-school care	8
<b>Total licensed spaces</b>	<b>213</b>

The number of unlicensed child care centres on reserve is not available.

There were no licensed Family Day Home agencies on reserve.

Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (AHSOR) programs may be licensed by invitation. There were 49 AHSOR programs in Alberta in 2025.

### Indigenous child care other than on reserve

As of April 17, 2025, 22 licensed child care centres in Alberta were Indigenous-led or focused (based on program plans directed toward Indigenous populations) and not located on a reserve.

These included 10 full-day programs, 12 part-day preschool programs, and three before- and after-school programs.

## FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE

In Alberta, 6.8% of the total population identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in the most recent census (2021). There are 138 First Nations reserves and eight Métis Settlements in the province. Almost 64% of First Nations people in Alberta do not live on reserve.

### First Nations child care on reserve and Métis Settlements

First Nations child care may be licensed under the *Early Learning and Child Care Act* by invitation.

---

### Licensed spaces not on reserve (2025)

Program type	Number of spaces
Full-day	396
Part-day (children 0 – 5 years)	270
Before- and after-school care	48
<b>Total licensed spaces</b>	<b>714</b>

---

Some Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) programs are licensed. In 2025, there were 16 licensed AHSUNC programs operating 363 spaces for preschool-age children and four unlicensed AHSUNC programs.

### Indigenous-specific resources/initiatives

The Ministry of Education and Childcare has a number of initiatives intended to support access to cultural resources for all child care staff and programs and to support affordable, quality, safe, and inclusive programs. These initiatives aim to increase understanding of the important role of culture, language, and heritage, and to improve access to child care for diverse communities, including Indigenous, racialized, and Francophone communities.

The Alberta Childcare Community Needs Assessment and the Spark Guide support advisory tables to develop a culturally responsive workforce framework for Alberta's child care sector, as well

as implementation and scaling up of existing evidence-informed resources, training, and professional development in partnership with diverse communities.

### PARENT FEES

Alberta introduced a set fee for licensed child care on April 1, 2025.

---

#### Average full-day daily parent fees (2021 – 2022, prior to fee reductions)

Age group	Child care centres	Family Day Homes
Infant	\$54.94	\$39.08
Toddler	\$48.28	\$39.08
Preschool-age	\$44.60	\$38.39
School-age (school year)	\$26.21	\$26.21

---

On January 1, 2022, affordability grants were provided to centres to reduce market fees for infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children (including children also attending part-day kindergarten). Operators were required to reduce parent fees by the amount of the grant.

Affordability grants were increased effective January 1, 2024, to further reduce fees to an average of \$15/day.

---

### Amount of monthly fee reduction in full-day child care (2022 and 2024)

Age group	Child care centres		Family Day Homes	
	2022	2024	2022	2024
Infant	\$635	\$883	\$350	\$487
Toddler	\$510	\$709	\$325	\$452
Preschool-age	\$450	\$626	\$300	\$417

---

On April 1, 2025, Alberta introduced a new approach to affordability funding – a set fee.

A flat monthly fee of \$326.25 (\$15/day) was introduced for all children 0 – 5 years in full-time licensed Daycares and Family Day Homes.

A flat monthly fee of \$230 was introduced for all children 0 – 5 years in part-time licensed child care and Family Day Homes.

Parents with children in preschools have a reduction of up to \$100 off their preschool program's stated monthly fees.

Fees for school-age child care continue to be set by operators.

### **Additional fees**

Child care operators are permitted to charge waitlist fees and optional fees for food, transportation, extended hours, field trips, extracurricular activities, diapers, registration, and other services.

There are no restrictions to the amounts charged for these services, as long as they are optional.

Operators are required to report on these services and the associated fees. A parent declining the services cannot be denied access to the program.

### **Parent fee subsidies**

On April 1, 2025, Alberta ended the Child Care Subsidy program in Daycares, Family Day Homes, and preschools for children up to kindergarten-age requiring child care during regular school hours. Fee subsidies remain in place for school-age children and may be used in non-profit, public, and for-profit Out-Of-School centres and Family Day Homes.

The Child Care Subsidy program information below was in effect until March 31, 2025.

Fee subsidy payments were made directly to child care service providers on behalf of subsidized parents. All eligible families were entitled to a fee subsidy; there was no waitlist for a subsidy.

### **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

To be eligible for a fee subsidy, parents were required to be working, looking for work (maximum four-month approval of subsidy in a 12-month time period per applicant), or attending school. Parents with a disability or with a child with a disability were eligible for a fee subsidy.

### **FINANCIAL CRITERIA**

Income eligibility was determined by the family's annual gross income and the age of the child receiving care.

---

#### **Income eligibility for fee subsidy (2024)**

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Maximum annual gross income for full subsidy</i>	<i>Annual gross income at which partial subsidy ends</i>
Birth – kindergarten-age (in kindergarten and attending child care during regular school hours)	\$119,999	\$180,000
Full-day kindergarten – Grade 6 (only enrolled in child care outside school hours)	\$49,999	\$90,000
Part-day preschool	All income levels up to \$180,000	

---

## SUBSIDY RATES

The maximum subsidy rate was the amount the government paid a facility-based Daycare or licensed Family Day Home on behalf of a fully subsidized parent to cover all or part of the parent fee.

The subsidy rates for children in full-day child care were reduced in January 2022.

### Maximum subsidy monthly rates in licensed child care (2024)

Age group	Centres	Family Day Homes
Birth to kindergarten-age (in kindergarten and attending child care during regular school hours)	\$266	\$266
Children enrolled in full-day kindergarten enrolled in child care outside of regular school hours (attendance of 100+ hours)	\$644	\$516
School-age Grades 1 – 6 (attendance of 50+ hours)	\$366	\$366
Part-day preschool	Flat rate of \$125	Not available

Families with children in full-day kindergarten to Grade 6 attending licensed Out-Of-School Care or Family Day Homes continue to be eligible for fee subsidies through the Child Care Subsidy. The subsidy rates and eligibility requirements, including a household income threshold of under \$90,000 per year, remain the same as in the above tables.

## WORKFORCE

### Child care centre staff wages

#### PROVINCIAL WAGE DATA

Alberta does not have a wage grid or scale. Individual operators set wages and benefits of early childhood educators and child care workers.

The province provides long-standing wage top-up funding to licensed child care programs to support eligible certified staff and Family Day Home providers.

### Average Alberta child care staff wages (December 2024)

Certification level	Average wage before top-up
Level 1	\$17.29
Level 2	\$18.35
Level 3	\$20.53

### PROVINCIAL WAGE TOP-UP FOR CENTRES AND FAMILY DAY HOME PROVIDERS

Effective January 2023, wage top-ups were increased by certification level to provide an additional \$2.64 per hour for Level 1 ECEs, \$5.05 per hour for Level 2 ECEs, and \$8.62 per hour for Level 3 ECEs above the employer paid wage.

### Mean average wages and top-up rates by certification level (2024)

Certification level	Average employer-paid wage	Provincial top-up rates per hour	Mean wage including top-up (December 2024)
Level 1	\$17.29	\$2.64	\$19.93
Level 2	\$18.35	\$5.05	\$23.40
Level 3	\$20.53	\$8.62	\$29.15

The Alberta wage top-up funding is allocated to child care programs as a grant to administer additional pay for certified staff and to Family Day Home providers. For the operator to qualify, staff must be paid at least the provincial minimum wage before the top-up is applied.



Wage top-ups are available to frontline certified paid staff and contracted Family Day Home providers who:

- Provide direct child care, including program supervisors and alternate supervisors (as defined in the Child Care Licensing Regulation), as well as people hired in the role of family child care consultants/coordinators with a licensed Family Day Home agency;
- Are certified as a Level 1, 2, or 3; and
- Meet the hour eligibility requirements.

Eligible hours for wage top-ups are defined as direct child care hours by staff in licensed centre-based programs and Family Day Home providers, as well as administrative hours by program supervisors in facility-based programs and agency coordinators and home visitors/consultants employed at a Family Day Home agency.

See [Alberta Child Care Grant Funding Guide: For Wage Top-Up and Professional Development Funding](#) for more information.

## Staff benefits

Alberta does not provide or fund province-wide benefits to child care staff or programs.

## Early childhood certification

Certification is required for all staff working in licensed child care programs in Alberta. This applies to facility-based programs and Family Day Homes operating under a licensed agency. Staff must be certified within six months of being hired, and staff who have not received certification cannot be left alone to supervise children.

Early childhood education is a regulated profession in Alberta. The Alberta government has legislative authority to certify child care staff. The Alberta Child Care Staff Certification Office administers the certification program.

The *Early Learning and Child Care Act* authorizes the Minister to set standards respecting the skills, training, and other qualifications that an individual must have for each level of certification and the conduct requirements an individual must meet to maintain certification.

The Early Learning and Child Care Regulation addresses child care certification, including establishing three levels of child care certification in Alberta and giving authority to the statutory director to certify applicants that meet applicable standards for that level.

Alberta's certification system is education-focused ECE. It assesses credentials and coursework based on post-secondary credits for certificates, diplomas, and degrees in early learning and child care and related programs to work in licensed child care in Alberta. Official transcripts from educational institutions are required for Levels 2 and 3. Original official language proficiency scores must also be provided, if applicable.

There are three levels of early childhood certification: Levels 1, 2, and 3.

An individual is eligible to receive a Level 1 ECE (formerly Child Development Assistant) certificate by completing one of the following:

- A 45-hour, three-credit post-secondary course in early learning and child care;
- Alberta ECE orientation course;
- Alberta high school courses in child care studies (CCS 3110 – 31500);
- Family Child Care Training Program through an approved Alberta Family Day Home Agency registered with the Alberta Family Child Care Association; or
- Level 1 ELCC coursework equivalencies as approved by the Ministry of Education and Childcare.



The Alberta Child Care Orientation Course is for eligible Alberta residents aged 16 years and up with no formal post-secondary education in early learning and child care.

An individual is eligible for a Level 2 ECE certificate upon completion of either:

- A one-year, 30-credit certificate in early learning and child care through an approved post-secondary institution; or
- An approved educational equivalency.

An individual is eligible to receive a Level 3 ECE certificate upon completion of either:

- A two-year, 60-credit diploma in early learning and child care through an approved post-secondary institution; or
- An approved educational equivalency.

Professional development is not a requirement to remain certified, and there are no renewal requirements for certified early childhood educators. However, if it is determined that an applicant or certified ECE has a reportable occurrence, the statutory director may impose terms, suspend, or cancel their certification, or refuse to certify in the case of a new applicant.

The [Certification Guide for Early Childhood Educators](#) includes a full list of post-secondary institutions (Appendix D) and equivalencies (Appendix B) approved for certification as an early childhood educator.

## ■ STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Child care centres and family child care homes must adhere to standards and regulations regarding staffing requirements, grouping of children, and licensing. Some additional key elements of child care standards and regulations, such as physical environments and food provision,

are covered in the comparative tables in this publication, while others may be found in the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#) and the [Early Learning and Child Care Act – Early Learning and Child Care Regulations](#).

### Regulated child care centres

Child care centres (termed facility-based child care programs) are licensed under the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#) and the [Early Learning and Child Care Act – Early Learning and Child Care Regulations](#). The *Child Care Licensing Act* was amended to the *Early Learning and Child Care Act* in 2021. Both the Act and Regulations were again amended in 2025.

### STAFF:CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZE

Alberta does not specify a maximum number of children permitted in a child care centre.

## Staff:child ratio and maximum group size

Program type	Age group	Staff:child ratio	Maximum group size
<b>Full-day (more than 4 hours)</b>	Infant (<12 months)	1:3	6
	Infant (12 months – <19 months)	1:4	8
	Toddler (19 months – <3 years)	1:6	12
	Preschool-age (3 years – <4 years)	1:8	16
	Preschool-age (4 years and older)	1:10	20

*Note: A centre (Daycares and Out-Of-School Care programs) is permitted to mix children of different age groups (older than 19 months) throughout the day between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:30 pm. Ratios for mixed-age groups are determined based on the age of the majority of children in the group.*

<b>Out-Of-School Care</b>	Kindergarten-age and older	1:15	30
<b>Part-day preschool</b>	Toddler (19 months – <3 years)	1:6	No maximum
	Preschool-age (3 years and older)	1:12	No maximum

*Note: Parent volunteers are allowed to act as staff members in the staff:child ratio for preschool programs.*

*Note: When seven or more children are receiving care in any program, at least two staff must be present, with at least one being a primary staff.*

## STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRES

### Qualification requirements for staffing a centre

In Alberta, staff qualification requirements are specified at the centre level.

“Primary staff member” means a staff member of a centre who is 16 years of age or older, whose primary duty is child care, and who is actively engaged in the supervision of children in the program.

In a full-day Daycare, at all times between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm, at least one in every three primary staff members must be certified at Level 2. The remaining primary staff must be certified at Level 1 or higher. At all other times, every primary staff member must be certified at least at Level 1.

In an Out-Of-School Care program or preschool program, at least one of every four staff members involved in providing care must be certified at Level 2, and the remaining staff members must be certified at Level 1 or higher.

In a Daycare or Out-Of-School Care program, a primary staff member may be hired before obtaining Level 1 certification but must become certified within six months of employment.

In a preschool, a staff member may be hired before obtaining a Level 1 certification and must become certified within six months of employment.

### Qualification requirements for on-site centre directors/supervisors

All full-day centres must have a program supervisor who is certified as a Level 3 early childhood educator. A designated program supervisor must be on duty at all times when children receiving care are on the program premises.

School-age-only programs are required to have a designated program supervisor, but that position has no certification requirements beyond a Level 1.

### Other requirements

One in two primary staff members must have first aid certification. At least one staff member with



first aid certification must be on duty at all times. The first aid certification does not have to include CPR or child CPR.

Each staff member and volunteer must have a criminal record check, including a vulnerable sector search. The criminal record check and vulnerable sector search must not be dated earlier than six months prior to the date of application.

A criminal record check can be provided within eight weeks of employment provided that the person does not have unsupervised access to children during that time.

The regulated minimum age for staff is 16 years old. An adult certified with at least Level 2 certification must directly supervise 16- and 17-year-old staff.

#### **LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES**

The [Child Care Licensing Handbook: Facility-based Programs](#) guides prospective and licensed providers through the licensing process and provides information about the inspection and monitoring process.

An initial licence for a child care centre is valid for one to three years. After the initial license is renewed, the term of the licence is indefinite depending on the licence holder's history of non-compliance, complaints, incidents, or enforcement actions.

A minimum of two inspections must occur annually. For inspections conducted to determine licence issuance (either initial or renewal), the inspections are announced. All other inspections are unannounced. For a one-year licence, at least one unannounced inspection is conducted during the licence term.

If non-compliances are identified or incidents or complaints occur, licensing staff will complete additional inspections or an assessment as

required. A licensing officer may enter the premises of a licensed facility-based child care program at any time children are present and at any other reasonable time before or after the program's regular operating hours. Permission from the licence holder or program supervisor is not required.

#### **Regulated family child care**

In Alberta, regulated family child care homes (termed Family Day Homes) are regulated under the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#), the [Early Learning and Child Care Act – Early Learning and Child Care Regulations](#), and the [Family Day Homes Standards Manual for Alberta](#).

Family Day Home providers must provide the child care in their personal residence.

#### **MODEL OF ORGANIZATION**

Alberta uses an agency model. Since April 1, 2021, the Alberta government licenses family child care agencies. Family Day Homes continue to operate as "approved" under their licensed agencies.

A Family Day Home agency is responsible for complying with and monitoring providers' compliance with provider standards, incidents, and complaints.

Family Day Home agencies may be non-profit or for-profit.

#### **MAXIMUM CAPACITY**

A Family Day Home provider may provide care for up to six children ages 0 – 12, not including the provider's own children.

There must not be more than two children under the age of two, including the provider's own children, or more than three children under the age of three, including the provider's own children.



## FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

Family child care providers (termed Family Day Home educators) must hold a minimum ECE Level 1 certification within six months of operation.

Providers must be at least 18 years old and have a criminal record check with a vulnerable sector search, first aid certification, personal references, and a physician's note stating the applicant is mentally and physically able to care for children. The first aid certification does not have to include CPR or child CPR.

Other adults who reside in the residence where the Family Day Home operates must complete a criminal reference check with a vulnerable sector check. This must be updated every three years.

Family Day Home agencies are required to bring providers together at least six times each year for training, consultation, information sharing, or problem solving to reduce provider isolation.

## LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

The Alberta government issues an agency licence to a Family Day Home agency for between one and three years, and it may be renewed for an additional term. Family Day Home providers sign a contract with a Family Day Home agency in their community. The agency determines the length of the Family Day Home contract; there is no regulated standard term.

Agencies are required to make scheduled and unscheduled visits to each Family Day Home at least six times per year. Ministry licensing staff monitor each agency's operations, activities, and records, and conduct a minimum of one in-person visit to each contracted agency annually. Ministry staff also visit a minimum of 10% of each agency's active homes annually.

## ■ OF INTEREST

### Municipal role

Historically, municipalities in Alberta played a significant but unofficial role in child care delivery. At one point, they both operated public child care and supported non-profit child care providers. Between the 1970s and 1990s, Alberta municipalities funded 11 public child care centres and provided support to over 60 centres across the province.

Today, several smaller municipalities – Beaumont, Jasper, Drayton Valley, the Municipal District of Opportunity, and others – provide child care. In addition, a number of municipalities and school boards are licensed to operate part-day preschools and before- and after-school care.

From January to September 2025, Deloitte Inc. conducted a community needs assessment to gather input from municipalities, First Nations, and Métis Settlements to understand localized needs for licensed child care spaces, particularly for children from diverse and vulnerable communities. The assessment estimated the number of child care spaces needed to meet modelled coverage levels and the number of children who would likely use licensed care if a suitable space were available. The provincial-level and community-level reports will inform Alberta's planning efforts to meet CWELCC requirements.

### Family Resource Networks

Family Resource Networks (FRNs) in Alberta are operated by non-profit, community-based organizations. There are 70 FRNs in Alberta, including 35 serving rural communities, 10 Indigenous hubs, and one Francophone hub that supports both urban and rural areas. Together, they help coordinate services across 136 agencies or providers, offering both in-person and virtual programs. FRNs provide prevention and early intervention services and supports for children



and youth aged 0 – 18, as well as support for their families. Services include home visitation, parent support groups, and early childhood development programs focused on early learning and play.

## CHILD CARE DATA

### ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

#### Number of spaces (2024, 2025)

Category	2024	2025
<b>Full-day centre spaces</b>		
Infant (<12 months)	2,900	3,000
Infant (12 – <19 months)	10,000	11,500
Toddler (19 months – <3 years)	23,600	27,000
Preschool-age (3 – <4 years)	21,200	25,300
Preschool-age (4 – 5 years)	27,900	31,400
<b>Total full-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>85,600</b>	<b>98,200</b>
<b>Part-day centre spaces</b>		
Preschool-age (19 months – <3 years)	1,200	1,100
Preschool-age (3 – 5 years)	13,700	13,500
<b>Total part-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>14,900</b>	<b>14,600</b>
<b>Other centre spaces</b>		
Innovative Child Care (no age grouping)	490	480
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>100,990</b>	<b>113,280</b>
<b>Before- and after-school care centre spaces (licensed or regulated)</b>		
Kindergarten and Grades 1 – 6	58,700	62,500
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>159,690</b>	<b>175,780</b>
<b>Family child care licensed capacity</b>		
<i>Family Day Homes</i>		
Full- and part-day (0 – 12 years)	17,100	18,700
<i>Group family child care (more than one provider)</i>		
Full-day (not yet in kindergarten or school)	120	100
Part-day (attending kindergarten or school)	35	30
<b>Total family child care spaces</b>	<b>17,255</b>	<b>18,830</b>
<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)</b>	<b>176,945</b>	<b>194,610</b>

## Number of child care centres and family child care homes (2024)

### Centre-based child care

<b>Total number of centres</b>	2,500
<b>Total number of licences</b>	1,700

*Note: The number of licence holders was reported instead of the total number of licences.*

### Centre-based programs

Centres providing a full-day program	1,500
Centres providing a part-day (preschool/nursery school) program	610
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 5 – 12 years)	1,400
Centres providing infant care (<19 months)	1,100
Centres providing toddler care (19 months – <3 years)	1,300

*Note: For ECEC in Canada 2023, 1,400 centres were reported. However, the correct number of centres providing toddler care in 2023 was 1,200.*

Centres providing preschool-age care (3 – 5 years)	1,500
Centres providing non-standard hours care (as defined by the province)	79
Centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – Grade 12)	<i>Not available</i>

### Regulated family child care

Family child care homes (Family Day Homes) (active)	2,600
Group family child care homes	15
<b>Total number of family child care homes</b>	<b>2,615</b>

### Participation in CWELCC

<b>Total number of child care centres receiving CWELCC funding</b>	2,500
<b>Total number of child care agencies receiving CWELCC funding</b>	82
<b>Total number of group family child care homes receiving CWELCC funding</b>	15

## Auspice (2024)

---

### Centres by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit	1,400
Non-profit and public	1,100

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>Part-day</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	62,600	5,400	35,000	<b>103,000</b>
Non-profit and public	23,000	9,500	23,800	<b>56,300</b>

*Note: Alberta's 490 Innovative Child Care spaces are not included in this table.*

*Note: Numbers in this table have been rounded and may not equal the sum of centre spaces by age groups.*

<sup>1</sup>Preschool.

<sup>2</sup>Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

---

### Family child care agencies by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of agencies</i>
For-profit	53
Non-profit and public	29

## Auspice (2025)

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>Part-day</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	71,700	5,400	37,600	<b>114,700</b>
Non-profit and public	26,400	9,200	24,900	<b>60,500</b>

*Note: Alberta's 480 Innovative Child Care spaces are not included in this table.*

*Note: Numbers in this table have been rounded and may not equal the sum of centre spaces by age groups.*

<sup>1</sup>Preschool.

<sup>2</sup>Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

---

## Publicly operated child care (2024)

There are a number of publicly operated child care centres in Alberta, but a breakdown of public spaces is not available. See Alberta's "[Of interest](#)" section for more information.

## Fee subsidies (2024)

### Number of children receiving fee subsidies

Full subsidy	47,000
Partial subsidy	35,700
<b>Total children receiving fee subsidies</b>	<b>82,700</b>

## Disability support (2024)

### Number of children receiving disability support

Children in licensed child care receiving disability support funding	<i>Not available</i>
--	----------------------

## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

## Number of children enrolled (2024)

### Full-day centre enrolment

Infant (<12 months)	1,000
Infant (12 – <19 months)	6,200
Toddler (19 months – <3 years)	23,700
Preschool-age (3 years – <4 years)	19,000
Preschool-age (4 – 5 years)	24,700
<b>Total full-day centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>74,600</b>

### Part-day centre enrolment

Preschool-age (19 months – <3 years)	590
Preschool-age (3 years – <4 years)	17,900

---

**Other enrolment**

Innovative Child Care (no age grouping)	<i>Not available</i>
<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>93,090</b>

---

**Before- and after-school care (licensed or regulated)**

Kindergarten	9,000
Grades 1 – 6	33,200
<b>Total before- and after-school care enrolment</b>	<b>42,200</b>
<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>135,290</b>

---

**Full-day family child care enrolment**

<i>Family Day Homes</i>	
Not attending kindergarten or school	13,400
<i>Group family child care (more than one provider)</i>	
Not attending kindergarten or school	140
<b>Total full-day family child care enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>13,540</b>

---

**Part-day family child care enrolment**

<i>Family Day Home</i>	
Attending kindergarten or school	2,400
<i>Group family child care (more than one provider)</i>	
Attending kindergarten or school	6
<b>Total part-day family child care enrolment (children 4 – 12 years)</b>	<b>2,406</b>
<b>Total family child care enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>15,946</b>
<b>TOTAL REGULATED ENROLMENT (centre and family child care enrolment)</b>	<b>151,236</b>

---

## CHILD CARE FUNDING

The types of funding available for child care services in Alberta include operational funding, one-time funding, fee subsidies, and other ELCC funding programs.

### ■ ELIGIBILITY FOR CWELCC FUNDING

The CWELCC plan provides federal funds to provinces and territories for early learning and child care operational and one-time funding and fee subsidies for licensed child care for children aged 0 – 5. Funded new child care expansion is to be public and non-profit unless otherwise specified in the jurisdiction's agreement. Provinces and territories also contribute their own funds and design their own policies and provision within this framework.

In Alberta, the following are eligible for operational funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools);
- Licensed before- and after-school centres that enrol children under age six; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres are eligible for operational funding under some circumstances.

Under Alberta's 2021 CWELCC agreement with the federal government, federal funding to a cap of 26,200 new or expanded for-profit spaces was permitted. Effective May 15, 2025, with the expectation that this cap would be reached by summer 2025, eligibility for operational (affordability) funding for for-profit Daycares, preschools, and Out-Of-School Care programs for

children up to kindergarten age was targeted with priority given to:

- Spaces in existing programs demonstrating parent demand for more spaces and having a proven track record of regulatory compliance (providing safe, high-quality care); and
- New programs in five communities with long waitlists.

New for-profit programs that do not meet these criteria are not eligible for operational funding at this time. Programs that already have signed 2025/2026 Affordability or Space Creation Grants are not affected by these changes.

In Alberta, the following are eligible for capital funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres.

New or expanded for-profit centres are not eligible for capital funding through the Building Blocks Capital Grant Program. For-profit centres are eligible for capital funding through the Space Creation Grant, but applications closed in November 2024. Applications received before this date continue to be processed as funding allows. See "[Space Creation Grant](#)" and "[Building Blocks Capital Grant Program](#)" below under "Types of funding" for more information.

### ■ CHILD CARE SERVICES' ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

Licensed non-profit and for-profit child care facilities are eligible for all applicable funding programs.

## ■ TYPES OF FUNDING

### Operational funding

#### AFFORDABILITY GRANT

The Affordability Grant is an operating grant for eligible child care programs providing monthly funding to cover the “reasonable costs” associated with staffing, facilities, operations, programming, and administration. The amount of funding varies based on program type, child care fee, region, age

group, and number of hours the child is registered to attend. Eligible programs must be licensed and have signed the Affordability Grant Agreement 2025/2026. Specific criteria apply for different types of programs and attendance hours.

See the [Alberta Child Care Affordability Grant Funding Guide](#) and the [Early Learning and Child Care “What’s Changing” Fact Sheet for Daycare Facilities](#) for more information.

#### Affordability Grant rates for licensed centres and family child care per space per month (January 1, 2024)

Type of care	Registered hours	Infant (<19 months)	Toddler (19 months – <3 years)	Preschool-age (3 years – kindergarten-age)	Preschool program (part-time programming for 4 or fewer hours per day for children 19 months up to kindergarten)
<i>Daycare centre</i>	Full-time	\$883	\$709	\$626	-
	Part-time	\$317.50	\$255	\$225	\$75
<i>Daycare centre – Overnight</i>	Full-time	\$1,324	\$1,063	\$938	-
	Part-time	\$476.25	\$382.50	\$337.50	-
<i>Family Day Home</i>	Full-time	\$487	\$452	\$417	-
	Part-time	\$175	\$162.50	\$150	-
<i>Family Day Home – Overnight</i>	Full-time	\$730	\$678	\$626	-
	Part-time	\$262.50	\$243.75	\$225	-

As of April 1, 2025, with the introduction of the set fee, Affordability Grants were increased, with rates varying by region, hours of care, children’s ages, and other factors.

#### ALBERTA CHILD CARE GRANT

Licensed Daycares, Out-Of-School Care, preschool programs, and licensed Family Day Home agencies may be eligible to apply for [Alberta Child Care Grant](#) funding to support the recruitment,

retention, and professional development of their certified educators. Funding is available for wage top-ups, professional development, release time, and mandatory employer contributions. To be eligible for funding, the facility-based program or Family Day Home agency must have signed the Child Care Affordability Grant agreement. Programs offering only Out-Of-School Care for kindergarten and school-age children are only eligible for wage top-ups and professional development.



See “[Other ELCC funding](#)” below for information about funding for professional development, release time, and mandatory employer contributions.

### **WAGE TOP-UP FUNDING**

Wage top-up funding through the Alberta Child Care Grant provides licensed child care programs with a wage top-up for eligible certified early childhood educators. Staff must be paid at least the provincial minimum wage before the wage top-up is added. Wage top-up is paid for hours directly and indirectly related to providing child care.

Wage top-up funding provides a wage enhancement for eligible certified frontline staff who:

- Provide direct child care, including program supervisors and alternate supervisors, as well as family child care consultants or coordinators with a licensed Family Day Home agency;
- Are certified as an early childhood educator Level 1, 2, or 3; and
- Meet the conditions outlined in the “Eligible hours for wage top-up” section of the [Alberta Child Care Grant Funding Guide](#).

In 2025, wage top-ups were paid up to a maximum of 181 hours/month by certification level at the following rates:

- Level 1 Early Childhood Educator at \$2.64/hour;
- Level 2 Early Childhood Educator at \$5.05/hour; and
- Level 3 Early Childhood Educator at \$8.62/hour.

### **INCLUSIVE SPACES PROGRAM GRANT**

Licensed early learning and child care programs can apply for [Inclusive Spaces Program Grant](#) funding to make their existing spaces, facilities, and programs more inclusive. Eligible applicants may submit proposals to improve access to existing child care programs through either of two streams. The first stream is for accessible

renovations to existing facilities to enhance accessibility and inclusivity, such as wheelchair ramps, elevators, or adaptive washrooms. The second stream is for purchasing equipment and materials that promote inclusion, such as assistive technology, sensory equipment, culturally relevant materials, or adaptive play structures. Projects must be completed within 12 months, with funding provided in installments. Half of the funds are available upfront, and the remainder is released after submitting a final report.

### **INFANT CARE INCENTIVE**

The Infant Care Incentive is aimed at increasing the availability of infant child care spaces in centres. The government provides \$150 for each child aged 0 – 18 months who participates for at least eight hours a month. Parents must complete a Parent Statement of Acknowledgement form for the child care centre to claim the grant. The funds are paid directly to the centre and are not considered taxable income for parents. Since the introduction of new funding approaches in April 2025, the Infant Care Incentive is accounted for in the regional fee in that age category and is not funded separately.

### **FAMILY DAY HOME AGENCY FUNDING**

Alberta introduced new contracts for Family Day Home agencies on January 1, 2025. The primary goal is to offer equal base funding per provider to help agencies fulfill their primary function to recruit, monitor, and train providers. Additional funding is available for agencies to support rural and new providers. The funding components include a base rate of \$400 per provider to support service delivery under the standards and modifiers, which provide additional funding for onboarding new educators and those in rural areas. Agencies can charge optional fees capped at \$550 per active provider for services such as insurance,



bookkeeping, online apps, lending libraries, marketing, and advertising.

## One-time funding

### SPACE CREATION GRANT

Applications for the [Space Creation Grant](#) funding program closed on November 12, 2024, but applications received before this date continue to be processed as funding allows. The Space Creation Grant targets areas of high need and high demand for child care spaces. The funds are available to non-profit, for-profit, and public child care.

Eligible recipients may receive grant amounts of up to:

- \$6,000 per space for new licensed facilities located in communities where there is limited to no child care;
- \$5,500 per space for new licensed facilities in areas with high demand;
- \$5,000 per new space for existing licensed facilities in high-demand regions; and
- \$1,350 per space for new or existing Family Day Home agencies in areas of high need or high demand.

### BUILDING BLOCKS CAPITAL GRANT PROGRAM

The [Building Blocks Capital Grant Program](#) started after the Space Creation Grant Program ended in November 2024, with the first application intake closing on March 15, 2025. It provides capital funding to support the creation of new licensed child care spaces in Alberta. The program aims to improve access to child care, particularly in high-need, rural, and underserved communities, as well as for families facing barriers such as low income, non-standard work hours, or language access challenges. Eligible applicants include non-profit and public child care providers,

including municipalities, First Nations and Indigenous communities, and public institutions such as school divisions and post-secondary institutions. For-profit providers are not eligible.

The program consists of two funding streams, Major Capital Grant and Minor Capital Grant, which support new and existing facility-based child care programs.

The [Major Capital Grant](#) provides one-time capital funding to support the creation of new full-time licensed early learning and child care spaces in new and existing public or non-profit facility-based child care programs. Eligible projects may receive up to \$30,000 per child care space, with total capital costs of \$500,000 or more. Funding can be used for new facility construction, building expansion, major retrofitting, or acquiring and installing modular structures.

The [Minor Capital Grant](#) provides one-time funding to support the creation of new full-time licensed child care spaces in new and existing public or non-profit facility-based child care programs. Eligible projects may receive up to \$10,000 per child care space, with total capital costs under \$500,000. Funding can be used for interior and exterior renovations, upgrades, repairs, improvements, and refurbishment in a new or existing building with no building structure change.

## Fee subsidies

On April 1, 2025, Alberta ended the Child Care Subsidy program in Daycares, Family Day Homes, and preschools for children up to kindergarten-age requiring child care during regular school hours. Fee subsidies remain in place for school-age children and may be used in non-profit, public, and for-profit Out-Of-School centres and Family Day Homes. See Alberta's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

## Other ELCC funding

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

Professional development funding through the Alberta Child Care Grant is provided to licensed child care programs to help staff with costs of approved post-secondary tuition, approved conferences and workshops, and up to \$1,500 per year for post-secondary coursework and textbooks, with a maximum of \$2,000 per ECE per year. This funding supports paid ECEs or contracted Family Day Home educators in pursuing further training and professional development opportunities.

Professional development funding covers employees or contracted Family Day Home providers who:

- Provide direct child care, including program supervisors and alternate supervisors (as defined in the Early Learning and Child Care Regulation), as well as consultants/coordinators with a licensed Family Day Home agency;
- Are certified as early childhood educators Level 1, 2, or 3;
- Are Canadian citizens or permanent residents of Canada; and
- Have worked at least 29 hours in at least one month preceding the date of the expenditure or the date the application was received.

### RELEASE TIME FUNDING

Release time funding through the Alberta Child Care Grant compensates ECEs for studying, completing post-secondary coursework, and attending workshops approved for professional development funding. Release time funding is available regardless of when training occurs. The funding rates are \$800 per three-credit course for post-secondary coursework, with a limit of two

three-credit courses per year, and \$17.50 per hour for workshops and conferences, up to 45 hours per year.

Programs need to apply for release time funds and pay it to ECEs as taxable income. This funding is available to staff who:

- Are eligible for professional development funding;
- Are enrolled in/have paid for a post-secondary course, workshop, or conference that is approved for the professional development funding; and
- Have been approved for professional development funding by the Alberta Child Care Grant Funding Program, which includes the request to access the release time funding.

Each ECE is eligible for a combined total of up to \$4,387.50 in funding for professional development and release time per year.

### MANDATORY EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTION FUNDING

Mandatory employer contribution funding through the Alberta Child Care Grant assists child care programs with payroll expenditures related to wage top-up payments. This funding is paid at a rate of 9.51% of the wage top-up funding received by the program. The fund is to help offset related expenditures to the Canadian Pension Plan (CPP) contributions, Employment Insurance (EI), and Workers Compensation Board (WCB) premiums. Programs that receive wage top-up funding and make the required payroll contributions are eligible for this funding.

## **FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024)**

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

### **Operational funding**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Infant Care Incentive	\$14,457,740
Family Day Home agency funding	\$8,757,346
Affordability Grant	\$624,557,188
Wage top-ups	\$212,836,113
Inclusion	\$17,587,631
<b>Total operational funding</b>	<b>\$878,196,018</b>

*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, disability funding, and other grants/funding paid on a recurring basis.*

### **One-time funding – capital (major and minor)**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Capital Investment	\$11,086,267

### **One-time funding – other**

Space Creation Grant (Operating)	\$23,863,730
<b>Total one-time funding</b>	<b>\$34,949,997</b>

*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.*

### **Fee subsidies**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Daycare	\$153,494,793
Family Day Home	\$27,660,876
Out-Of-School Care	\$51,891,524
Extended hours	\$931,958
Preschool	\$5,153,015
<b>Total fee subsidies</b>	<b>\$239,132,165</b>

*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 directly to service providers.*

**TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, and fee subsidies)** **\$1,152,278,180**

### **Other ELCC funding**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Professional development funding	\$10,175,162
Release time funding	\$8,610,280
Mandatory employer contribution funding	\$17,452,371
Curriculum	\$1,518,650
<b>Total other ELCC funding</b>	<b>\$37,756,463</b>

### **Federal transfers to Alberta**

<b>Federal transfer</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$65,214,040
Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care	\$756,550,668
Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$8,615,673

*Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to Alberta for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements, as they are updated annually in line with population estimates. 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 (2025).



# British Columbia

Overview	304	<b>CHILD CARE FUNDING</b>	<b>328</b>
Provincial context	305	Eligibility for CWELCC funding	328
<b>KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA</b>	<b>308</b>	Child care services' eligibility for funding	328
Kindergarten for five-year-olds	308	Types of funding	328
Curriculum framework	308	Funding for regulated child care (fiscal year 2023 – 2024)	334
Enrolment	309		
Recent or anticipated developments	309		
Other early childhood programs	309		
<b>CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>310</b>		
Administration	310		
Curriculum framework	312		
Children with disabilities	312		
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care	313		
Parent fees	314		
Workforce	317		
Standards and regulations	320		
Of interest	322		
<b>CHILD CARE DATA</b>	<b>324</b>		
Regulated child care space statistics	324		
Regulated child care enrolment statistics	327		



# British Columbia

## ■ OVERVIEW

In British Columbia, the Ministry of Education and Child Care is responsible for regulated child care centres, preschools, family child care, kindergarten, and before- and after-school child care. The Ministry of Health is responsible for child care licensing.

Licensed child care includes full-day centres, part-day preschools, family child care, and before- and after-school programs.

Centre-based child care is provided by for-profit and non-profit operators, with some publicly operated spaces. A majority of full-day centre spaces are for-profit.

Family child care is individually licensed.

British Columbia offers full school-day kindergarten for all five-year-olds. Kindergarten is compulsory but may be deferred by one year, in which case grade placement is determined at the school level. There is no kindergarten for four-year-olds.

British Columbia has two programs that reduce child care fees: the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) and \$10 a Day ChildCareBC centres. Through the CCFRI, a majority of centres and family child care providers receive a set amount per month to reduce market fees, with the province limiting fee increases. \$10 a Day ChildCareBC service providers receive core funding to provide child care for children 0 – 12 years at a provincially set fee of \$10/day (\$200/month). The Affordable Child Care Benefit is an income-tested fee subsidy that further reduces fees for eligible families using licensed child care and some types of unlicensed child care.

British Columbia does not have a provincial child care wage grid but has committed to developing a wage grid for early childhood educators (ECEs). Since 2023, it has been carrying out a wage grid pilot project with 53 Operating Funding Model test sites. Beginning in January 2019 and retroactive to September 1, 2018, Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement provided certified ECEs working in eligible licensed child care up to \$6/hour of wage enhancement, to a maximum of 195 hours per month.

British Columbia signed the Canada-British Columbia Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELECC) Agreement in July 2021. It allocated \$3.21 billion over five years to the province.

In March 2025, British Columbia accepted the federal offer to extend its bilateral agreement until 2031.

### Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)

	2021	2025	Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025
Non-profit and public	20,567	27,050	+6,483
For-profit	38,023	54,580	+16,557
<b>Total full-day spaces</b>	<b>58,590</b>	<b>81,630</b>	<b>+23,040</b>
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	65%	67%	+2%
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit	-	-	72%

## ■ PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded; however, the totals are based on exact figures. Therefore, totals may not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

### Number of children 0 – 12 years (2024 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	39,600
1	37,700
2	42,000
3	43,500
4	48,100
5	48,000
6	48,500
7	55,800
8	51,500
9	55,200
10	51,400
11	50,400
12	53,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>625,500</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	119,300
3 – 5	139,600
6 – 12	366,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>625,500</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0	26,800
1	23,600
2	26,100
3	27,900
4	28,500
5	31,200
6	31,200
7	38,100
8	33,100
9	36,900
10	36,000
11	35,300
12	36,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>411,000</b>

---

**Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	76,500
3 – 5	87,600
6 – 12	247,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>411,000</b>

---

### 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	12,610	6,025	120	570	240
5 – 9	15,260	7,905	165	670	315
10 – 14	16,780	8,190	180	685	355
<b>Total</b>	<b>44,650</b>	<b>22,120</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>1,925</b>	<b>910</b>

### Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age of youngest child</i>	<i>Number of mothers</i>	<i>Participation rate (%)</i>
0 – 3	93,200	74.4
4 – 5	41,900	77.6
0 – 5	135,100	75.3
6 – 12	146,700	82.2

### Living arrangements by age of child (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Living with two parents</i>	<i>Living with one parent</i>			<i>Total</i>
		<i>Lone mother</i>	<i>Lone father</i>		
0 – 4	189,400	19,465	4,845		<b>24,310</b>
5 – 9	198,595	32,335	9,370		<b>41,710</b>
10 – 14	195,210	42,685	12,620		<b>55,305</b>

### Languages spoken most often at home (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Non-official</i>	<i>Multiple</i>
0 – 4	172,590	890	33,620	9,555
5 – 9	203,035	970	27,875	12,355
10 – 14	215,180	900	26,310	13,210
<b>Total</b>	<b>590,800</b>	<b>2,760</b>	<b>87,805</b>	<b>35,115</b>

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

<i>Two-parent families</i>	<i>Male lone parent</i>	<i>Female lone parent</i>
\$108,000	\$54,000	\$45,200

# KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA

## KINDERGARTEN FOR FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

### Provincial responsibility

Ministry of Education and Child Care

Phone: *Not available*

Email: [EDUC.EarlyLearning@gov.bc.ca](mailto:EDUC.EarlyLearning@gov.bc.ca)

Website: [gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/ministries/education](http://gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/ministries/education)

### Legislation

Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. [School Act](#) [R.S.B.C. 1996] Chapter 412.

Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. [School Act – School Regulation](#) [R.S.B.C. 1996] B.C. Reg. 265/89 O.C. 1281/89.

Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. [School Act – School Calendar Regulation](#) [R.S.B.C. 1996] Chapter 412.

Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. [Independent School Act](#) [R.S.B.C. 1996] Chapter 216.

### Provision

#### Kindergarten provision

<b>Definition</b>	Full school-day program for all five-year-old children.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Five years old by December 31.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Compulsory, but participation can be delayed by one year.
<b>Entitlement</b>	All eligible children have access.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Full school-day (minimum 853 hours per year).
<b>Class size</b>	Maximum 22 children.

### Teacher qualifications and certification

To be a qualified kindergarten teacher in British Columbia requires a Certificate of Qualification issued by the Teacher Regulation Branch of the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

Certification requires, at minimum, completion of four years (120 credits) of post-secondary studies, which must include a professional teacher education program that comprises a full year of full-time study. Kindergarten teachers are not required to have an early childhood qualification.

An Independent School Teaching Certificate is restricted to educators teaching in the British Columbia independent Montessori or Waldorf schools. Certification requires at least 120 credits of post-secondary studies and a teaching credential from an acceptable program that offers training within the Montessori or Waldorf philosophy or pedagogy.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The [British Columbia K – 12 Curriculum](#) (2017) is a mandatory curriculum framework for kindergarten programs in all publicly funded schools (public and independent) in British Columbia.

#### [British Columbia Early Learning Framework](#)

(2019) is a voluntary curriculum framework for kindergarten, licensed child care services, and other early childhood development or child health programs in British Columbia. The framework is mandatory only in StrongStart BC programs. It focuses on children from birth to age eight.

## ENROLMENT

### Kindergarten enrolment (2024 – 2025 school year)

	Full school-day	Part-day
<b>Enrolment in public schools</b>		
Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	38,462	3
<b>Enrolment in private/independent schools</b>		
Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	6,704	184
<b>Total kindergarten enrolment</b>	<b>45,353</b>	

## OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

### StrongStart BC

StrongStart BC is an early childhood play-based drop-in program for children 0 – 5 years under the Ministry of Education and Child Care. It operates in 323 sites within all 60 British Columbia school districts. Children must be accompanied by a parent or other caregiver. StrongStart is provided at no fee and is intended to support children’s transitions to kindergarten. StrongStart BC sites are staffed by certified ECEs and must use the *British Columbia Early Learning Framework* (2019).

## RECENT OR ANTICIPATED DEVELOPMENTS

### Seamless Day Kindergarten

In 2019, British Columbia introduced the Seamless Day Kindergarten pilot project. The programs are staffed by two ECEs who provide before- and after-school care in kindergarten classrooms and work alongside the classroom teacher during school hours. The pilot began with one school in 2019 and expanded to 23 public schools and two independent schools in the 2021 school year. The province provided \$3 million in 2022 – 2023 to add 20 classrooms, expanding the program to 45 classrooms. In 2024, \$4.1 million in funding was provided to support the pilot.

### Just B4

Just B4 is a part-day licensed preschool program for four-year-olds using existing StrongStart BC educators and classrooms. The Just B4 program was introduced in 2020 on a pilot basis in one school district and expanded to five additional districts in the 2021 school year. Budget 2022 committed to expanding these initiatives; in 2024 – 2025, 24 districts participated in the pilot.

# CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

## ■ ADMINISTRATION

### Provincial responsibility

Ministry of Education and Child Care  
Child Care Division  
Phone: 1-888-338-6622  
Email: [DM.Education@gov.bc.ca](mailto:DM.Education@gov.bc.ca)  
Website: [gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children](http://gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children)

Ministry of Health (responsible for licensing)  
Community Care Licensing  
Phone: *Not available* – contact regional health authorities  
Email: [hlth.ccf@gov.bc.ca](mailto:hlth.ccf@gov.bc.ca)  
Website: [gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/information-for-partners-providers](http://gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/information-for-partners-providers)

### Legislation

Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. [\*Early Learning and Child Care Act\*](#). SBC 2021, c. 22  
Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. [\*Early Learning and Child Care Regulation\*](#). BC Reg. 189/2024.  
Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. [\*Community Care and Assisted Living Act\*](#). SBC 2002, c. 75.  
Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. [\*Child Care Licensing Regulation\*](#). BC Reg. 332/2007.  
Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. [\*Early Childhood Educators Act\*](#). SBC 2021, c. 25 (not yet in force).

The *Early Learning and Child Care Act* replaced the *Child Care Subsidy Act* and the *Child Care BC Act*, effective September 1, 2024.

The *Early Childhood Educators Act* received royal assent in the British Columbia legislature in October 2021 and will be brought into force by regulation. It will replace relevant sections of the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* and Child Care Licensing Regulation that govern the work of the ECE Registry. The Ministry of Health will continue to license child care facilities.

### Service descriptions

#### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

There are no health, safety, or training requirements or provision for public oversight in unregulated child care. There may be attention by public officials on a complaint basis. See the [\*Child Care Licensing Regulation\*](#) for more information.

#### Licence-not-required child care

Licence-not-required family child care providers may care for up to two children of any age or a sibling group not related to them (by blood or marriage) in the provider's home.

#### Registered licence-not-required child care

Registered licence-not-required (RLNR) child care providers are not licensed or monitored by the government but are registered and monitored by the Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) centre in their community. The province retains the right to review, audit, or terminate an RLNR provider. An RLNR provider must be 19 years of age and have 20 hours of child care-related training, relevant work experience, and a valid first aid certificate. They may care for up to two children of any age or a sibling group not related to them (by blood or marriage) in the provider's home. New RLNR operators are no longer being registered, but current RLNR providers have access



to ongoing CCRR support, training, resources, and group liability insurance. CCRRs are focusing efforts on recruiting and continuing to support licensed child care providers who qualify for ChildCareBC funding.

### **In-child's-own-home care**

In-child's-own-home care is unlicensed care arranged by parents at home (a nanny or a babysitter). Children from other families cannot be included in this care. The provider cannot be a relative who lives in the home. Under this arrangement, the employer needs to make regular payments to Employment Insurance and the Canada Pension Plan and register the employment situation with Revenue Canada and WorkSafeBC.

## **REGULATED CHILD CARE**

### **\$10 a Day ChildCareBC**

British Columbia's \$10 a Day sites (ChildCareBC initiative) receive operational funding to limit parent fees to a maximum of \$10/day for full-day child care. These sites must meet specified conditions and must be non-profit/public, for-profit, or family child care. See the [Policies and Procedures Manual](#) for more information.

### **Child care centre**

Regulated child care centres for children not yet in kindergarten (termed Group Child Care) provide care for no more than 13 hours/day at a community-based facility or centre. Group Child Care has different categories: under three years old, 2.5 years old to school-age, and school-age. See the [Understand the Different Types of Child Care in B.C.](#) for more information.

### **Preschool**

Preschool is a part-day program (maximum four hours/day) for preschool-age children who are at least 30 months old and not yet in school. Preschool programs typically operate from September to June.

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

Regulated care for school-age children is grouped into three categories, each with different licensing criteria: school-age Group Child Care, school-age care on school grounds, and recreational care. All three provide child care outside school hours and during school vacations for children attending school, including kindergarten, for no more than 13 hours/day.

School-age Group Child Care provides before- and after-school care and care during school closures to children who attend school, including kindergarten. It can be provided within a single-family dwelling.

School-age care on school grounds is care provided in schools or on school grounds. It is a licensing category similar to the school-age Group Child Care category. Providers located on school grounds are exempt from meeting certain regulated health and safety requirements. Exemptions vary based on whether the program is delivered by a board of education or a third-party provider (including non-profit and for-profit organizations).

Recreational care is child care provided after school hours, during school closures, or on a drop-in basis to kindergarten-age and school-age children. It must be provided by a local government, an Indigenous governing body, or a non-profit organization. Programs providing recreational care are exempt from certain facility, outdoor space, and other requirements that pertain to Group Child Care settings. See ss. 14, 14.1, 16, 43, 44, 57(2.4) of the Child Care Licensing Regulation.

### **Family child care**

Family child care is located in a private home for no more than seven children ages 0 – 12 years, including the provider's own children under age 12. The provider must live in the location in which care is provided and personally provide care to the children.

## Multi-age child care

Multi-age child care is provided by an ECE in a centre for groups of up to eight children of various ages. There can be no more than three children under 36 months.

## In-home multi-age child care

In-home multi-age child care is provided by a certified educator to no more than eight children in the educator's personal residence. There can be no more than three children under 36 months.

## Occasional child care

Occasional child care is short-term care in a community-based facility or centre for children who are at least 18 months old. Care for a child cannot be overnight and cannot exceed eight hours/day and 40 hours within a 30-day period. If a child under three years old is present, the maximum group size is 16 children. If all children are at least three years old, the maximum group size is 20 children.

## Child-minding

Child-minding is care for a child younger than 13 years old whose parent is engaged in an English as a Second Language, settlement, or labour market integration program for immigrants. Parents must be present on the premises where the child is receiving care and be immediately accessible at all times to attend to the child's needs. Child-minding may not provide care for more than five hours per day to each child.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

### [British Columbia Early Learning Framework](#)

(2019) is a voluntary curriculum framework for kindergarten, licensed child care services, and other early childhood development or child health programs in British Columbia. It focuses on children from birth to age eight.

The framework is mandatory only in StrongStart BC programs.

## CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

### Terminology and approach

British Columbia uses the term "children with support needs" to refer to children who are experiencing, or have an increased likelihood of experiencing, developmental delay or disability and who require support to optimize their development, functional abilities, and quality of life. The British Columbia definition is broader than disability to include children with support needs who may not yet have a diagnosed disability or may never receive a diagnosis.

All types of licensed child care are eligible to receive inclusion services.

Special Needs Early Childhood Educator is a post-basic ECE program specific to working with children with support needs in British Columbia, but the designation is not required.

In June 2024, British Columbia released [Where All Children Belong: B.C. Inclusive Child Care Strategy](#). This strategy identifies goals and actions the province is taking as it makes progress toward inclusive child care as a core service.

### Programs supporting inclusion in ELCC

British Columbia funds Supported Child Development (SCD) and Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD) through contractual agreements with community agencies. These community-based programs offer a range of consulting and support services to children, families, and child care centres intended to assist the participation of children with support needs in fully inclusive child care settings. SCD and ASCD develop and monitor strategies for the inclusion of individual children and provide or fund additional



staffing as required. They may also support the child care program as a whole in building capacity for inclusion through training and mentorship opportunities. ASCD programs support unique Indigenous service needs and are responsive to local Indigenous culture and communities.

The province does not encourage or promote child care that solely serves children with disabilities, as this does not align with their definition of inclusive child care. The one exception is child care that is tailored to deaf and hard-of-hearing children and their siblings and focused on immersion in sign language.

### Access to inclusive ELCC

Child care providers in receipt of operating funding through ChildCareBC programs, including the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative and \$10 a Day ChildCareBC, are not required to accept children with disabilities.

A diagnosis is not required for a child to receive inclusion supports, but documentation is required to determine eligibility for services.

Newly constructed or renovated facilities must meet the standards of the BC Building Code, which provides a framework to identify, remove, and prevent barriers to accessibility. If a child with disabilities is attending a child care facility, the licensee must ensure that the physical structure is modified to meet the needs of the child.

Additionally, British Columbia's [Design Guidelines for Child Care Centres](#) supports improved accessibility and quality of child care centre buildings and infrastructure.

In British Columbia, there may be a delay in accessing inclusion supports due to budget constraints.

See [Inclusive Child Care Resources and Supports](#) for more information about inclusive child care.

## FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE

In British Columbia, 5.9% of the total population identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in the most recent census (2021). There are 1,583 reserves and 203 First Nations in the province. Approximately 60% of First Nations people in British Columbia do not live on reserve. British Columbia most often uses the term First Nations communities, which includes reserves.

### First Nations child care

Child care located in First Nations communities in British Columbia is not always provincially licensed. The province licenses child care located in First Nations communities upon invitation by the community.

The province's most recent available data reports that in 2024, more than 65 licensed centre-based child care programs identified as being physically located in First Nations communities. These facilities had more than 2,190 licensed spaces for children aged five and under, and more than 330 licensed spaces for school-age children.

The number of unlicensed child care facilities physically located in First Nations communities is not available.

Fewer than five licensed family child care providers identified as being physically located in a First Nations community in 2024.

Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (AHSOR) programs, which are under the aegis of the British Columbia First Nations Health Authority, may be licensed upon invitation by a First Nation. In 2025, 156 AHSOR programs were operating in the province. The provincial government reported that they supported 66 licensed AHSOR programs, with a total of 1,439 spaces.



## Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities

Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) programs are under the aegis of the First Nations Health Authority, Indigenous-led, and not physically located in an Indigenous community, such as a reserve. All AHSUNC programs are licensed by the province.

In 2025, a total of 43 AHSUNC programs operated in British Columbia. Of these, the provincial government reported that they supported 31 licensed AHSUNC programs, with a total of 853 spaces.

### Indigenous-specific resources/initiatives

The province works with the First Nations Leadership Council and Government of Canada under a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on early learning and child care (ELCC) for First Nations in British Columbia. This MOU is an important step on British Columbia's path to reconciliation, with the goals of supporting the self-determination of First Nations in British Columbia and advancing Declaration Act Action Item 4.19 to enhance First Nations' jurisdiction in ELCC.

Since 2018, British Columbia and the federal government have been collaborating to support expansion and transformation of Aboriginal Head Start (AHS) programs. Working with Indigenous groups in British Columbia, the government has provided additional financial support, including capital funding, to facilitate development of additional AHSOR and AHSUNC programs. These new AHS programs provide full-day ELCC programs and include infant, toddler, and multi-age care. Some AHSOR programs are supported by both the federal government and the provincial government. While approaches differ from community to community, all programs maintain a focus on cultural continuity, flexibility,

and community governance – ensuring that programming remains responsive to local priorities.

The Native Education College is a private institution with a recognized ECE program. The ECE Dual Credit, ECE Bursary, and Work Integrated Learning programs prioritize Indigenous students.

The province provides funding to the British Columbia Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS), the Métis Nation of British Columbia, and the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres to undertake engagement, planning, professional development training, and culturally focused resources.

## ■ PARENT FEES

British Columbia has two programs that reduce child care fees: the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) and \$10 a Day ChildCareBC centres.

The CCFRI provides operational funding to eligible service providers. Through the CCFRI, a majority of centres and family child care providers receive a set amount per month to reduce market fees. Reduced fees are based on the age of the child and type of care. Fees are not set by the province. Annual fee increases are at the discretion of the province and are limited to 3% of the regional median fee.

Since April 1, 2021, newly established child care facilities and those that have changed ownership or location and choose to participate in the CCFRI must charge fees at or below the affordability benchmark for fees in the region for the same type of care.

---

### Average monthly parent fees after CCFRI applied (2021 – 2024)

<i>Group Child Care</i>	<i>Average monthly fee (2021 – 2022)</i>	<i>Average monthly fee (2023 – 2024)</i>
<b><i>Full-day</i></b>		
Infant	\$1,060	\$652
Toddler	\$1,025	\$600
30 months – 5 years	\$875	\$510
<b><i>Part-day</i></b>		
Preschool (5 days/week)	\$450	\$450
Out-of-school (kindergarten-age)	\$400	\$230
Out-of-school (Grade 1 and older)	\$470	\$505
<b><i>Family child care</i></b>		
Infant	\$800	\$462
Toddler	\$800	\$448
3 – 5 years	\$840	\$450
Out-of-school (kindergarten)	\$490	\$300
Out-of-school (Grade 1 and older; school year)	\$500	\$550

---

\$10 a Day ChildCareBC service providers receive core funding to provide child care for children 0 – 12 years at a provincially set fee of \$10/day or \$200/month.

See British Columbia's "[Types of funding](#)" section for more information.

### Parent fee subsidies

The [Affordable Child Care Benefit](#) (ACCB) is an income-tested child care fee subsidy for parents with annual pre-tax household incomes of up to \$111,000. The ACCB is available for eligible families using licensed child care and some types of unlicensed child care (licence-not-

required or in-child's-own-home care). Parents using occasional child care, child-minding, and recreational care are not eligible for fee subsidies. The ACCB is paid to service providers (except in-child's-own-home care) on behalf of the parent to cover all or some of the parent fee. The amount of fee subsidy a family receives depends on family income and size, children's ages, and type of child care. Families are required to reapply for the benefit every year or more frequently if their circumstances change.

All eligible families are entitled by legislation to a fee subsidy; there is no subsidy waitlist.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Parents must meet one of the following reasons for requiring child care:

- Working or self-employed;
- Attending school;
- Participating in an employment program;
- Looking for work (only one parent or guardian);
- Living with a medical condition that interferes with their ability to care for their child;
- Child care arranged or recommended by a Ministry of Children and Family Development or Indigenous Child and Family Services Agency social worker;
- Child care arranged or recommended by a staff member authorized by an Indigenous authority to provide child and family services under Indigenous law; or
- Child attending a licensed preschool program.

## FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

Financial eligibility for the ACCB is based on the family's adjusted annual gross income, with deductions based on family size and whether the family includes children with disabilities.

### Income eligibility in licensed child care (2024)

	<i>Maximum income for full subsidy (ACCB)</i>	<i>Income at which partial subsidy (ACCB) ends</i>
<i><b>One parent, one child</b></i>	\$45,000	\$111,000
<i><b>Two parents, two children</b></i>	\$49,000	\$115,000

Families earning more than \$111,000 but who have considerable deductions for family size or children who have support needs may also be eligible.

Families may be exempt from income testing when a child is living with the applicant following

an agreement under the *Child, Family, and Community Service Act* or an Indigenous law.

## SUBSIDY RATES

The subsidy rate is the amount the government pays on behalf of an eligible parent to cover all or part of the parent fee. This may not cover the entire cost of child care.

### Maximum monthly subsidy rates in licensed child care (2024)

	<i>Centre-based care</i>	<i>Family child care/in-home multi-age care</i>
<i><b>Full-day programs</b></i>		
Infant (0 – 19 months)	\$1,250	\$1,000
Toddler (19 – 36 months)	\$1,060	\$1,000
37 months – school entry	\$550	\$550
School-age	\$415	\$415
<i><b>Part-day programs</b></i>		
Before- and after-school	\$210	\$210
Preschool-age (30 months – school entry)	\$225	<i>Not applicable</i>

*Note: These rates apply in all full- and part-day licensed child care programs, with the exception of occasional care, recreational care, and child-minding.*

British Columbia provides ACCB in licence-not-required or in-child's-own-home care (both unlicensed) for families with an adjusted annual income starting at \$24,000 (maximum subsidy), with partial subsidy ending at \$70,000. Families using registered licence-not-required child care are eligible for the maximum subsidy if their adjusted annual income is less than \$39,000. Eligibility ends at an income of \$85,000.

---

### Maximum monthly subsidy rates in unlicensed child care (2024)

	<i>Registered licence-not-required</i>	<i>Licence-not-required</i>	<i>In-child's-own-home care</i>
<b>Full-day programs</b>			
Infant (0 – 19 months)	\$600	\$438	\$394
Toddler (19 – 36 months)	\$600	\$404	\$318
37 months – school entry	\$550	\$354	\$318
<b>Part-day programs</b>			
School-age	\$210	\$210	\$210

See [Early Learning and Child Care Regulation](#) for more information.

The [Affordable Child Care Benefit Estimator](#) provides an estimate of the amount of fee subsidy available for both licensed and unlicensed child care.

### Additional fees

Since April 1, 2024, licensed child care operators receiving Child Care Operating Funding are not permitted to charge waitlist fees.

Service providers receiving CCFRI funds are permitted to charge optional fees for food, transportation, extended hours, and field trips. Additional fees are not permitted for hours of service that could reasonably be expected to be included in the base parent fee. The Ministry has sole discretion to determine if a fee is permitted.

\$10 a Day ChildCareBC providers with funding agreements under the Eligible Expenses model can charge optional fees for food, transportation, extended hours, and field trips if the fees were charged before they joined the \$10 a Day ChildCareBC program; they cannot introduce new optional fees.

\$10 a Day ChildCareBC sites participating in the Operating Funding Model test sites are not permitted to charge additional fees.

## ■ WORKFORCE

### Child care staff wages

#### PROVINCIAL WAGE DATA

---

### Median hourly wages before ECE wage enhancement (2020 – 2025)

	<i>2020 – 2021</i>	<i>2021 – 2022</i>	<i>2022 – 2023</i>	<i>2023 – 2024</i>	<i>2024 – 2025</i>
<i>ECE or ECE+</i>	\$21	\$21	\$22	\$23	\$24
<i>Non-ECE staff</i>	\$18	\$19	\$19	\$20	\$21
<i>All child care staff</i>	\$20	\$20	\$21	\$22	\$23

*Note: ECE+ staff includes basic ECE certification, and/or Infant/Toddler certification, and/or Special Needs certification. Non-ECE staff includes ECE assistants.*

---

## WAGE ENHANCEMENT

[Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement](#) (ECE-WE) for centres and family child care began in January 2019, retroactive to September 1, 2018, as part of British Columbia's Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy. ECE-WE is available to all certified ECEs (including owner/operators) directly employed by and working in eligible licensed child care facilities. For a licensed child care facility to be eligible, it must be enrolled in Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) and the CCFRI, or operate as a \$10 a Day ChildCareBC centre. Licensed child care facilities that do not charge parent fees may be eligible for ECE-WE despite not participating in the CCFRI. For a staff person to be eligible, they must hold a valid ECE certificate (Childhood Educator, Infant and Toddler Educator, and/or Special Needs Educator) issued by the ECE Registry that has not been suspended, cancelled, or expired. An ECE working as a Supported Child Development or Aboriginal Supported Child Development worker who is directly employed by a licensed child care facility is also eligible for the ECE-WE. ECE-WE was initially set at \$1/hour for a maximum of 195 hours per month. It increased to \$2/hour in April 2020, \$4/hour effective September 2021, and up to \$6/hour effective December 2023 for ECEs working for non-public sector employers. Unionized ECEs working for public sector employers remained eligible for a \$4/hour wage enhancement. Additional funding for statutory benefits is also provided. Since January 2022, the rate for statutory benefits is 19.25%.

## PROVINCIAL WAGE GRID

British Columbia does not have a provincial child care wage grid but has committed to developing a wage grid for ECEs. Since 2023, the province has been carrying out a wage grid pilot project with

53 Operating Funding Model test sites. The test establishes a minimum wage that must be paid for each specified role providing direct care to children, along with a corresponding funding level that exceeds the minimum hourly wage. Funding is provided based on the required role(s) for each care type, not the certificate level held by the employee. See the [Phase 2 Manual](#) for more information.

## Staff benefits

British Columbia does not provide or fund any province-wide benefits to the child care workforce. The province is testing a compensation package for direct child care staff. It includes benefits and paid time off for vacation, illness, and attendance at professional development activities.

## Early childhood certification

In British Columbia, ECEs and ECE assistants caring for children younger than school-age in licensed programs are required to be certified by the ECE Registry.

Child care providers in family child care or school-age child care programs are not required to be certified; however, they must meet the requirements to be a "responsible adult" (s. 29 of the Community Care and Licensing Regulation) and be monitored by Community Care Facility Licensing Officers. A responsible adult is someone who is at least 19 years old; has completed a 20-hour training course in health, safety, and child development; and can provide care and guidance to children.

The ECE Registry is the regulatory body mandated under the [Community Care and Assisted Living Act](#) and the [Child Care Licensing Regulation \(CCLR\)](#); these outline the legislative requirements for ECEs and ECE assistants.

## ECE CERTIFICATION LEVELS

ECE certification has five categories, each with minimum and renewal requirements.

Professional development is required for those holding an ECE Five Year Certificate, Infant and Toddler Educator Certificate, and/or Special Needs Educator Certificate. These ECEs are required to complete at least 40 hours of professional development relevant to early childhood education within the past five years to [renew certification](#).

Individuals with an ECE Assistant Certificate are required to complete one additional course of a basic early childhood education training program within the last five years.

ECE Five Year Certificates, Infant and Toddler Educator Certificates, Special Needs Educator Certificates, and ECE Assistant Certificates expire on the fifth anniversary of their date of issue.

### ECE certification levels with minimum requirements and renewal

<i><b>Certificate level</b></i>	<i><b>Minimum requirement</b></i>	<i><b>Renewal</b></i>
ECE Assistant	One of three courses (as per s. 27 of the CCLR) of a “basic” early childhood education training program from a recognized post-secondary institution.	Must be renewed every five years by completing one additional ECE course and 400 hours of work experience.
ECE One Year	The “basic” early childhood education program (minimum 902 hours, or approximately one year) from an approved post-secondary institution. Valid for one year.	May be renewed once if completion of 500 hours of work experience was unable to be completed within the one-year time frame.
ECE Five Year	The “basic” early childhood education training program (minimum 902 hours) and demonstration of competence through either (i) 500 hours of work experience under the supervision of a Canadian-certified ECE or (ii) completion of sufficient child care experience, both of which must have been completed within the last five years.	Must be renewed every five years by completing 40 hours of professional development and 400 hours of work experience.
Infant and Toddler Educator	An educator holds or qualifies to hold an ECE Five Year Certificate, in addition to a specialized post-basic program (minimum 250 hours) and a 200-hour infant/toddler practicum.	Must be renewed every five years by completing 40 hours of professional development and 400 hours of work experience.
Special Needs ECE	An educator holds or qualifies to hold an ECE Five Year Certificate, in addition to a specialized post-basic program (minimum 250 hours) and a 200-hour special needs practicum.	Must be renewed every five years by completing 40 hours of professional development and 400 hours of work experience.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

Family child care providers are not required to be certified as educators but must meet the requirements to be a responsible adult. Responsible adults must be at least 19 years old; have completed a course or a combination of courses of at least 20 hours in child development, guidance, health and

safety, or nutrition; have relevant work experience; and be able to provide care and mature guidance to children.

An in-home multi-age child care provider must hold a valid ECE certification.

A family child care provider must have completed a course or combination of courses of at least 20 hours

in child development, guidance, health and safety, or nutrition and have relevant work experience.

Family child care providers are not required to undertake professional development unless they are a certified ECE, in which case they require 40 hours of professional development over the course of their five-year certificate term.

## STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Child care centres and family child care homes must adhere to standards and regulations regarding staffing requirements, grouping of children, and licensing. Some additional key elements of child care standards and regulations, such as physical environments and food provision, are covered in the comparative tables in this

publication, while others may be found in the [Community Care and Assisted Living Act](#) and [Child Care Licensing Regulations](#).

### Regulated child care centres

Child care centres are licensed under the [Community Care and Assisted Living Act](#) and [Child Care Licensing Regulations](#). The Act was most recently amended in 2022, and the regulations in 2023. Sections of the Act and regulations will be replaced by the *Early Childhood Educators Act* (which received royal assent in October 2021) when it comes into effect.

### STAFF:CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZE

British Columbia does not specify a maximum number of children permitted in a child care centre.

#### Staff:child ratio and maximum group size

Program type	Age group	Staff:child ratio	Maximum group size
Group care	Infant/toddler (<36 months)	1:4	12
	Preschool-age (30 months – school-age)	1:8	25
	School-age (if any preschool-age or Grade 1-age child is present)	1:12	24
	School-age (if no preschool-age or Grade 1-age child is present)	1:15	30
Multi-age care	Children 0 – 12 years	1:8	8
Preschool	Preschool-age (30 months – school-age)	1:10	20
School-age care on school grounds	Kindergarten and Grade 1	1:12	24
	Grade 2 and older	1:15	30 <sup>1</sup>
Recreational care	Kindergarten and Grade 1	1:12	No maximum <sup>2</sup>
	Grade 2 and older	1:15	
Occasional care (18 months and up)	If children under 36 months are present	1:4	20
	If no children under 36 months are present	1:8	24
Child-minding <sup>3</sup>	-	1:8	24

<sup>1</sup> Maximum of 30 only applies if no children in kindergarten or Grade 1 are present.

<sup>2</sup> No maximum, but usable floor area of the space must be deemed sufficient by a local medical health officer to ensure the health and safety of children participating in the activity.

<sup>3</sup> In child-minding, each child younger than 12 months is counted as 2.5 children, each child 12 – <36 months is counted as two children, and each child 36 months or older is counted as one child.

## Minimum staff certification requirements by age group (2024)

<i>Program type/age group</i>	<i>Number of children</i>	<i>Required certified staff</i>
Group care (under 36 months)	1 – 4	1 infant-toddler educator
	5 – 8	1 infant-toddler educator and 1 ECE
	9 – 12	1 infant-toddler educator, 1 ECE and 1 ECE assistant
Group care (30 months – school age)	1 – 8	1 ECE
	9 – 16	1 ECE and 1 ECE assistant
	17 – 25	1 ECE and 2 ECE assistants
Multi-age (0 – 12 years)	1 – 8	1 ECE
Preschool-age (30 months – school-age)	1 – 10	1 ECE
	11 – 20	1 ECE and 1 ECE assistant

## STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRES

### Qualification requirements for staffing a centre

In British Columbia, staff qualification requirements are specified at a group level by number and age of children.

In child care for school-age children in kindergarten and older, occasional care, and child-minding, staff do not need to be certified ECEs but must be deemed responsible adults. Responsible adults must be at least 19 years old; have completed a course or a combination of courses of at least 20 hours in child development, guidance, health and safety, or nutrition; have relevant work experience; and be able to provide care and mature guidance to children.

### Qualification requirements for on-site centre directors/supervisors

A designated supervisor or director position is not required in child care centres.

### Other requirements

There is no minimum age requirement for centre staff who are ECEs. Staff who are not ECEs must be at least 19 years old.

Children must always have immediate access to an employee who holds a valid first aid and CPR certificate.

All staff and volunteers must provide a criminal record check, up-to-date immunization records, and a tuberculosis test.

## LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES

Community Care Licensing Programs (which include child care) are administered by local health authorities through medical health officers. Health authorities process applications and issue the licence to operate a child care facility.

Five local health authorities are responsible for licensing: Fraser Health Authority, Interior Health Authority, Island Health Authority, Northern Health Authority, and Vancouver Coastal Health Authority.

Child care centre licences do not have a defined period of validity and do not need to be renewed, but they cannot be transferred from one person or facility to another. Centres are typically inspected every 12 to 18 months, unless more frequent inspections are required.

## Regulated family child care

In British Columbia, family child care is regulated under the [Community Care and Assisted Living Act](#) and [Child Care Licensing Regulations](#).

Family child care must be provided in the provider's personal residence.

### MODEL OF ORGANIZATION

Family child care in British Columbia is individually licensed.

### MAXIMUM CAPACITY

A family child care provider may care for no more than seven children, including the provider's own children.

If any child younger than 12 months is present, there must be no more than three children younger than 48 months. Of those three, there may be no more than one child younger than 12 months.

If no child younger than 12 months is present, there must be no more than four children younger than 48 months. Of those four, there may be no more than two children younger than 24 months.

An in-home multi-age child care provider may care for up to eight children, including the provider's own children. No more than three of those children may be younger than 36 months. No more than one child may be younger than 12 months.

### FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

A family child care provider does not need to be a certified ECE unless they operate an in-home multi-age child care facility, in which case they must hold at least a provincially issued one-year ECE certificate.

A family child care provider must be at least 19 years of age; have completed a course or a combination of courses of at least 20 hours in

child development, guidance, health and safety, or nutrition; and have relevant work experience.

The provider must also have first aid and CPR certificates, up-to-date immunizations, and tuberculosis screening.

A criminal records check must be completed for the provider and any person over the age of 12 who will ordinarily be present in the home.

### LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

Family child care licenses do not have a defined period of validity and do not need to be renewed, but they cannot be transferred from one person or facility to another. Family child care homes are typically inspected every 12 to 18 months, unless more frequent inspections are required.

## ■ OF INTEREST

### Municipal role

British Columbia does not have a mandated role for municipalities in child care, but the City of Vancouver has played a significant voluntary role in the planning and funding of child care since the 1990s. There are 17 municipalities in the Metro Vancouver area, and a number of them play similar roles in supporting child care through zoning, demand measurement, and rental provisions, although some are less involved.

In addition to Vancouver's long-time municipal role, in 2018, the provincial government provided \$21 million to the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) to support municipalities to take on a role in child care planning as part of the provincial child care expansion plan. This funding supported municipalities with up to \$25,000 to create a Child Care Community Needs Assessment through UBCM's Community Child Care Planning program and supported the creation of almost 700



child care spaces through UBCM's Community Child Care Space Creation program.

### **Family resource centres**

[Family Resource Programs](#) are parent/child centres for families or caregivers accompanying children. These programs are operated by non-profit organizations and funded through the Ministry for Children and Family Development. There are more than [275 family resource programs](#) in British Columbia. The programs are intended to provide services that strengthen parenting skills, provide stimulating environments for children, and promote family and community engagement.

## CHILD CARE DATA

### ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

#### Number of spaces (2024, 2025)

	2024	2025
<b>Full-day centre spaces</b>		
Infant/toddler (<36 months)	20,406	23,395
Preschool-age (30 months – 5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	48,301	54,045
<b>Total full-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>68,707</b>	<b>77,440</b>
<b>Part-day centre spaces</b>		
Preschool-age (30 months – 5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	17,325	16,252
<b>Other centre spaces</b>		
Multi-age (18 months – 5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	4,105	4,189
Occasional care (18 months – 5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	<i>Not available</i>	<i>Not available</i>
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>90,137</b>	<b>97,881</b>
<b>Before- and after-school care centre spaces (licensed or regulated)</b>		
Kindergarten-age	10,946	11,674
Grades 1 – 6	34,491	37,776
<i>Note: The split between kindergarten and Grades 1 – 6 spaces is an estimate based on Child Care Operating Fund enrolment figures.</i>		
<b>Total before- and after-school care centre spaces</b>	<b>45,437</b>	<b>49,450</b>
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>135,574</b>	<b>147,331</b>
<b>Family child care licensed capacity</b>		
Full-day (children not yet in kindergarten or school)	11,387	11,965
Part-day (children attending kindergarten or school)	1,240	1,305
<b>Total family child care spaces</b>	<b>12,627</b>	<b>13,270</b>
<i>Note: In 2024, British Columbia changed the way full- and part-day spaces in family child care are calculated. The breakdown of full- and part-day family child care spaces is different from that reported in the 2024 Interim Space Statistics report. The total number of family child care spaces remains the same.</i>		
<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)</b>	<b>148,201</b>	<b>160,601</b>

## Number of child care centres and family child care homes (2024)

### Centre-based child care

<i>Total number of centres</i>	3,727
<i>Total number of licences</i>	5,652

### Centre-based programs

Centres providing a full-day program	2,471
Centres providing a part-day (nursery or preschool) program	865
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 5 – 12 years)	1,434
Centres providing infant and toddler care	1,168
Centres providing preschool-age care	1,776
Centres providing a Francophone child care program	22
Centres providing non-standard hours care (as defined by the province)	399
Centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – Grade 12)	761

### Regulated family child care

Individually licensed family child care homes (active)	1,725
--	-------

### Participation in CWELCC

Centres providing a full-day program	2,163
Centres providing a part-day (nursery or preschool) program	766
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 5 – 12 years)	1,273

<i>Total number of child care centres receiving CWELCC funding</i>	3,301
--	-------

<i>Total number of licensed family child care homes receiving CWELCC funding</i>	1,657
--	-------

## Auspice (2024)

### Centres by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit	2,142
Non-profit and public	1,585

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>Part-day</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	48,655	7,361	16,839	72,855
Non-profit and public	24,157	9,964	28,598	62,719

<sup>1</sup> Includes 4,105 multi-age centre spaces.

<sup>2</sup> Nursery school/preschool.

<sup>3</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

## Auspice (2025)

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>Part-day</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>3</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	54,580	6,678	17,562	78,820
Non-profit and public	27,050	9,574	31,888	68,513

<sup>1</sup> Includes 4,189 multi-age centre spaces.

<sup>2</sup> Nursery school/preschool.

<sup>3</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

## Fee subsidies (2024)

### Number of children receiving fee subsidies

Affordable Child Care Benefit	36,209
-------------------------------	--------

## Disability support (2024)

### Number of children receiving disability support

Children in licensed child care receiving disability support funding	2,578
--	-------



## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

### Number of children enrolled (2024)

---

#### Full-day centre enrolment

Infant/toddler (<36 months)	26,057
Preschool-age (36 months – 5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	48,937
<b>Total full-day centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>74,994</b>

#### Part-day centre enrolment

Preschool-age (30 months – 5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	21,630
--	--------

#### Other

Multi-age (18 months – 5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	337
--	-----

*Note: Due to data limitations, only \$10 a Day ChildCareBC sites are included in the multi-age enrolment figures.*

<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>96,962</b>
--	---------------

#### Before- and after-school care enrolment (licensed or regulated)

Kindergarten-age	10,083
Grades 1 – 6	31,772
Kindergarten-age and Grades 1 – 6 enrolled at \$10 a Day ChildCareBC sites	3,179
<b>Total before- and after-school care enrolment</b>	<b>45,034</b>

<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>141,996</b>
---	----------------

#### Family child care enrolment

Full-day (not attending kindergarten or school)	12,180
Part-day (attending kindergarten or school)	1,326
\$10 a Day ChildCareBC sites (children 0 – 12 years)	35
<b>Total family child care enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>13,541</b>

<b>TOTAL REGULATED ENROLMENT (centre and family child care enrolment)</b>	<b>155,537</b>
---	----------------

## CHILD CARE FUNDING

The types of funding available for child care services in British Columbia include operational funding, one-time funding, fee subsidies, and other ELCC funding programs. See [ChildCareBC programs](#) for more information.

### ■ ELIGIBILITY FOR CWELCC FUNDING

The CWELCC plan provides federal funds to provinces and territories for early learning and child care operational and one-time funding and fee subsidies for licensed child care for children aged 0 – 5. Funded new child care expansion is to be public and non-profit unless otherwise specified in the jurisdiction's agreement. Provinces and territories contribute their own funds and design their own policies and provision within this framework.

In British Columbia, the following are eligible for operational funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools);
- Licensed before- and after-school centres that enrol children under age six; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New and expanded for-profit centres are eligible for operational funding.

In British Columbia, the following are eligible for capital funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools); and
- Licensed before- and after-school centres that enrol children under age six.

New or expanded for-profit centres are not eligible for capital funding.

### ■ CHILD CARE SERVICES' ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

The majority of licensed care types are eligible for most types of funding, and unlicensed child care may be eligible for fee subsidies. The level of funding may vary based on the program eligibility criteria.

Occasional child care services, child-minding, and recreational care are not eligible for any funding.

### ■ TYPES OF FUNDING

#### **Operational funding**

#### **\$10 A DAY CHILDCAREBC**

Beginning in November 2018, British Columbia introduced the [\\$10 a Day ChildCareBC](#) initiative (previously called the Prototype Sites Initiative) using federal funding. This initiative provides operational funding to selected sites that agree to limit parent fees to a maximum of \$10/day (\$200/month) for full-day child care. \$10 a Day sites must meet specified conditions to receive individualized monthly payments based on an expectation of 80% enrolment. \$10 a Day sites must be non-profit/public, for-profit, or family child care. As of March 31, 2024, there were more than 13,480 \$10 a Day spaces (monthly average), accounting for 9% of all child care spaces. Of these, more than 10,870 were for children ages five and under, and over 2,600 were for children 6 – 12 years. As of the 2024 – 2025 intake, there were approximately 16,000 \$10 a Day spaces across the province. Priority is given to larger non-profit, publicly delivered, or Indigenous-led providers that primarily offer care

to children up to age five in communities with low or no \$10/day spaces.

### CHILD CARE OPERATING FUNDING

Child Care Operating Funding (CCOF) base funding supports eligible licensed centres and family child care to cover a portion of the day-to-day costs of operating a licensed child care facility. Daily rates are based on enrolment, the number of hours per day that care is provided, age group, and type of child care. A service provider's participation in the program is optional, but most service providers (more than 90%) apply for and receive CCOF. Participating in CCOF base funding is required for a service provider to participate in the Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) and the Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement and to become a \$10 a Day ChildCareBC centre. CCOF is not available for occasional care, recreational child care, or child-minding. Non-profit, public, and for-profit centres are all eligible for CCOF.

#### CCOF daily rates for centres per child by hours of attendance (2025)

Age group	4 hours or less	More than 4 hours
0 – 36 months	\$6.00	\$12.00
3 years – kindergarten-age	\$2.74	\$5.48
Grade 1 – 12 years	\$1.40	\$2.80
Part-day preschool	\$1.37	Not applicable

#### CCOF daily rates for family child care per child by hours of attendance (2025)

Age group	4 hours or less	More than 4 hours
0 – 36 months	\$1.85	\$3.70
3 years – kindergarten-age	\$1.41	\$2.82
Grade 1 – 12 years	\$0.73	\$1.46

### CHILD CARE FEE REDUCTION INITIATIVE

The Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative (CCFRI) improves child care affordability for families by offering funding to eligible, licensed child care providers to reduce and stabilize monthly child care fees. A fee increase of 3% is permitted. Providers opt in to receive CCFRI funding when they apply for CCOF. Child care providers must be caring for children aged 12 and under and receiving CCOF base funding. They must apply for the CCFRI annually.

To receive CCFRI, providers must be providing care for:

- Infant/toddler (under 36 months; group and family child care);
- Three-year-olds to kindergarten-age (group and family child care);
- Preschool-age children; or
- Children in Grade 1 to age 12.

Non-profit, public, and for-profit centres and family child care providers are all eligible for CCFRI funding. Until September 2023, CCFRI was not available for child care for school-age children (ages 6 – 12) and preschools. It was then expanded to include them.

Under CCFRI, approved service providers received the following amounts per enrolled child for full-time child care to reduce parent fees.

---

**Monthly fee reductions for full-time enrolment under CCFRI (2018 – 2024)**

<b>Group care</b>	<b>2018 – November 2022</b>	<b>After December 2022</b>	<b>2024</b>
Infant/toddler care	\$350	\$900	\$900
3 – 5 years (not in school)	\$100	\$545	\$545
Kindergarten (before- and after-school)	\$60	\$320	\$320
Grade 1 – 12 years	-	-	\$110
Preschool-age	-	-	\$95
<b>Family and in-home child care</b>			
0 – 36 months	\$200	\$600	\$600
3 – 5 years (not in school)	\$60	\$500	\$500
Grade 1 – 12 years	-	-	\$145

*Note: Service providers receive prorated amounts for children enrolled part-time.*

---

Child care providers participating in the CCFRI receive provider payments to help cover operational costs associated with running a child care centre, including staff wages and administration. This funding is in addition to base funding, fee reductions for families, and the Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement.

### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR WAGE ENHANCEMENT**

Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement for centres and family child care began in January 2019, retroactive to September 1, 2018, as part of British Columbia’s Early Care and Learning Recruitment and Retention Strategy. See British Columbia’s “[Workforce](#)” section for more information.

### **SUPPORTED CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND ABORIGINAL SUPPORTED CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

Supported Child Development (SCD) and Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD) programs provide supports from birth to 12 years

of age to children with a developmental delay or disability who require additional support to attend a licensed child care setting. This funding is intended to increase the number of children and families who have access to SCD/ASCD supports and, where needed, increase the level of service for children already on caseload. It also enables SCD and ASCD programs to increase emphasis on capacity building within child care settings through training and mentorship.

### **FULL-DAY ABORIGINAL HEAD START**

Through provincial bilateral ELCC and CWELCC investments, British Columbia allocated an additional \$73 million in 2024 – 2025 to expand licensed full-day Aboriginal Head Start child care to 2,150 licensed ELCC spaces in more than 30 communities through partnerships with the First Nations Health Authority and the Aboriginal Head Start Association of British Columbia. These funds are for both Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve and Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities. The programs provide culturally based, inclusive child care and early learning, as

well as family bonding and prevention services. Services are available to families at no fee.

## One-time funding

### CHILDCAREBC NEW SPACES FUND

The [ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund](#) provides funding to create new licensed child care. This funding was originally available to public sector organizations, Indigenous governments, not-for-profit organizations (societies), Indigenous not-for-profit organizations (societies), and for-profit operations. Beginning in the 2021 – 2022 fiscal year, for-profits were no longer eligible. As of 2024 – 2025, applicants to the New Spaces Fund have access to two funding streams: the Major Capital Grant and Minor Capital Grant.

The Major Capital Grant supports major projects, including ground-up builds, modular builds, and major renovations, including expansions and additions, requesting more than \$500,000. Applicants to the Major Capital Grant must own

the land on which the proposed child care centre will be built. Indigenous governing entities are exempt from this requirement.

The Minor Capital Grant supports minor capital projects, including renovations and equipment-only projects, anticipated to be completed within one year and requesting up to \$500,000. Applicants to the Minor Capital Grant can own or lease the land on which the projects are being completed.

The following applicants are eligible for the ChildcareBC New Spaces Fund 2024 – 2025:

- Indigenous governing entities;
- Local governments;
- Public bodies including health authorities, boards of education, public post-secondary institutions, and Crown corporations;
- Not-for-profits and Indigenous not-for-profits;
- First Nations schools; and
- Other eligible independent schools.

### Required organization contribution, financial commitments, and provincial contributions

<i>Applicant type</i>	<i>Required organization contribution as a percentage of project costs</i>	<i>Organization's financial commitment to the project as a percentage of ineligible costs</i>	<i>Provincial contribution as a percentage of eligible costs</i>
Indigenous governing entities, local governments, public bodies, First Nations schools, and Indigenous not-for-profits	0%	100%	100%
Not-for-profits and other eligible independent schools	10%	100%	90%



Funding guidelines are updated each year to align with current priorities. Priorities for the ChildcareBC New Spaces Fund 2024 – 2025 are infant/toddler spaces, school-age spaces, and child care spaces in underserved regions.

The areas of focus for the ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund 2024 – 2025 are:

- Fully inclusive and accessible child care spaces that allow children of all abilities to participate meaningfully (accessible physical design and application of program inclusion policy);
- Spaces with non-standard hours of care (extended hours of care from 6:00 am and after 7:00 pm, weekend care, care provided on statutory holidays, and/or care provided on days of school closures); and
- Spaces offering specialized programming for children with support needs, Indigenous children and families, Francophone children, and/or young parents.

Priority populations for the ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund 2024 – 2025 are:

- Low-income families;
- Children with support needs;
- Indigenous children and families;
- Black and other children and families of colour;
- Francophone children;
- Families new to Canada; and
- Young parents (25 years and under).

An additional priority for 2024 – 2025 under the Major Capital Grants funding stream is projects that commence within six months of application and are scheduled to be completed prior to March 31, 2028.

## CHILD CARE BC MAINTENANCE FUND

The fund is available to assist licensed providers in emergency circumstances, defined as sudden and unexpected conditions that directly impact children's health and safety or may result in immediate facility closure. The emergency funding helps address the immediate, necessary repairs or the replacement of eligible items unrelated to routine or regular service. For emergency repairs and replacements, eligible applicants may receive up to \$10,000/year depending on licence type to cover the costs of necessary repairs or maintenance. Relocation support is not available to licensed personal residence providers, regardless of licence type and circumstance.

For the required relocation of a licensed facility, each fiscal year eligible applicants may receive, per physical location:

- Up to \$50,000 for not-for-profit licensed Group Child Care, multi-age child care, school-age care on school grounds, and preschool providers; or
- Up to \$25,000 for for-profit licensed Group Child Care, multi-age child care, school-age care on school grounds, and preschool providers.

## START-UP GRANTS

The Start-up Grants program is designed to increase the number of licensed child care spaces available to families by supporting individuals who want to operate a licensed child care facility in their personal residence. The grant assists with the costs associated with obtaining a group care, family, and in-home multi-age licence type under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* and Child Care Licensing Regulation. The grant offers \$500 to cover costs associated with becoming licensed. An additional \$500 per space is available once a valid licence under the *Community Care and Assisted Living Act* has been issued and the organization is actively participating in CCOF and,



where eligible, the CCFRI. Child care providers who receive funding through Start-up Grants must provide proof of a valid licence within one year of funding approval, enrol in the CCOF and, where eligible, the CCFRI, and remain operational and enrolled for three consecutive years.

### **FIRST NATIONS GRANTS**

In 2023, a one-time [First Nations Early Learning and Child Care Grant](#) was available to all First Nations in British Columbia through the Ministry of Education and Child Care.

### **Fee subsidies**

#### **AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE BENEFIT**

The Affordable Child Care Benefit is an income-tested fee subsidy that reduces fees for eligible families using licensed child care and some types of unlicensed child care. See British Columbia's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

### **Other ELCC funding**

#### **CHILD CARE RESOURCE AND REFERRAL**

Child Care Resource and Referral programs enhance the availability and accessibility of a range of child care options and services and build relationships within the child care sector to support the advancement of the ChildCareBC Plan.

#### **ECE EDUCATION SUPPORT FUND**

Since September 2018, in partnership with the Early Childhood Educators of BC (ECEBC), the province has expanded and enhanced the ECE Bursary Program for students enrolled in early childhood education programs at recognized post-secondary institutions in British Columbia. In 2024, \$45 million was awarded to ECEBC to continue to administer the ECE Education Support Fund for 2024 – 2025 through to March 31, 2027.

The [ECE Education Support Fund](#) consists of two streams:

- The Early Childhood Student Bursary, which assists students studying in an ECE program at a recognized post-secondary institution. Up to \$500 per course to a maximum of eight courses per semester (maximum of \$4,000 per semester) is available to assist with tuition, books, and materials; and
- The ECE Workforce Development Bursary Fund is available to ECEs, ECE assistants, responsible adults (as defined in the Child Care Licensing Regulation), and StrongStart BC Facilitators who are currently working in the ECE field to upgrade their credentials. Up to \$5,000 per semester is available to assist with tuition and other expenses, such as lost wages or travel.

#### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDING**

In 2023 – 2024, the Ministry of Education and Child Care allocated \$7.017 million to support a variety of professional development initiatives. This included the delivery of several programs over three years to support peer mentoring for ECEs; an administration and management in child care course; a program to enhance children's experiences outdoors, including Indigenous ways of knowing; the delivery of professional development bursaries to reduce the cost for ECEs; the delivery of an online professional development hub; and the Let's Talk About Touching personal safety curriculum.

#### **EARLY CHILDHOOD PEDAGOGY NETWORK**

The Early Childhood Pedagogy Project (ECPP) provides a pedagogical support program for ECEs and other members of the child care workforce and licensed child care programs in British Columbia. In 2024, the ECPP was administered by the Early

Childhood Pedagogy Network. The ECPP supports the maintenance of a provincial network of pedagogists who provide direct support to licensed child care programs; mentoring, capacity building, and pedagogical resources to Child Care Resource and Referral centres, as requested; and a variety of professional development opportunities.

### ELCC DISTRICT LEAD

Beginning in the 2022 – 2023 school year, 56 out of 60 school districts accepted capacity-building funding to promote and expand ELCC programs, including 0 – 5 and school-age child care on school grounds. From 2023 – 2024 through 2025 – 2026, district ELCC funding is supporting 59 out of 60 school districts in implementing, promoting, and expanding ELCC initiatives. Districts are also exploring opportunities to create new child care spaces on school grounds and applying for the ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund, where appropriate.

### INDIGENOUS PEDAGOGY

The Ministry provides \$123,000 annually to Métis Nation BC to deliver Métis pedagogy services to child care centres throughout the province. This includes support to include Métis culture and language in programming. Starting in 2024 – 2025, the Ministry is also providing support to the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society to deliver First Nations mentorship and pedagogy services to child care centres throughout the province, including developing communities of practice within the Indigenous child care sector.

### ECE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATION GRANT

The ECE Specialized Certification Grant recognizes ECEs with specialized certificates and encourages others to upgrade their credentials to support British Columbians' access to quality, inclusive child care. For three years (2024 – 2026),

ECEs who work in licensed child care or Aboriginal Head Start Programs with children aged 0 – 5 and who hold a valid Infant and Toddler Educator and/or Special Needs Educator Certificate are able to apply. The annual grant provides \$2,000 for one certificate or \$3,000 for both certificates.

## FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024)

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

### Operational funding

Program	Amount
Child Care Operating Funding	\$136,154,247
Child Care Fee Reduction Initiative	\$597,473,642
\$10 a Day ChildCareBC	\$171,208,055
Early Childhood Educator Wage Enhancement	\$157,810,866
Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development	\$41,800,000
Aboriginal Head Start	\$48,253,000
<b>Total operational funding</b>	<b>\$1,152,699,810</b>

*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, disability funding, and other grants/funding paid on a recurring basis.*

### One-time funding – capital (major and minor)

Program	Amount
ChildCareBC Maintenance Fund	\$481,069
ChildCareBC New Spaces Fund	\$270,931,425
Start-up Grants	\$607,500
First Nations Grants	\$21,670,316
<b>Total one-time funding</b>	<b>\$293,690,310</b>

*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.*

### Fee subsidies

Program	Amount
Affordable Child Care Benefit	\$130,325,321
Single Parent Employment Initiative	\$195,819
Young Parent Program	\$767,541
<b>Total fee subsidies</b>	<b>\$131,288,681</b>

*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 directly to service providers.*

**TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, and fee subsidies) \$1,577,678,802**

### Other ELCC funding

Program	Amount
Child Care Resource and Referral	\$18,384,775
ELCC District Lead	\$10,325,000
Early Childhood Pedagogy Network	\$4,164,092
Indigenous Pedagogy	\$83,500
ECE Specialized Certification Grant	\$5,970,000
Professional Development Funding	\$7,017,000
ECE Education Support Fund	\$15,000,000
Others	\$6,903,046
<b>Total other ELCC funding</b>	<b>\$67,847,412</b>

### Federal transfers to British Columbia

Federal transfer	Amount
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$76,304,060
Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care	\$663,871,725
Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$7,810,264

*Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to British Columbia for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements, as they are updated annually in line with population estimates. 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 (2025).



# The Yukon

Overview	337	<b>CHILD CARE FUNDING</b>	<b>357</b>
Territorial context	338	Eligibility for CWELCC funding	357
<b>KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA</b>	<b>340</b>	Child care services' eligibility for funding	357
Kindergarten for four- and five-year-olds (k4 and k5)	340	Types of funding	357
Curriculum framework	340	Funding for regulated child care (fiscal year 2023 – 2024)	361
Enrolment	341		
Other early childhood programs	341		
<b>CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>342</b>		
Administration	342		
Curriculum framework	343		
Children with disabilities	343		
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care	343		
Parent fees	344		
Workforce	347		
Standards and regulations	350		
Of interest	352		
<b>CHILD CARE DATA</b>	<b>353</b>		
Regulated child care space statistics	353		
Regulated child care enrolment statistics	355		



# The Yukon

## ■ OVERVIEW

In the Yukon, the Department of Education is responsible for regulated full-day child care centres, family child care, kindergarten, and before- and after-school child care.

Licensed centre-based child care includes full-day centres and before- and after-school programs. Part-day preschool programs are not required to be licensed.

Centre-based child care is delivered by for-profit and non-profit operators, with a small number of publicly operated spaces. A majority of full-day centre spaces are for-profit.

Family child care (termed Family Day Home) providers are individually licensed.

The Yukon offers part- or full school-day kindergarten for four-year-olds (termed K4) in most rural schools and for all five-year-olds (termed K5). Kindergarten for four- and five-year-olds is not compulsory. Francophone schools offer full school-day K4 and K5 programs.

The Yukon does not have territorially set child care fees. Introduced in April 2021, the Early Learning and Child Care Funding Program provides licensed operators with funding to reduce parent fees for each child registered in part- or full-day early learning and child care programs. The Child Care Subsidy assists eligible families pay for their child to attend a licensed child care centre, Family Day Home, or school-age program.

The Yukon does not have a wage grid. On April 1, 2021, the Yukon introduced a minimum wage level for educators by level of certification, supported by wage supplement funding.

The Yukon signed the Canada-Yukon Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement on July 23, 2021. It allocated \$41.6 million over five years to the territory.

In March 2025, the Yukon accepted the federal offer to extend its bilateral agreement until 2031.

---

### Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)

	2021	2025	Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025
Non-profit and public	712	872	+160
For-profit	947	1,324	+377
<b>Total full-day spaces</b>	<b>1,659</b>	<b>2,196</b>	<b>+537</b>
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	57%	60%	+3.2%
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit	-	-	70%

## TERRITORIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded; however, the totals are based on exact figures. Therefore, totals may not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

### **Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	1,000
3 – 5	1,000
6 – 12	3,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,600</b>

### **Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	800
3 – 5	800
6 – 12	2,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,500</b>

### **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	520	105	25	30	0
5 – 9	570	60	25	25	0
10 – 14	530	105	25	0	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,620</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>10</b>

### **Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2024 rounded estimate)**

*Not available*

### **Living arrangements by age of child (2021)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>Living with two parents</i>	<i>Living with one parent</i>		<i>Total</i>
		<i>Lone mother</i>	<i>Lone father</i>	
0 – 4	1,795	275	70	350
5 – 9	1,730	430	150	575
10 – 14	1,520	465	180	645

---

**Languages spoken most often at home (2021)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Non-official</i>	<i>Multiple</i>
0 – 4	1,940	75	95	50
5 – 9	2,180	75	55	60
10 – 14	2,065	75	60	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,190</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>180</b>

---

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

<i>Two-parent families</i>	<i>Male lone parent</i>	<i>Female lone parent</i>
\$123,000	\$63,200	\$54,000

---

# KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA

## KINDERGARTEN FOR FOUR- AND FIVE-YEAR-OLDS (K4 AND K5)

### Territorial responsibility

Department of Education  
Schools and Student Services  
Phone: 867-667-5141  
Email: [publicschools@yukon.ca](mailto:publicschools@yukon.ca)  
Website: [yukon.ca/en/education-and-schools](http://yukon.ca/en/education-and-schools)

### Legislation

Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. *[Education Act](#)*. RSY2002 c.61.

### Provision

#### Kindergarten for 5-year-olds (K5) provision

<b>Definition</b>	Part or full school-day program for all five-year-old children.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Five years old by December 31.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Not compulsory.
<b>Entitlement</b>	All eligible children have access.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Full school-day (5.13 hours), but part-day in some schools. Francophone schools offer full school-day programs.
<b>Class size</b>	Maximum 18 children.

#### Kindergarten for 4-year-olds (K4) provision

<b>Definition</b>	Part or full school-day program for four-year-olds in most rural schools.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Four years old by December 31.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Not compulsory.
<b>Entitlement</b>	All eligible children have access.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Full school-day (5.13 hours), but part-day in some schools. Francophone schools offer full school-day programs.
<b>Class size</b>	Maximum 18 children.

### Teacher qualifications and certification

To be a qualified kindergarten (K4 or K5) teacher in the Yukon requires either a Bachelor of Education or a bachelor's degree plus an approved program of teacher preparation of no less than one academic year.

Kindergarten teachers are not required to have an early childhood qualification.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

In September 2017, the Yukon Department of Education adopted the British Columbia kindergarten curriculum. The *[British Columbia K – 12 Curriculum](#)* (2017) is a mandatory curriculum framework for all English kindergarten programs in the Yukon. The application of the British Columbia curriculum in the Yukon *includes* First Nations' ways of knowing, doing, and being, which allows schools to tailor the curriculum for the local community, area, and culture.



## ■ ENROLMENT

---

### Kindergarten enrolment (2024 – 2025 school year)

#### *Enrolment in public schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds (K5)	455
Kindergarten for 4-year-olds (K4)	78

#### *Enrolment in private/independent schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds (K5)	<i>Not available</i>
Kindergarten for 4-year-olds (K4)	<i>Not available</i>
<b>Total kindergarten enrolment</b>	<b>533</b>

---

## ■ OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

### Learning Together

Learning Together is a free drop-in program operated by the Department of Education for children under the age of five and their caregivers. Qualified teachers lead the program, which has the objectives of helping children learn school routines and teaching caregivers how to support learning at home.



## CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

### ■ ADMINISTRATION

#### Territorial responsibility

Department of Education  
Early Learning and Child Care Unit  
Phone: 867-667-3492  
Email: [earlylearning@yukon.ca](mailto:earlylearning@yukon.ca)  
Website: [yukon.ca/en/early-childhood-learning-and-programs](http://yukon.ca/en/early-childhood-learning-and-programs)

#### Legislation

Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. [Child Care Act](#). RSY 2002, c. 30.  
Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. [Child Care Centre Program Regulation](#). OIC 1995/087  
Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. [Child Care Subsidy Regulation](#). OIC 1995/087  
Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. [Family Day Home Program Regulation](#). OIC 1995/087  
Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. [School-age Program Regulation](#). OIC 1995/087

On March 11, 2025, the Yukon Minister of Education tabled Bill 48, the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#), to replace the previous *Child Care Act*. The new Act received assent in the Yukon Legislative Assembly on May 1, 2025, and will come into force when regulations have been developed to support its implementation.

#### Service descriptions

### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

There are no health, safety, or training requirements or provision for public oversight in unregulated child care. There may be attention by public officials on a complaint basis. See the [Child Care Act](#) for additional information about exemptions to the child care regulations.

### Family child care

An unregulated family child care provider can care for up to four children, with no more than three children younger than school age, not including the provider's own children.

### Preschool

Preschools are centre-based programs for preschool-age children operating for fewer than three consecutive hours per day. They are not required to be licensed.

### REGULATED CHILD CARE

#### Child care centre

Child care centres provide group care for less than 24 hours a day for four or more children up to and including 12 years of age in a place other than a preschool, school-age program, or Family Day Home.

#### School-age child care

School-age child care programs provide care outside school hours for eight or more school-age children in kindergarten through 12 years of age. The Yukon does not license by age group. Programs can offer care to all age groups as long as they meet the requirements for staff:child ratios.

#### Family child care

Family child care (termed a Family Day Home) is located in the provider's own home for up to eight preschool-age children if none are infants, up to six preschool-age children if no more than three are infants, and up to four children if all are under 18 months. The provider's preschool-age children are counted in the maximum number of children.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The Government of Canada's [\*Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework\*](#) (2018) and [\*British Columbia Early Learning Framework\*](#) (2019) are two voluntary curriculum frameworks that can be used as starting points for early learning professionals in the Yukon who want to learn more and apply the practices to their work.

An early learning framework will be developed in collaboration with Yukon First Nations as part of the territory's new *Early Learning and Child Care Act*.

## CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

### Terminology and approach

The Yukon uses the term "children with diverse needs/abilities" to encompass children with disabilities. This includes children 16 years old or younger who have had an individual assessment by a qualified professional and who have a physical, emotional, behavioural, mental, developmental, communicative, or other identifiable and recognized disorder.

All types of licensed facilities are eligible to receive inclusion funding.

The Yukon provides inclusion funding specific to the individual child.

There are no specific qualifications or requirements for staff who work with children with disabilities.

### Programs supporting inclusion in ELCC

The Supported Child Care Program provides funding to assist licensed early learning and child care programs in providing inclusive programs for children with diverse developmental needs in the Yukon. This funding may be used to hire additional early childhood educators, to support inclusion and learning, or for additional training for regular staff. Centres can also apply for funding for renovations

or equipment purchases to support an inclusive and accessible early learning environment suitable for children with diverse abilities. The service provider must have a current Individual Program Plan for each child with disabilities attending the program.

The Supported Child Care Program was reviewed in 2021. A [report on the review](#) was published in 2024.

The Yukon funds one child care service that is primarily for children with disabilities. The Whitehorse Child Development Centre is a non-profit organization that provides therapeutic services and supports the developmental needs of all children from birth to kindergarten entry. See the Yukon's "[Types of funding](#)" section for more information.

### Access to inclusive ELCC

Child care programs are not required to accept children with disabilities.

A diagnosis or other documentation is required to receive funding under the Supported Child Care Program.

Newly constructed or renovated facilities are required to meet the accessibility standards in the 2020 version of the [National Building Code](#).

In the Yukon, there may be delays for receiving inclusion funding due to budget constraints.

See the [Government of Yukon website](#) for more details about the Yukon's inclusion policies.

## FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE

In the Yukon, 22% of the total population identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in the most recent census (2021).

There are no First Nations reserves in the Yukon.

There are 11 First Nations with land claims and self-government agreements and settlement areas,



including part of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. The Yukon government funds all licensed child care centres, including those owned and operated by Indigenous governing bodies.

First Nations governing bodies operate nine full-day licensed centres, with a total of 291 spaces. All licensed centres may also offer part-day and/or after-school programming. These spaces are included in the overall territorial space statistics.

There are four Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) programs, two of which are licensed.

Parents who use First Nations licensed centres and Family Day Homes are eligible for fee subsidies.

### Indigenous-specific resources/initiatives

Cultural enhancement funding is available to all licensed centres.

In 2023, the Yukon and the federal government launched [Understanding the Early Years](#), a Yukon First Nations designed and developed course with special focus on communities that have limited access to professional development. It provides opportunities for employees of licensed programs currently working without a certificate level and for Yukoners wanting to enter the early childhood education field. Successful completion of the course leads to a Level 1 certificate to practice as an early childhood educator.

The Yukon also funds a cultural connection program at an urban First Nations-owned and operated program.

### ■ PARENT FEES

The Yukon does not have territorially set child care fees.

Introduced in April 2021, the Early Learning and Child Care Funding Program provides licensed

operators with funding to reduce parent fees for each child registered in part- or full-day early learning and child care programs.

Licensed early learning and child care operators receive up to \$700/month for each child registered for a full-day program. For each child registered full-time, licensed operators offering after-school care receive \$350/month for children in kindergarten and \$300/month for children in Grade 1 and older. During summer months, licensed operators receive \$700/month for kindergarten-age children and \$500/month for children in Grade 1 and older. Parents and caregivers of children in part-day programs receive a prorated reduction. Those attending on a drop-in basis are not eligible for funding.

Beginning in 2021, service providers have been limited to an annual increase of 3% of the average fee, unless otherwise approved by the Department of Education. In Whitehorse, annual fee increases are limited to 3% for operators charging within 10% of the Yukon average and 1% for those charging 10% or more than the Yukon average, unless otherwise approved by the Department of Education. Fee increases in rural areas are considered on an individual basis depending on program needs.

As of January 2022, every licensed operator in the Yukon had opted into the Early Learning and Child Care Funding Program.

With fee reductions, parents are paying an average of approximately \$4 to \$12.30 per day for full-day care, depending on the age of the child, the type of care, and the region.

---

### Average posted (market) monthly child care fees not including fee reduction (2022)

Age group	Whitehorse child care centre	Whitehorse Family Day Home	Rural child care centre
Infant	\$970.00	\$846.00	\$835.00
Toddler	\$938.00	\$810.59	\$802.50
Preschool-age	\$922.00	\$803.00	\$780.83
Kindergarten-age (school year)	\$580.00	\$448.57	\$485.00
Kindergarten-age (summer)	\$908.00	\$743.75	\$740.00
School-age (school year)	\$511.00	\$440.57	\$468.50
School-age (summer)	\$824.00	\$690.83	\$675.00

*Note: Posted parent fees were reduced by up to \$700 per enrolled child, paid to the service by the territorial government.*

---

### Average posted (market) monthly child care fees not including fee reduction (2025)

Age group	Whitehorse child care centre	Whitehorse Family Day Home	Rural child care centre
Infant	\$1,041.95	\$868.38	\$836.11
Toddler	\$1,001.96	\$800.82	\$819.08
Preschool-age	\$980.79	\$793.18	\$811.23
Kindergarten-age (school year)	\$609.40	\$452.95	\$486.73
Kindergarten-age (summer)	\$953.02	\$774.36	\$815.55
School-age (school year)	\$553.12	\$470.10	\$472.10
School-age (summer)	\$891.52	\$720.13	\$752.10

*Note: Posted parent fees were reduced by up to \$700 per enrolled child, paid to the service by the territorial government.*

---

### Additional fees

Operators are permitted to charge waitlist fees and additional fees for food, transportation, extended hours, and field trips.

### Parent fee subsidies

The [Child Care Subsidy](#) assists eligible families pay for their child to attend a for-profit or non-profit licensed child care centre, Family Day Home, or school-age program. The amount of subsidy is based on an income test on combined net family

income, taking into account family size, income, and the community where the applicant resides. The subsidy is calculated using reduced parent fees after the universal reduction (up to \$700) has been applied. All eligible families are entitled to a fee subsidy. There is no waitlist.

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for a fee subsidy, applicants must be:

- Employed full- or part-time;
- Looking for employment;

- Attending school or a training program full- or part-time; or
- Receiving medical treatment.

A fee subsidy is also available when child care is recommended by a child protection service, approved based on a qualified professional's

individual assessment of disabilities of the family or child, or when emergency child care services are required to meet a short-term family crisis.

## FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

### Maximum net monthly income for full subsidy (2025)

	<i>Whitehorse</i>	<i>Rural Yukon</i>	<i>Old Crow</i>
<i>One parent with one child</i>	\$1,941	\$2,028	\$2,479
<i>Two parents with two children</i>	\$2,859	\$3,008	\$3,784

### Maximum net monthly income at which partial subsidy ends (2025)

	<i>Age</i>	<i>Whitehorse</i>	<i>Rural Yukon</i>	<i>Old Crow</i>
<i>One parent with one child</i>	Infant	\$5,055	\$5,142	\$5,593
	School-age	\$3,305	\$3,392	\$3,843
<i>Two parents with two children</i>	Infant	\$5,973	\$6,122	\$6,898
	School-age	\$4,223	\$4,372	\$5,148

## SUBSIDY RATES

The subsidy rate is the maximum amount paid by the territorial government to the service to cover all or part of the parent fee.

### Monthly maximum subsidy rates by age of child (2024)

<i>Full-day (100 hours/month or more)</i>	<i>Monthly maximum subsidy</i>
Infant (0 – 18 months)	\$688
Toddler (19 – 36 months)	\$622
Preschool-age (37 – 59 months)	\$578
Kindergarten-age	\$578
Child with a disability (0 – 59 months or 0 – 71 months for children in part-day kindergarten)	\$688
School-age	\$550

<i>Part-day (less than 80 hours/month)</i>	<i>Monthly maximum subsidy</i>
Kindergarten-age	\$330
School-age	\$303

## **Additional programs that subsidize individual families**

The Grandparent Grant is a fee subsidy for grandparents who are the primary caregivers for their grandchild. Grandparents may also be required to demonstrate a need for child care support based on the grandparent's employment status, school attendance, or other specific circumstances like a medical need of the child or caregiver. Legal custody is not required.

## **WORKFORCE**

### **Child care centre staff wages**

#### **TERRITORIAL WAGE DATA**

Current average wage data are not available.

#### **WAGE FLOOR**

On April 1, 2021, the Yukon implemented a mandatory wage floor as part of the Early Learning and Child Care Funding Program. This set a \$31.01/hour (\$32.81/hour in rural communities) as a minimum wage floor for full-time educators with Level 3 certification, including Family Day Home providers. However, the wage floor does not function as a comprehensive wage grid that accounts for factors such as job positions or years of experience.

Wages for educators in the Yukon are based on the territorial minimum wage. ECE wages are adjusted annually to align with territorial wage increases.

The Yukon has committed to a mandatory wage grid in its new legislation.

## **WAGE ENHANCEMENT**

Funding for wage enhancement grants are provided to licensed child care and Family Day Home operators in the form of a wage supplement.

#### **Wage enhancement for centre-based staff**

The wage supplement for centre-based staff is based on the actual hours worked, to a maximum of 40 hours per week, by each staff person. The wages paid to each early childhood educator before the addition of the wage enhancement must be no less than the minimum wage under the *Employment Standards Act*.

Early childhood educators whose wages are paid through the Supported Child Care Program are paid in accordance with the wage floor. The Department of Education pays the full wage, rather than a wage supplement.

## Whitehorse wage enhancement amounts for centre-based staff (2025)

<i>ECE level</i>	<i>Wage enhancement</i>	<i>Territorial minimum wage plus enhancement</i>	<i>Mandatory minimum wage floor</i>
Level 0	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	\$17.94
Level 1	\$4.12	\$17.94 + \$4.12	\$22.06
Level 1A	\$6.01	\$17.94 + \$6.01	\$23.95
Level 2	\$7.44	\$17.94 + \$7.44	\$25.38
Level 2A	\$9.96	\$17.94 + \$9.96	\$27.90
Level 3 equivalent	\$12.31	\$17.94 + \$12.31	\$30.25
Level 3	\$15.31	\$17.94 + \$15.31	\$33.25

## Rural wage enhancement amounts for centre-based staff (2025)

<i>ECE level</i>	<i>Wage enhancement</i>	<i>Territorial minimum wage plus enhancement</i>	<i>Mandatory minimum wage floor</i>
Level 0	\$1.85	\$17.94 + \$1.85	\$19.79
Level 1	\$4.49	\$17.94 + \$4.49	\$22.43
Level 1A	\$6.71	\$17.94 + \$6.71	\$24.65
Level 2	\$8.39	\$17.94 + \$8.39	\$26.33
Level 2A	\$11.35	\$17.94 + \$11.35	\$29.29
Level 3 equivalent	\$14.11	\$17.94 + \$14.11	\$32.05
Level 3	\$17.11	\$17.94 + \$17.11	\$35.05

*Note: The Yukon minimum wage was \$17.59 in March 2025. On April 1, 2025, the minimum wage increased to \$17.94.*

*Note: The mandatory minimum wages for licensed early learning and child care centre staff include an additional 14% payment for mandatory employment-related costs. The Level 0 wage supplement is only available to programs operating in rural communities, and a training plan and exemption from the training requirements must be approved*

## Wage enhancement for Family Day Home providers

### Whitehorse wage enhancement – Family Day Home providers (2025)

<i>Child care worker level</i>	<i>Wage enhancement</i>	<i>Territorial minimum wage plus enhancement</i>	<i>Mandatory minimum wage floor</i>
Level 0	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	\$17.94
Level 1	\$4.12	\$17.94 + \$4.12	\$22.06
Level 1A	\$6.01	\$17.94 + \$6.01	\$23.95
Level 2	\$7.44	\$17.94 + \$7.44	\$25.38
Level 2A	\$9.96	\$17.94 + \$9.96	\$27.90
Level 3 equivalent	\$12.31	\$17.94 + \$12.31	\$30.25
Level 3	\$15.31	\$17.94 + \$15.31	\$33.25

## Rural wage enhancements – Family Day Home providers (2025)

Child care worker level	Wage enhancement	Minimum wage plus enhancement	Mandatory minimum wage floor
Level 0	\$1.85	\$17.94 + \$1.85	\$19.79
Level 1	\$4.49	\$17.94 + \$4.49	\$22.43
Level 1A	\$6.71	\$17.94 + \$6.71	\$24.65
Level 2	\$8.39	\$17.94 + \$8.39	\$26.33
Level 2A	\$11.35	\$17.94 + \$11.35	\$29.29
Level 3 equivalent	\$14.11	\$17.94 + \$14.11	\$32.05
Level 3	\$17.11	\$17.94 + \$17.11	\$35.05

Note: The Yukon minimum wage was \$17.59 in March 2025. On April 1, 2025, the minimum wage increased to \$17.94.

Note: The mandatory minimum wages for Family Day Home providers include an additional 12% payment for mandatory employment-related costs. The Level 0 wage supplement is only available to programs operating in rural communities, and a training plan and exemption from the training requirements must be approved and in place.

## Staff benefits

On April 1, 2022, the Yukon began providing compensation for up to 8% of staff wages for employers to select and offer a comprehensive benefits package from a registered Canadian insurance provider.

Licensed early learning and child care programs that already offer comprehensive benefits to employees through a registered Canadian insurance provider were able to apply for this funding before January 1, 2022. Approved applications were able to receive retroactive funding covering the period from April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022.

All licensed early learning programs are eligible to receive benefit funding. New programs no longer need to submit an additional application.

## Other workforce measures

The Yukon has begun a process of proposing regulatory changes aimed at changing ECEs' working conditions. A review of the Yukon *Child Care Act* began in November 2023 with an initial

consultation. New legislation was tabled March 11, 2025, and received assent May 1, 2025. It is not yet in force.

## Early childhood certification

The Yukon has a territorial staff certification process. All staff are required to be certified. The Early Learning and Child Care Unit in the Yukon Department of Education is responsible for assessing applications for certification. See the Yukon's "[Standards and regulations](#)" section for more information.

## ECE CERTIFICATION LEVELS

There are five certification levels with minimum requirements for early childhood educators in the Yukon. The classification criteria for each designation are:

### Level 1

- 60 hours of coursework in early childhood development;
- Yukon First Nation Education Directorate Understanding the Early Years course; or
- An approved educational equivalency.

## Level 1A

- Completion of 15 credits or five post-secondary courses in early childhood development offered by a recognized college or university; or
- An approved educational equivalency.

## Level 2

- Completion of one year of post-secondary coursework in early childhood development offered by a recognized college or university; or
- An approved educational equivalency.

## Level 2A

- Completion of 45 credits or 15 post-secondary courses in early childhood development offered by a recognized college or university; or
- An approved educational equivalency.

## Level 3

- Completion of two years of post-secondary coursework in early childhood development offered by a recognized college or university; or
- An approved educational equivalency.

Coursework must be credit coursework from a recognized post-secondary educational institute. See the [Early Childhood Educator Guide to Certification](#) for further details.

As of March 31, 2024, approximately 95% of educators working in licensed programs have at least a Level 1 certificate. Over 50% of ECEs have two or more years of training in early childhood development.

## ■ STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Child care centres and family child care homes must adhere to standards and regulations regarding staffing requirements, grouping of children, and licensing. Some additional key elements of child care standards and regulations,

such as physical environments and food provision, are covered in the comparative tables in this publication, while others may be found in the [Child Care Act](#), [Child Care Centre Program Regulation](#), [Family Day Home Program Regulation](#), and [School-Age Program Regulation](#).

Bill 48, the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#), was tabled in March 2025. This legislation will replace the current [Child Care Act](#).

## Regulated child care centres

Child care centres are licensed under the [Child Care Act](#), [Child Care Centre Program Regulation](#), and [School-Age Program Regulation](#). The Act was most recently amended in 2018, and both sets of regulations were amended in 2022.

## STAFF:CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZE

The maximum centre size is 64 spaces in full-day centres and 60 spaces in school-age programs.

### Staff:child ratio and maximum group size

Age group	Staff:child ratio	Maximum group size
Infant (<18 months)	1:4	8
Toddler (18 months – 3 years)	1:6	12
Preschool-age (3 years – kindergarten-age)	1:8	16
School-age (Grade 1 – 12 years)	1:12	24

*Note: When more than six children are in attendance, at least two staff members must be on duty, one of whom must be free of other responsibilities while engaged in the care of children.*



## STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRES

### Qualification requirements for staffing a centre

In the Yukon, staff qualification requirements are specified at the centre level.

In all licensed centres (full-day and school-age), all staff who are included in the staff:child ratio must hold one of the three levels of certification: 20% of staff must hold at least Level 3 qualifications, an additional 30% must have at least Level 2 qualifications, and the remaining 50% must have at least Level 1 qualifications.

### Qualification requirements for on-site centre directors/supervisors

All licensed centres are required to have a designated supervisor. There are no regulated qualification requirements for centre supervisors.

### Other requirements

In all centre programs, a staff member who is at least 18 years old must be in charge at all times.

At least one caregiver present in each group of children must have a 14 – 16 hour standard first aid certificate including CPR level C.

All staff must have up-to-date immunizations, a medical note stating that they are in good health, a tuberculosis test, and a confidential police check/vulnerable sector check.

## LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES

A child care centre licence is valid for a maximum of one year and is not transferable to another person. A centre may be inspected at any time by child care inspectors. Each centre is inspected every three months at a minimum but potentially more often depending on the level of support required.

### Regulated family child care

Regulated family child care homes (termed Family Day Homes) are regulated under the [Child Care Act](#) and [Family Day Home Program Regulation](#).

Family child care is required to be provided in the personal residence of the provider.

## MODEL OF ORGANIZATION

Family Day Homes are individually licensed.

## MAXIMUM CAPACITY

A Family Day Home program can serve from four to eight children with either:

- Four infants (under 18 months);
- Six children with no more than three under 18 months; or
- Eight children all over 18 months.

Four additional school-age children may attend if there is an additional caregiver.

The provider's preschool-age children are included in the above numbers, but their school-age children are not.

## FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

Family Day Home operators must complete a 60-hour introductory early childhood development course or a specific Family Day Home course or equivalent within the first year of providing care for children.

A caregiver must be 18 years of age, have up-to-date immunizations, a medical note, a tuberculosis test, and a confidential police/vulnerable sector check. They must also be first aid certified, including CPR level C.



## LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES

A Family Day Home licence is valid for a maximum of one year and is not transferable to another person.

A Family Day Home may be inspected at any time by child care inspectors. Each Family Day Home is inspected a minimum of every three months or more often depending on support needed.

### OF INTEREST

#### **Municipal role**

Municipalities in the Yukon do not have a mandated role in child care governance, funding, or administration. There are no municipally operated centres.

#### **Early Learning Educators Web Hub**

In July 2022, the Yukon Department of Education launched the [Early Learning Educators Web Hub](#), a virtual network that provides early childhood educators access to online courses, resources, and information about early learning events, updates, funding for educators, and more.

## CHILD CARE DATA

### ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

#### Number of spaces (2024, 2025)

##### Centre spaces

	2024	2025
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	2,101	2,196
<b>Family child care licensed capacity</b>	2024	2025
<b>Total family child care spaces</b>	156	149
<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)</b>	2,257	2,345

*Note: The Yukon does not license spaces by age group. As a result, further breakdowns for licensed capacity are not available.*

#### Number of child care centres and family child care homes (2024)

##### Centre-based child care

<b>Total number of centres</b>	59
--------------------------------	----

##### Centre-based programs

Centres providing a full-day program	59
Centres providing infant care (<18 months)	34
Centres providing toddler care (18 – <36 months)	46
Centres providing preschool-age care (36 months – kindergarten)	58
Centres providing a Francophone child care program	2
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 4 – 12 years)	2

*Note: In addition to the two programs licensed exclusively for before- and after-school care, 32 other licensed programs in the Yukon also offered before- and after-school care, as well as full-day infant, toddler, or preschool-age care.*

Centres providing non-standard hours care (as defined by the territory)	2
Centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – Grade 12)	2

##### Regulated family child care

Individually licensed Family Day Homes (active)	18
---	----

---

## Participation in CWELCC

Centres providing a full-day program	59
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 4 – 12 years)	2
<b>Total number of child care centres receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Total number of licensed family child care homes receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>18</b>

---

## Auspice (2024)

---

### Centres by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit	38
Non-profit	12
Public	9

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Part-day<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	1,286	<i>Not applicable</i>	<b>1,286</b>
Non-profit	427	<i>Not applicable</i>	<b>427</b>
Public	388	<i>Not applicable</i>	<b>388</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes before- and after-school care (children 4 – 12 years).

<sup>2</sup> The Yukon does not require part-day centres to be licensed.

---

## Auspice (2025)

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Part-day<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	1,324	<i>Not applicable</i>	<b>1,324</b>
Non-profit	494	<i>Not applicable</i>	<b>494</b>
Public	378	<i>Not applicable</i>	<b>378</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes before- and after-school care (children 4 – 12 years).

<sup>2</sup> The Yukon does not require part-day centres to be licensed.

---

## Publicly operated child care (2024)

### Publicly operated child care

Entity type	Licence holders	Centres	Total spaces
Indigenous governing body	9	9	291

### Fee subsidies (2024)

#### Number of children receiving fee subsidies

Full subsidy	378
--------------	-----

### Disability support (2024)

#### Number of children receiving disability support

Children in licensed child care receiving disability support funding	69
--	----

*Note: In addition, the Whitehorse Child Development Centre provided inclusion support to 49 centres and four Family Day Homes.*

## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

### Number of children enrolled (2024)

#### Full-day centre enrolment

Infant (<18 months)	153
Toddler (18 months – 3 years)	462
Preschool-age (3 years – kindergarten)	761
<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>1,376</b>

#### Before- and after-school care enrolment (licensed or regulated)

Kindergarten for 4- and 5-year-olds (K4 and K5)	106
Grades 1 – 6	287
<b>Total before- and after-school care enrolment</b>	<b>393</b>
<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>1,769</b>

---

**Family child care enrolment**

---

*Total family child care enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)* **128**

**TOTAL REGULATED ENROLMENT (centre and family child care enrolment)** **1,897**

---

## CHILD CARE FUNDING

The types of funding available for child care services in the Yukon include operational funding, one-time funding, fee subsidies, and other ELCC funding programs. See [Funding Program for Early Learning and Child Care Centres](#) and [Funding Program for Family Day Homes](#) for more information.

### ELIGIBILITY FOR CWELCC FUNDING

The CWELCC plan provides federal funds to provinces and territories for early learning and child care operational and one-time funding and fee subsidies for licensed child care for children aged 0 – 5. Funded new child care expansion is to be public and non-profit unless otherwise specified in the jurisdiction's agreement. Provinces and territories also contribute their own funds and design their own policies and provision within this framework.

In the Yukon, the following are eligible for operational funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed before- and after-school centres that enrol children under age six; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres are eligible for operational funding. CWELCC funding is used to support non-profit centres.

In the Yukon, the following are eligible for capital funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed before- and after-school centres that enrol children under age six; and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New or expanded for-profit centres are not eligible for capital funding.

### CHILD CARE SERVICES' ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

All regulated non-profit and for-profit child care programs are eligible for all types of funding.

### TYPES OF FUNDING

#### Operational funding

##### EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE FUNDING PROGRAM

Introduced on April 1, 2021, the Early Learning and Child Care Funding Program for centres and Family Day Homes is the Yukon's primary funding program. It provides funding to offset fees and the cost of operating high-quality programs. The [funding for Family Day Homes](#) has five parts: reducing the cost of early learning and child care for families, support for administration, support to enhance program quality, supporting children with diverse needs, and funding to increase educator wages. The [funding for early learning and child care centres](#) has those same five parts and an additional sixth part: funding towards operating costs.

#### Reducing the cost of early learning and child care for families

Reducing the cost of early learning and child care for families funding is intended to directly help licensed centres lower the amount parents or caregivers pay. Funding for part-time attendance is prorated based on the number of hours a child attends the program as a percent of full-time hours of operation. Children must attend 75% of the time for centre and Family Day Home operators to access this funding. Families only pay the difference between the government funding and the full fee.

### Funding for fee reduction by age group in centres and Family Day Homes (2024)

Age group	Funding per full-time space
Infant	\$700
Toddler	\$700
Preschool-age	\$700
Kindergarten (full-time, not in school)	\$700
Kindergarten (part-time, in school)	\$350
School-age (during school year)	\$300
School-age (during summer)	\$500

### Support for administration

The support for administration payment is 10% of the funding provided to reduce parent or caregiver fees. The intent of this funding is to support administrative needs related to operating a centre and fulfilling reporting requirements, such as hiring a part-time bookkeeper or administrative assistant.

### Support to enhance program quality

Support to enhance program quality funding helps cover the costs of materials, supplies, and equipment. The amount is based on the number of children enrolled. Programs that charge an additional fee to parents/caregivers for a nutritional meal program are not eligible to receive the additional meal funding in this category.

### Quality program enhancement – Whitehorse area programs (2024)

Age group	Funding per space/month <sup>1</sup>	Funding per space/month <sup>2</sup>
Infant	\$206.10	\$238.16
Toddler	\$154.58	\$186.64
Preschool-age	\$114.50	\$146.56
School-age (Grade 1 and above)	\$97.33	\$129.39

<sup>1</sup> Programs not offering a meal program.

<sup>2</sup> Programs offering a nutritious meal program.

### Quality program enhancement – rural programs (2024)

Age group	Funding per space/month <sup>1</sup>	Funding per space/month <sup>2</sup>
Infant	\$242.10	\$298.59
Toddler	\$181.58	\$238.07
Preschool-age	\$134.50	\$190.99
School-age (Grade 1 and above)	\$114.33	\$151.99

<sup>1</sup> Programs not offering a meal program.

<sup>2</sup> Programs offering a nutritious meal program.

### Support for children with diverse needs

Support for children with diverse needs funding provides for the inclusion of children with diverse needs and abilities. Centres and Family Day Homes must provide the ELCC Branch with a child's current Individual Program Plan to receive the funding.

## Funding supports for children with disabilities (2025)

Age group	Funding per space/month - Whitehorse	Funding per space/month - rural
Toddler	\$54.96	\$64.56
Preschool-age	\$91.60	\$107.60
School-age (Grade 1 and above)	\$114.50	\$134.50

## Funding to increase educator wages

Funding to increase educator wages enhances the wage of early childhood educators up to 40 hours per week. To receive this funding, centres must pay each educator, at a minimum, according to the established wage floor. The amounts are based on educators' certification levels. Different amounts are paid in and outside Whitehorse. See the Yukon's "[Workforce](#)" section for specific amounts.

## Funding towards operating costs

Funding towards operating costs is the sixth part of the funding for early learning and child care centres; it does not apply to licensed Family Day Homes. The intent of this funding is to support child care centres to pay for the cost of operations such as rent, mortgage, heating, or supplies. In Whitehorse, 37% of the cost of eligible operating expenses is provided. In rural communities, 43% of the cost of eligible operating expenses is provided.

## EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE BENEFITS FUNDING

Since April 1, 2022, funding for benefits for early childhood educators has been a standard part of the Yukon ELCC Funding Program. The [Early Learning and Child Care Benefits Funding](#) program aims to improve access to comprehensive insurance benefits for early childhood educators working in licensed programs. It provides

compensation for up to 8% of staff wages for employers to select and offer a comprehensive benefits package from a registered Canadian insurance provider.

## One-time funding

### START-UP FUNDING

Start-up funding is available through the Enhancement Fund to child care centres and Family Day Homes. Child care centres may receive a maximum of \$10,000. Family Day Homes may receive up to \$1,000 per home in Whitehorse and up to \$2,000 per home in the rest of the territory.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY ENHANCEMENT

Health and Safety Enhancement funding is available to child care centres and Family Day Homes. Providers may not apply for this funding if they received start-up funding during the same fiscal year. Up to \$5,000 is available to child care centres on an annual basis to meet regulatory requirements related to health and safety or playground development and maintenance. Additional funding needs for larger child care centres are considered on a case-by-case basis. For Family Day Homes, up to \$500 is available annually for the replacement of a major appliance (up to 50% of the cost), health and safety requirements, and for outdoor play space development and maintenance.

### RADON MITIGATION

Child care centres and Family Day Homes can apply to the radon mitigation fund. Applications must include a written quote for radon testing and mitigation, which must be completed by a radon measurement professional. Licensed child care centres can receive up to \$15,000; additional funding is considered on a case-by-case basis for larger centres. Applications are assessed based on a centre's financial or in-kind contribution and



an approved playground plan. Up to \$3,000 is available for Family Day Homes.

## EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

The [Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund](#) aims to expand child care spaces by funding non-profits, Family Day Homes, Indigenous groups, and First Nations governments in underserved communities. This fund includes minor and major project funding streams.

Minor project funding supports projects that improve physical accessibility in licensed early learning and child care programs or establish new Family Day Homes in rural Yukon. Funding covers accessibility upgrades up to \$100,000 for costs like design, project management, construction, and playground equipment. Start-up costs up to \$10,000 are also covered for new rural Family Day Homes.

Funding is available to:

- A Yukon First Nations government;
- A Yukon society in good standing registered under the [Yukon Societies Act](#), including Indigenous organizations;
- A Yukon-based not-for-profit incorporated under the [Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act](#); or
- Individuals interested in opening a Family Day Home in rural Yukon communities.

The major project stream provides funding for planning, design, construction, and renovation of existing facilities to create new early learning and child care spaces in the Yukon. Funding covers planning costs, such as business plans and feasibility studies. It is available to:

- A Yukon First Nations government;
- A Yukon society in good standing and registered under the [Yukon Societies Act](#), including Indigenous organizations; or

- A Yukon-based not-for-profit incorporated under the [Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act](#).

## Fee subsidies

The Child Care Subsidy assists eligible families pay for their child to attend a for-profit or non-profit licensed child care centre, Family Day Home, or school-age program. See the Yukon's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

## Other ELCC funding

### EMERGENCY FUNDING

Emergency funding is available to licensed child care providers based on individual circumstances. Family Day Homes cannot apply for emergency funding.

### CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Established in 1979, the Whitehorse [Child Development Centre](#) is a non-profit organization that supports children in licensed child care. It is funded by the Government of Yukon, Jordan's Principle, and Health Canada, as well as through donations and fundraisers. It offers a range of programs and services, such as diagnostic services and programs for children with diverse needs and abilities. The Child Development Centre has two locations in Whitehorse: the main location downtown and a second centre at the Kwanlin Dün First Nations building, which opened in 2023.

### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The ELCC Branch offers a variety of professional development workshops, centre-based professional development days, program support visits, and more, free of charge to all ECEs.

## YUKON FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION DIRECTORATE EARLY YEARS COURSE – UNDERSTANDING THE EARLY YEARS

The ELCC Branch provides funding for a Yukon First Nations designed and delivered course that helps support the development of culturally competent educators.

### ■ FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024)

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

#### Operational funding

Program	Amount
Operating funding	\$6,223,808
Early childhood educator wage funding	\$8,782,461
Supports to children with special needs	\$1,783,890
Funding to reduce parent or caregiver fee payments to providers	\$13,557,703
Staff benefits	\$1,006,456
<b>Total operational funding</b>	<b>\$31,354,318</b>

*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, disability funding, and other grants/funding paid on a recurring basis.*

#### One-time funding – other

Program	Amount
Health and Safety Enhancement	\$213,184
Cultural Enhancement	\$203,693
<b>Total one-time funding</b>	<b>\$416,877</b>

*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.*

#### Fee subsidies

Program	Amount
Child Care Subsidy	\$596,224
<i>Note: These are fee subsidies in licensed, regulated, or approved child care. The subsidies are associated with an individual child and family. There are territorial eligibility criteria. Fee subsidies are sent directly to service providers.</i>	
<b>TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, and fee subsidies)</b>	<b>\$32,367,419</b>

#### Other ELCC funding

Program	Amount
Child Development Centre	\$5,392,294
Yukon University – Professional Diploma Pathway	\$185,000
Professional Development	\$437,048
Valuing Educator Campaign	\$30,000
Yukon First Nations Education Directorate Early Years Course	\$301,013
Bursaries	\$59,411
<b>Total other ELCC funding</b>	<b>\$6,404,766</b>

#### Federal transfers to the Yukon

Federal transfer	Amount
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$2,605,511
Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care	\$8,400,207
Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$2,283,404

*Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to the Yukon for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements, as they are updated annually in line with population estimates. 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 (2025).



# Northwest Territories

Overview	363	<b>CHILD CARE FUNDING</b>	<b>381</b>
Territorial context	364	Eligibility for CWELCC funding	381
<b>KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA</b>	<b>366</b>	Child care services' eligibility for funding	381
Kindergarten for four- and five-year-olds	366	Types of funding	381
Curriculum framework	367	Funding for regulated child care (fiscal year 2023 – 2024)	386
Enrolment	367		
<b>CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>368</b>		
Administration	368		
Curriculum framework	368		
Children with disabilities	369		
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care	369		
Parent fees	370		
Workforce	371		
Standards and regulations	374		
Of interest	376		
<b>CHILD CARE DATA</b>	<b>378</b>		
Regulated child care space statistics	378		
Regulated child care enrolment statistics	380		



# Northwest Territories

## ■ OVERVIEW

In the Northwest Territories, the Department of Education, Culture, and Employment is responsible for regulated child care centres, family child care, kindergarten, and before- and after-school child care.

Licensed centre-based care includes full-day centres and before- and after-school programs. There are some part-day programs in the Northwest Territories, but they are not categorized separately from full-day programs.

Centre-based child care is provided by non-profit and public operators, including municipalities, Indigenous governing bodies, and school authorities. There is no for-profit child care.

Family child care homes are individually licensed.

The Northwest Territories offers part or full school-day junior kindergarten for all four-year-olds and full school-day kindergarten for all five-year-olds. Kindergarten for four- and five-year-olds is not compulsory.

Since January 2022, the Northwest Territories has been reducing fees for licensed early learning and child care (ELCC). On February 22, 2024, the Northwest Territories government announced that average fees of \$10/day would be achieved by April 1, 2024, when fees were reduced by an average of 74% in licensed facilities for children up to age five. The Income Assistance Program offers financial support to assist with child care expenses for children enrolled in an ELCC facility.

The Northwest Territories has a wage grid specifying territorial minimum pay rates.

The Northwest Territories signed the Canada-Northwest Territories Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement on December 14, 2021. It allocated \$51.1 million over five years to the territory.

In March 2025, the Northwest Territories accepted the federal offer to extend its bilateral agreement until 2031.

### Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)

	2021	2025	Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025
Non-profit and public	763	822	+59
For-profit	0	0	0
<b>Total full-day spaces</b>	<b>763</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>+59</b>
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	0%	0%	0%
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit	-	-	0%

## ■ TERRITORIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded; however, the totals are based on exact figures. Therefore, totals may not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

### Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	1,200
3 – 5	1,500
6 – 12	4,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,900</b>

### Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	800
3 – 5	1,000
6 – 12	2,900
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,800</b>

### 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	920	220	410	60	15
5 – 9	985	205	370	55	15
10 – 14	1,035	195	390	40	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,940</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>1,170</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>50</b>

### Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2024 rounded estimate)

*Not available*

### Living arrangements by age of child (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Living with two parents</i>	<i>Living with one parent</i>			<i>Total</i>
		<i>Lone mother</i>	<i>Lone father</i>		
0 – 4	2,160	450	150		600
5 – 9	2,005	555	175		735
10 – 14	1,885	625	185		810

---

**Languages spoken most often at home (2021)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Non-official</i>	<i>Multiple</i>
0 – 4	2,545	65	135	75
5 – 9	2,580	55	115	70
10 – 14	2,585	35	120	85
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,715</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>225</b>

---

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

<i>Two-parent families</i>	<i>Male lone parent</i>	<i>Female lone parent</i>
\$140,000	\$56,000	\$52,000

---

## KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA

### KINDERGARTEN FOR FOUR- AND FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

#### Territorial responsibility

Department of Education, Culture, and Employment  
Phone: 844-698-5655  
Email: [earlylearning@gov.nt.ca](mailto:earlylearning@gov.nt.ca)  
Website: [ece.gov.nt.ca/en/services/junior-kindergarten](http://ece.gov.nt.ca/en/services/junior-kindergarten)

#### Legislation

NWT. Legislative Assembly. *Education Act*.  
RSNWT1995, C-28.

#### Provision

##### Kindergarten provision

<b>Definition</b>	Full school-day program for all five-year-olds.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Five years old by December 31.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Not compulsory.
<b>Entitlement</b>	All eligible children have access.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Part- or full-day, at the discretion of the local District Education Authority (maximum six hours).
<b>Class size</b>	No set class sizes.

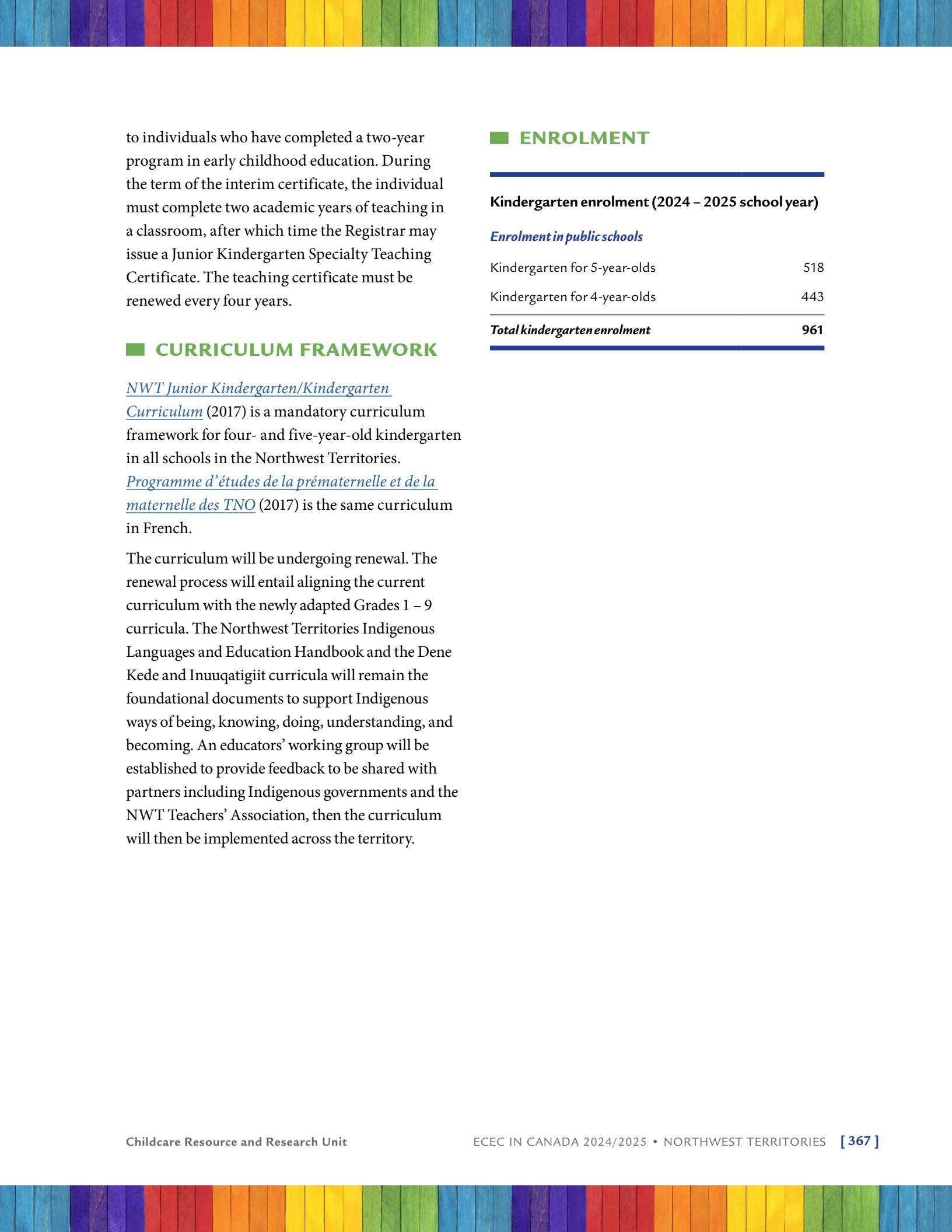
##### Junior kindergarten provision

<b>Definition</b>	Part- or full-day program for all four-year-olds.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Four years old by December 31.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Not compulsory.
<b>Entitlement</b>	All eligible children have access.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Part- or full-day, at the discretion of the local District Education Authority (maximum six hours).
<b>Class size</b>	No set class sizes.

#### Teacher qualifications and certification

To be a qualified kindergarten teacher in the Northwest Territories requires a Bachelor of Education. Teachers must apply to the Registrar for a teaching certificate prior to employment. The Registrar may issue an Interim Standard Teaching Certificate to an individual who has successfully completed a teacher training program at an approved institution. During the term of the interim certificate, the individual must then complete the courses required by the Teacher Qualification Service towards a Bachelor of Education and two academic years of teaching in a classroom. A Standard Teaching Certificate may then be issued and must be renewed every four years. Kindergarten teachers are not required to have an early childhood qualification.

To be a qualified junior kindergarten teacher in the Northwest Territories requires a Bachelor of Education or a two-year diploma in early childhood from an accredited educational institution approved by the Registrar. The Registrar may issue an Interim Junior Kindergarten Teaching Certificate



to individuals who have completed a two-year program in early childhood education. During the term of the interim certificate, the individual must complete two academic years of teaching in a classroom, after which time the Registrar may issue a Junior Kindergarten Specialty Teaching Certificate. The teaching certificate must be renewed every four years.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

[NWT Junior Kindergarten/Kindergarten Curriculum](#) (2017) is a mandatory curriculum framework for four- and five-year-old kindergarten in all schools in the Northwest Territories.

[Programme d'études de la prématernelle et de la maternelle des TNO](#) (2017) is the same curriculum in French.

The curriculum will be undergoing renewal. The renewal process will entail aligning the current curriculum with the newly adapted Grades 1 – 9 curricula. The Northwest Territories Indigenous Languages and Education Handbook and the Dene Kede and Inuuqatigiit curricula will remain the foundational documents to support Indigenous ways of being, knowing, doing, understanding, and becoming. An educators' working group will be established to provide feedback to be shared with partners including Indigenous governments and the NWT Teachers' Association, then the curriculum will then be implemented across the territory.

## ENROLMENT

### **Kindergarten enrolment (2024 – 2025 school year)**

#### *Enrolment in public schools*

Kindergarten for 5-year-olds	518
Kindergarten for 4-year-olds	443
<b>Total kindergarten enrolment</b>	<b>961</b>

# CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

## ■ ADMINISTRATION

### Territorial responsibility

Department of Education, Culture, and Employment

Early Learning and Child Care Division

Phone: 867-767-9354

Email: [earlylearning@gov.nt.ca](mailto:earlylearning@gov.nt.ca)

Website: [ece.gov.nt.ca/en/elcc](http://ece.gov.nt.ca/en/elcc)

### Legislation

NWT. Legislative Assembly. [\*Early Learning and Child Care Act\*](#). RSNWT 1988, c. C-5.

NWT. Legislative Assembly. [\*Early Learning and Child Care Regulations\*](#). R-098-2024.

Effective May 1, 2023, the *Child Day Care Act* was amended and renamed the *Early Learning and Child Care Act*. At the same time, the Child Day Care Standards Regulations were amended, renamed the Early Learning and Child Care Standards Regulations, and came into force.

On November 15, 2024, these regulations were repealed and replaced by the Early Learning and Child Care Regulations.

### Service descriptions

## ■ UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

There are no health, safety, or training requirements or provision for public oversight in unregulated child care. There may be attention by public officials or Department of Education, Culture, and Employment staff on a complaint basis.

A license is not required when care is provided to fewer than five children regardless of age or fewer than two children under two years of age. See the [\*Early Learning and Child Care Act\*](#) for more information.

## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE

In the Northwest Territories, regulated child care types can be classified as:

- Full-time early learning and child care (more than five consecutive hours per day);
- Part-time early learning and child care (not more than five consecutive hours per day); and
- Out-Of-School early learning and child care.

### Child care centre

A child care centre (termed a centre-based facility) provides group child care in a place other than a private residence.

### School-age child care

School-age child care (termed Out-Of-School early learning and child care) refers to child care provided to a school-age child outside regular school hours.

### Family child care

Family child care homes (termed a home-based facility) are early learning and child care facilities located in the private residence of an operator. The operator may care for up to eight children under 12 years, including their own children.

## ■ CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Until 2025, a draft child care curriculum framework was being piloted. In June 2025, the [\*Early Learning Framework: First edition\*](#) was released. It is a voluntary framework, adapted from the *British Columbia Early Learning Framework* and aligned with the vision and plans set out in the [\*2030 Early Learning and Child Care Strategy\*](#). Acknowledging that the Indigenous Peoples are the first peoples of the Northwest Territories, the framework highlights the importance



of respectfully learning about Indigenous perspectives, history, culture, and languages.

A second edition of the *Early Learning Framework* will be created and released, taking into account feedback acquired from engagement with the sector and community partners. The *Early Learning Framework* will align with the *NWT Junior Kindergarten/Kindergarten Curriculum* to support a smoother transition into the school system.

## ■ CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

### Terminology and approach

The Northwest Territories has not developed a territorial definition for children with disabilities.

All types of regulated child care facilities are eligible to receive inclusion funding.

Disability funding in the Northwest Territories may be specific to the individual child or targeted to multiple children.

There are no specific qualifications or requirements for staff who work with children with disabilities.

In February 2025, the territory published the *Government Response to the Review of Inclusive Education Practices in Early Learning and Child Care Settings in the Northwest Territories* and began implementing a renewed approach to inclusion, removing barriers, and enhancing supports.

### Programs supporting inclusion in ELCC

The [Supporting Child Inclusion and Participation](#) (SCIP) funding program supports community-based ELCC programming, professional learning, and staffing supports (one-to-one or one-to-multiple) to support children's participation in licensed early learning facilities.

The SCIP program provides funding to hire staff to support children who otherwise could not

safely attend programs, provide staff training, and purchase resources to support children's participation. It also provides funding to create or enhance community unlicensed play-based early learning opportunities, such as Family and Tot programs.

In the Northwest Territories, there is no child care service solely or primarily for children with disabilities.

### Access to inclusive ELCC

Licensed facilities are required to accept children with disabilities and modify their programming to support inclusion to the extent possible.

The SCIP program does not require diagnosis or documentation to provide funding, but documentation from a health professional is required for a child to be funded through the Early Childhood Program subsidy.

Newly constructed or renovated facilities are required to meet the accessibility standards in the [National Building Code](#).

In the Northwest Territories, there may be delays for receiving inclusion funding due to budget constraints. There is an open call for applications for some of the SCIP funding, but it is usually oversubscribed.

See [Inclusive Learning](#) for more details about the Northwest Territories' inclusion supports.

## ■ FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE

In the Northwest Territories, approximately 50% of the total population identified as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in the last census (2021). In 30 of the 33 Northwest Territories communities (all communities except Yellowknife, Norman Wells, and Hay River), the majority of residents are Indigenous.

Indigenous Peoples in the Northwest Territories include First Nations, Inuvialuit (Inuit), and Métis communities.

There are two reserves in the Northwest Territories. In addition, there are other traditional territories in which Indigenous governing bodies have formal agreements with the Government of the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada, or are in the process of negotiating agreements.

The Northwest Territories government funds all licensed ELCC facilities, including those owned and operated by Indigenous governments and organizations.

The territory licenses Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve (AHSOR) programs. There is one AHSOR program providing 10 spaces on the K'atl'odeeche First Nation Reserve operated by the District Education Authority.

There are also eight Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) programs in the Northwest Territories. Six are licensed ELCC facilities, and two are unlicensed family-centred programs for caregivers attending with children.

All licensed spaces are included in the overall territorial space statistics.

### **Indigenous-specific resources/initiatives**

The federal ELCC agreements support provision of post-secondary early childhood education programs based in the territory, including an in-person certificate and diploma program at Aurora College in Yellowknife, and a distance-based certificate and diploma program. The distance program allows those living in small communities to better access post-secondary education.

### **PARENT FEES**

In January 2022, the Northwest Territories introduced the [Child Care Fee Reduction](#) (CCFR), intended to reduce the cost of child care by an average of 50% for children up to age five in licensed facilities that are part of CWELCC. On April 1, 2023, the Northwest Territories increased funding to reduce fees by an average of 60% in licensed facilities for children up to age five. On February 22, 2024, the Northwest Territories government announced that [average fees of \\$10/day](#) would be achieved by April 1, 2024, when fees were reduced by an average of 74% in licensed facilities for children up to age five.

The fee reduction is a set amount. Annual fee increases are limited to a specified amount depending on the current fees charged.

---

#### **Monthly fee reduction amounts (2023 – 2026)**

<b>Age group</b>	<b>2023 – 2024</b>	<b>2024 – 2026</b>
Infant (0 – 23 months)	\$666	\$760
Preschool-age (2 – 5 years)	\$640	\$750
Out-Of-School (3 – 5 years)	\$175	\$175

---

The actual reduction in the amount families can expect to pay for child care fees will depend on the current fee the family is paying and the age of the child.

A breakdown of average fees by age group in 2025 is not available.

## Additional fees

Operators are permitted to charge waitlist fees and to request and collect [optional donations](#) for food, transportation, extended hours, field trips, specialized classes, membership fees, and other services and programs.

The children of parents who do not voluntarily donate should not have a reduction in the quality of care, services, programs, or experiences. For example, if a provider offers a food program through a voluntary membership donation, children whose families do not voluntarily donate must still receive the same food as children whose families contribute.

There is no limit to the amount of money that can be raised through voluntary donations. Operators may be required to report the types and amounts of donations.

## Parent fee subsidies

The Northwest Territories does not have a stand-alone child care subsidy program. The [Income Assistance Program](#), though not specific to child care, offers financial support to assist with child care expenses for children enrolled in an ELCC facility. Applicants may also be eligible for support for school-break camps and occasional babysitting.

### Income Assistance Program child care allowance rates

Care Type	Daily Rate (2025)
Full-time child care	\$50
After-school child care	\$15

## WORKFORCE

### Child care centre staff wages

#### TERRITORIAL WAGE DATA

Current average wage data are not available.

#### WAGE ENHANCEMENT

Until September 30, 2022, the Northwest Territories provided the Early Childhood Staff Grant, which was paid directly to educators based on hours worked and level of post-secondary education. In 2022, this grant was replaced by the Retention Incentive to streamline staff wage enhancement for early childhood educators.

Between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2024, licensed child care centres received Retention Incentive funding for legislatively required staff (as per staff:child ratios) working directly with children. This funding was provided to operators of licensed centre-based facilities, who were responsible for distributing it to eligible educators.

On April 1, 2024, [Dedicated Wage Funding](#) was introduced to support wages and employer costs for early childhood educators working in licensed centre-based facilities. The funding amount is determined by the number of full-time equivalent employees required, based on the staff:child ratio outlined in Section 75 of the Early Learning and Child Care Regulations.

#### TERRITORIAL WAGE GRID FOR CENTRE STAFF

On November 14, 2024, the Northwest Territories [implemented a wage grid](#) with minimum rates of hourly pay for employees in licensed centre-based facilities. This approach uses four geographical zones to reflect cost-of-living differences across the

territory. Minimum rates of pay are determined by position, years of experience, and post-secondary education levels. The territory provides funding to licensed child care centres at the identified rate for each educator in an allocated position based on their identified minimum rate of pay. The program applies to employees working in centre-based

facilities in administrator, ELCC assistant, ELCC educator, and supervisor roles. It does not apply to other support staff positions, such as bookkeepers, cooks, and custodians or to home-based ELCC facility operators.

---

**Minimum rates of pay per hour for centre staff by geographical zone, including the geographical zone allowance (2025)**

---

**Zone A: Behchokǫ̀, Dettah, Enterprise, Fort Liard, Fort Smith, Hay River, Kátł'odeeche, Ndilǫ, and Yellowknife**

---

<i>Position</i>	<i>Step 1: &lt;1 year</i>	<i>Step 2: 1 – 4 years</i>	<i>Step 3: 4 – 7 years</i>	<i>Step 4: 7 – 10 years</i>	<i>Step 5: 10+ years</i>
Administrator	\$37.50	\$39.00	\$40.25	\$41.50	\$43.00
ELCC assistant	\$34.20	\$35.25	\$36.25	\$37.25	\$37.50
ELCC educator	\$35.50	\$37.00	\$38.25	\$39.50	\$41.50
Supervisor	\$36.50	\$38.00	\$39.25	\$40.25	\$42.00

**Zone B: Fort Providence, Fort Resolution, Fort Simpson, Inuvik, Jean Marie River, Kakisa, and Whatì**

---

<i>Position</i>	<i>Step 1: &lt;1 year</i>	<i>Step 2: 1 – 4 years</i>	<i>Step 3: 4 – 7 years</i>	<i>Step 4: 7 – 10 years</i>	<i>Step 5: 10+ years</i>
Administrator	\$38.50	\$40.00	\$41.25	\$42.50	\$44.00
ELCC assistant	\$35.20	\$36.25	\$37.25	\$38.25	\$38.50
ELCC educator	\$36.50	\$38.00	\$39.25	\$40.50	\$42.00
Supervisor	\$37.50	\$39.00	\$40.25	\$41.50	\$43.00

---

**Zone C: Aklavik, Fort McPherson, Gamèti, Łutselk'e, Nahanni Butte, Norman Wells, Tsiigehtchic, Tuktoyaktuk, Wekweètì, and Wrigley**

---

<b>Position</b>	<i>Hourly step increment rate by years of experience</i>				
	<i>Step 1: &lt;1 year</i>	<i>Step 2: 1 – 4 years</i>	<i>Step 3: 4 – 7 years</i>	<i>Step 4: 7 – 10 years</i>	<i>Step 5: 10+ years</i>
Administrator	\$40.75	\$42.25	\$43.50	\$44.75	\$46.25
ELCC assistant	\$37.45	\$38.50	\$39.50	\$40.50	\$40.75
ELCC educator	\$38.75	\$40.25	\$41.50	\$42.75	\$44.25
Supervisor	\$39.75	\$41.25	\$42.50	\$43.75	\$45.25

**Zone D: Colville Lake, Délı̨nę, K'asho Got'ine, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Sambaa K'e, Tulita, and Ulukhaktok**

---

<b>Position</b>	<i>Hourly step increment rate by years of experience</i>				
	<i>Step 1: &lt;1 year</i>	<i>Step 2: 1 – 4 years</i>	<i>Step 3: 4 – 7 years</i>	<i>Step 4: 7 – 10 years</i>	<i>Step 5: 10+ years</i>
Administrator	\$43.25	\$44.75	\$46.00	\$47.25	\$48.75
ELCC assistant	\$39.95	\$41.00	\$42.00	\$43.00	\$43.25
ELCC educator	\$41.25	\$42.75	\$44.00	\$45.25	\$46.75
Supervisor	\$42.25	\$43.75	\$45.00	\$46.25	\$47.74

## Staff benefits

The Northwest Territories does not have territory-wide benefits for the child care workforce.

## Other workforce measures

### NORTHERN EXPERIENCE BONUS FOR CENTRE-BASED EMPLOYEES

Since 2024, staff persons have received an additional annual [Northern Experience Bonus](#) if they have worked in a licensed ELCC facility in a northern environment for at least five years. A northern environment is any prescribed or intermediate zone defined by the Canada Revenue Agency. This bonus is part of the staff person's wage as per the wage grid and is administered as part of the wage grid.

### INDIGENOUS STAFF PERSON BONUS FOR CENTRE-BASED EMPLOYEES

Since 2024, Indigenous employees may receive an additional [Indigenous Staff Person Bonus](#).

Any Indigenous person, as defined in Section 1 of the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act*, who works as an ELCC staff person in a licensed centre-based facility with more than one year of experience in a licensed ELCC facility is eligible. This bonus is part of the staff person's wage as per the wage grid and is administered as part of the wage grid.

## Early childhood certification

On November 14, 2024, the Northwest Territories implemented a certification process, termed the [Early Learning and Child Care Recognition of Qualifications](#).

Staff working with children in licensed centre-based facilities are required to be certified.

certificates are valid for a period of four months from the date of issue.

### ECE CERTIFICATION LEVELS

Certificates for Levels A, 1, 2, 3, and 4 are valid for three years from the date of issue. Provisional

### ELCC staff person qualification requirements (2024)

Level	Requirements
Level 4	Four-year bachelor's degree from an approved institution that covers educational material primarily dealing with early childhood.
Level 3	Two-year diploma program from an approved institution that covers educational material primarily dealing with early childhood.
Level 2	One-year certificate in early childhood development from an approved institution.
Level 1	Early Childhood Essentials course and minimum one year of experience in a licensed ELCC facility. OR Combination of extensive relevant professional learning and experience in a licensed ELCC facility as determined by the Director of Early Learning and Child Care.
Level A	Unrecognized experience or education.
Provisional	All employees working with children in centre-based facilities on or before November 14, 2024, were given a temporary provisional certification valid for four months. New employees hired after November 14, 2024, must contact <a href="mailto:elcc_educator_certification@gov.nt.ca">elcc_educator_certification@gov.nt.ca</a> to be issued a provisional certification. Educators must apply for and become certified before the end of the four-month period.

*Note: See subsection 1(1) of the Student Financial Assistance Regulations for more information about qualification requirements.*

## ■ STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Child care centres and family child care homes must adhere to standards and regulations regarding staffing requirements, grouping of children, and licensing. Some additional key elements of child care standards and regulations, such as physical environments and food provision, are covered in the comparative tables in this publication, while others may be found in the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#) and [Early Learning and Child Care Regulations](#).

### Regulated child care centres

Licensed centre-based facilities are regulated under the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#) and [Early Learning and Child Care Regulations](#). The Act was most recently amended in 2023. The current regulations came into force in November 2024.

### STAFF:CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZE

The Northwest Territories does not specify a maximum number of children permitted in a child care centre.

## Staff:child ratio and maximum group size (2025)

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Staff:child ratio</i>	<i>Maximum group size</i>
<b>Separate age groups</b>	0 – 12 months	1:3
	13 – 24 months	1:4
	25 – 35 months	1:6
	3 years	1:8
	4 years	1:9
	5 – 11 years	1:10
<b>Mixed age groups</b>	0 – 24 months	1:4
	25 months – 5 years (child not enrolled in full-day school)	1:8
	25 months – 5 years (child enrolled in full-day school)	1:10
	5 – 11 years	1:10

*Note: Only ELCC staff persons (educators and assistants) count toward the ratios.*

*Note: The maximum group size does not apply when children are having meals, taking naps, or participating in special activities.*

## STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRES

### Qualification requirements for staffing a centre

In the Northwest Territories, staff qualification requirements are specified at the centre level.

In centre-based facilities, staff persons include ELCC educators and assistants. An ELCC educator has primary responsibility for the provision of care, instruction, and supervision of children, and has a valid or provisional recognition of qualifications at Level 1 – 4. An ELCC assistant provides support in the daily operations of the facility and has a valid or provisional recognition of qualifications at Level A or 1 – 4. ELCC educators and assistants are both considered primary staff people, along with facility operators, administrators, and supervisors.

In a centre-based facility, at least one ELCC educator must be present and working at all times. For every ELCC assistant working, at least one ELCC educator must also be working.

When more than six children are present at the facility, at least two ELCC staff members must be on duty. One of these individuals must have no responsibilities other than care of the children.

### Qualification requirements for on-site centre administrators/supervisors

The Northwest Territories does not have specific regulated requirements for centre-based facility administrators or supervisors.

### Other requirements

ELCC educators must be at least 19 years of age, and ELCC assistants must be at least 16 years of age.

All ELCC educators and ELCC assistants must have first aid and CPR certification.

Before starting at a centre, all staff, volunteers, and substitutes are required to submit a criminal record check with a vulnerable sector search. All staff and substitutes must also submit an up-to-



date immunization record and tuberculosis screening test.

Criminal record checks with vulnerable sector checks must be updated every two years.

### **LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES**

An ELCC facility licence is valid for up to one year. A facility must be inspected annually for licence renewal. Inspections are conducted by the Regional Early Childhood Consultant, Fire Inspector, and Environmental Health Officer. A licensed facility can be inspected at times other than the annual licence renewal inspection.

### **Regulated family child care**

Regulated family child care homes (termed home-based facilities) are regulated under the [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#) and [Early Learning and Child Care Regulations](#).

Family child care must be located in the private residence of the operator.

### **MODEL OF ORGANIZATION**

Regulated home-based facilities are individually licensed.

### **MAXIMUM CAPACITY**

A family child care provider may care for a maximum of eight children under 12 years old, including the operator's own children. Additionally, no more than six of the children may be under six years old, and no more than two children may be younger than two years.

### **FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS**

Family child care providers who have not completed post-secondary education with a focus on early childhood development must complete the Early Childhood Essentials course.

They must also undertake annual professional learning in child development and care through courses, seminars, or workshops. There is no specified number of hours required.

Home-based facility providers must be at least 19 years of age and have first aid and CPR certification. The provider, as well as any other adults residing in the home, must have a criminal record check with a vulnerable sector search, updated every two years.

### **LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES**

Home-based facility licences are valid for up to one year. A home-based facility must be inspected annually for licence renewal. Inspections are conducted by the Regional Early Childhood Consultant, Fire Inspector, and Environmental Health Officer. A home-based facility can be inspected at times other than the annual licence renewal inspection.

## **■ OF INTEREST**

### **Municipal role**

In the Northwest Territories, municipalities do not have a mandated role in child care governance, funding, or administration. Three municipalities operate child care centres: Sachs Harbour and Tsuigehtchic each operate one centre, and the Town of Fort Smith operates two.

### **Family resource program**

### **HEALTHY FAMILY PROGRAM**

The [Healthy Family Program](#) (HFP) is a family resource program managed and funded by the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority. It is a universal and free program open to anyone who has young children (prenatal to age six) and is interested in learning and sharing



about children and caregiving. The HFP offers family support services that focus on parent-child attachment, as well as parenting skills and childhood development (prenatal to age four). They connect families to resources in the community and provide one-on-one support based on what families want and need. The HFP has been renewed so that services are more inclusive, preventive, and centred around culture.

## CHILD CARE DATA

### ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

#### Number of spaces (2024, 2025)

Full-day centre spaces	2024	2025
Infant (<2 years)	202	206
Preschool-age (2 – 5 years, not yet in kindergarten or school)	608	616
<b>Total full-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>810</b>	<b>822</b>
Part-day centre spaces	2024	2025
Children not yet in kindergarten or school	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>
<i>Note: All centres for children not yet in school are licensed as full-day; some may offer a part-day program.</i>		
Before- and after-school care centre spaces (licensed or regulated)	2024	2025
Children in kindergarten and Grades 1 – 6	798	815
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>1,608</b>	<b>1,637</b>
Family child care licensed capacity	2024	2025
Full-day (children not yet in kindergarten or school)	246	270
Part-day (children attending kindergarten or school)	82	90
<b>Total family child care spaces</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>360</b>
<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)</b>	<b>1,936</b>	<b>1,997</b>

#### Number of child care centres and family child care homes (2024)

##### Centre-based child care

<b>Total number of centres</b>	<b>49</b>
<i>Note: This figure may not be comparable to ECEC in Canada 2023.</i>	
<b>Total number of licences</b>	<b>65</b>

---

### Centre-based programs

Centres providing a full-day program	35
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 4 – 12 years)	40
Centres providing infant care (<2 years)	22
Centres providing preschool-age care (2 – 5 years)	34
Centres providing a Francophone child care program	7
Centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – Grade 12)	26

---

### Regulated family child care

Individually licensed family child care homes (active)	41
--	----

---

### Participation in CWELCC

Centres providing a full-day program	35
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 4 – 12 years)	40

---

<b>Total number of child care centres receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>49</b>
--	-----------

---

<b>Total number of licensed family child care homes receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>41</b>
--	-----------

---

## Auspice (2024)

---

### Centres by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit	0
Non-profit	30
Public	35

*Note: This table reflects a breakdown of the number of licences, not centres.*

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>BASC<sup>2</sup></i>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	0	0	0
Non-profit and public	810	798	1,608

<sup>1</sup> Children 0 – 5 years, not yet in school.

<sup>2</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 4 – 12 years).

## Auspice (2025)

### Centre spaces by auspice

Auspice	Full-day <sup>1</sup>	BASC <sup>2</sup>	Total
For-profit	0	0	0
Non-profit and public	822	815	1,637

<sup>1</sup> Children 0 – 5 years, not yet in school.

<sup>2</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 4 – 12 years).

## Publicly operated child care (2024)

### Publicly operated child care

Entity type	Licence holders	Centres	Full-day spaces	BASC spaces <sup>1</sup>	Total spaces
Municipality	3	4	48	46	94
School authority	4	13	10	185	195
Indigenous governing body	10	18	350	64	414
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>703</b>

Note: The hamlets of Sachs Harbour and Tsuigehtchic each operate one centre, and the Town of Fort Smith operates two centres. The school authorities operating child care centres are the Yellowknife Public Denominational District Education Authority, the Commission Scolaire Francophone – Territoires du Nord-Ouest, and the Hay River Reserve District Education Authority.

<sup>1</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 4 – 12 years).

## Fee subsidies (2024)

### Number of children receiving fee subsidies

Subsidies through the Income Assistance Program	3
---	---

## Disability support (2024)

### Number of children receiving disability support

Children in licensed child care receiving disability support funding	Not available
--	---------------

## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

The Northwest Territories does not currently report on enrolment.

## CHILD CARE FUNDING

The types of funding available for child care services in the Northwest Territories include operational funding, one-time funding, fee subsidies, and other ELCC funding programs. See [Early Learning and Child Care](#) for more information.

### ■ ELIGIBILITY FOR CWELCC FUNDING

The CWELCC plan provides federal funds to provinces and territories for early learning and child care operational and one-time funding and fee subsidies for licensed child care for children aged 0 – 5. Funded new child care expansion is to be public and non-profit unless otherwise specified in the jurisdiction's agreement. Provinces and territories contribute their own funds and design their own policies and provision within this framework.

In the Northwest Territories, the following are eligible for operational funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools);
- Licensed before- and after-school centres that enrol children under age six; and
- Licensed family child care.

The Northwest Territories has no for-profit centres and does not fund them. New for-profit centres are not eligible for operational funding.

In the Northwest Territories, the following are eligible for capital funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools);

- Licensed before- and after-school centres that enrol children under age six; and
- Licensed family child care.

New for-profit centres are not eligible for capital funding.

### ■ CHILD CARE SERVICES' ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

Funding is available to all licensed non-profit child care centres and licensed home-based providers. For-profit centres are not eligible for government funding and support. There are no for-profit centres in the Northwest Territories.

### ■ TYPES OF FUNDING

#### **Operational funding**

The Northwest Territories introduced a [new funding model](#) on April 1, 2024. For centre-based programs, this funding model combines previous funding into two new types of operational funding: Dedicated Funding and Flexible Funding. Replacing the previous attendance-based funding model, the new model is based on enrolment (licensed spaces) to provide operators with stable and predictable funding that provides more flexibility when they may be closed or when a child is absent.

#### **EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM OPERATING SUBSIDY**

The Early Childhood Program Operating Subsidy funding stream ended on March 31, 2024. It was an attendance-based quarterly contribution through which licensed centres and home-based facilities received a fixed daily rate per attending child.

Facilities located at government-owned buildings were funded at 75% of the daily rate. All licensed ELCC facilities were eligible for this funding.

#### **Full-time daily rates per child for the Early Childhood Program Operating Subsidy (ended March 31, 2024)**

	<b>Zone A</b>	<b>Zone B</b>
Infant/child with disability	\$33.75/child	\$49.66/child
Preschool-age	\$14.17/child	\$19.81/child
Out-Of-School	\$4.72/child	\$5.01/child

*Note: Part-time spaces were funded at half the full-time rate.*

*Note: The 2017 – 2021 Canada-Northwest Territories Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement and action plan offered enhanced Early Childhood Program Operating Subsidy funding for licensed centre-based programs with preschool and Out-Of-School spaces.*

#### **EARLY CHILDHOOD STAFF GRANT**

Until September 30, 2022, the Northwest Territories provided the Early Childhood Staff Grant, which was paid directly to educators based on hours worked and level of post-secondary education. In 2022, this grant was replaced by the Retention Incentive to streamline staff wage enhancement for early childhood educators.

#### **RETENTION INCENTIVE**

The Retention Incentive ended on March 31, 2024. Implemented in October 2022, Retention Incentive funding was a two-year transitionary step to address recruitment and retention challenges until a wage grid was implemented in the 2024 – 2025 fiscal year. Because of the Retention Incentive, early childhood educators working in licensed centre-based facilities no longer needed to apply to receive wage top-ups, as this funding was provided directly from the employer. The Retention Incentive was retroactive to April 1, 2022.

#### **PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY GRANT**

The Program Sustainability Grant was introduced in 2021 – 2022 and ended March 31, 2024.

It provided additional operating funding to licensed facilities that offered free child care for families (including those operated by Indigenous governments) to help offset their underlying cost base. Licensed facilities that charged child care fees were ineligible.

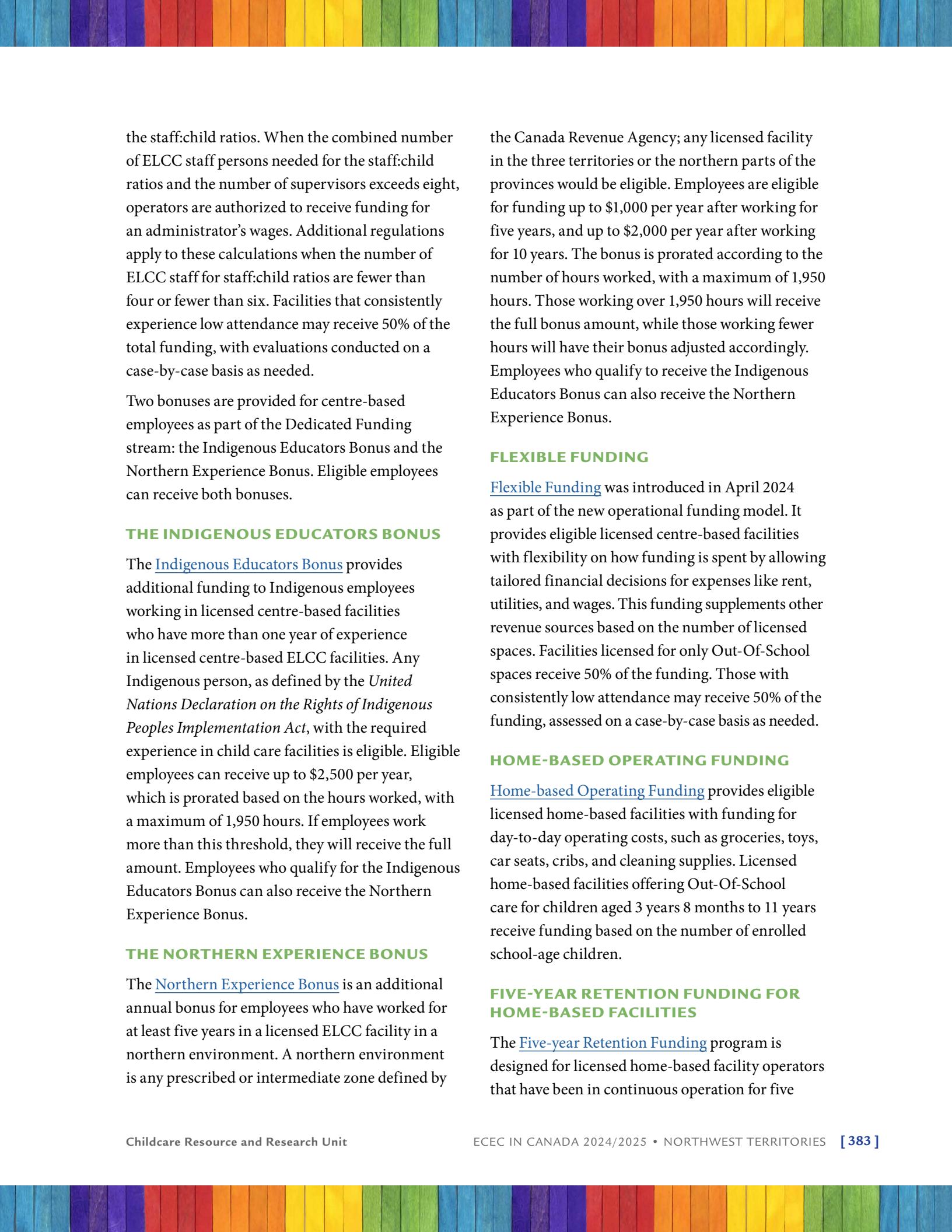
#### **CHILD CARE FEE REDUCTION**

In April 2024, the Child Care Fee Reduction (CCFR) funding for licensed centre-based programs was integrated into the new operational funding model. It provides funding to eligible child care programs to reduce child care fees charged to families. Funding amounts vary based on the type of child care spaces offered and the ages of the enrolled children. Home-based facilities receive the CCFR directly to reduce fees and receive monthly administration funding based on the number of registered children.

#### **DEDICATED FUNDING**

Dedicated Funding was introduced in April 2024 as part of the new operational funding model. Funding is allocated to support the wages of early childhood educators working in licensed centre-based facilities, along with employer-related costs (additional 11.4%). Licensed centre-based facilities automatically qualify for this funding and do not need to apply for it; however, they are required to submit quarterly and annual reporting to continue receiving it.

Funding is determined based on the required number of ELCC staff according to the necessary staff:child ratio. For every three funded ELCC staff persons, one additional ELCC staff person is funded. An operator is also eligible to receive additional funding for one supervisor's wages for every six ELCC staff persons who are necessary for



the staff:child ratios. When the combined number of ELCC staff persons needed for the staff:child ratios and the number of supervisors exceeds eight, operators are authorized to receive funding for an administrator's wages. Additional regulations apply to these calculations when the number of ELCC staff for staff:child ratios are fewer than four or fewer than six. Facilities that consistently experience low attendance may receive 50% of the total funding, with evaluations conducted on a case-by-case basis as needed.

Two bonuses are provided for centre-based employees as part of the Dedicated Funding stream: the Indigenous Educators Bonus and the Northern Experience Bonus. Eligible employees can receive both bonuses.

### THE INDIGENOUS EDUCATORS BONUS

The [Indigenous Educators Bonus](#) provides additional funding to Indigenous employees working in licensed centre-based facilities who have more than one year of experience in licensed centre-based ELCC facilities. Any Indigenous person, as defined by the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Act*, with the required experience in child care facilities is eligible. Eligible employees can receive up to \$2,500 per year, which is prorated based on the hours worked, with a maximum of 1,950 hours. If employees work more than this threshold, they will receive the full amount. Employees who qualify for the Indigenous Educators Bonus can also receive the Northern Experience Bonus.

### THE NORTHERN EXPERIENCE BONUS

The [Northern Experience Bonus](#) is an additional annual bonus for employees who have worked for at least five years in a licensed ELCC facility in a northern environment. A northern environment is any prescribed or intermediate zone defined by

the Canada Revenue Agency; any licensed facility in the three territories or the northern parts of the provinces would be eligible. Employees are eligible for funding up to \$1,000 per year after working for five years, and up to \$2,000 per year after working for 10 years. The bonus is prorated according to the number of hours worked, with a maximum of 1,950 hours. Those working over 1,950 hours will receive the full bonus amount, while those working fewer hours will have their bonus adjusted accordingly. Employees who qualify to receive the Indigenous Educators Bonus can also receive the Northern Experience Bonus.

### FLEXIBLE FUNDING

[Flexible Funding](#) was introduced in April 2024 as part of the new operational funding model. It provides eligible licensed centre-based facilities with flexibility on how funding is spent by allowing tailored financial decisions for expenses like rent, utilities, and wages. This funding supplements other revenue sources based on the number of licensed spaces. Facilities licensed for only Out-Of-School spaces receive 50% of the funding. Those with consistently low attendance may receive 50% of the funding, assessed on a case-by-case basis as needed.

### HOME-BASED OPERATING FUNDING

[Home-based Operating Funding](#) provides eligible licensed home-based facilities with funding for day-to-day operating costs, such as groceries, toys, car seats, cribs, and cleaning supplies. Licensed home-based facilities offering Out-Of-School care for children aged 3 years 8 months to 11 years receive funding based on the number of enrolled school-age children.

### FIVE-YEAR RETENTION FUNDING FOR HOME-BASED FACILITIES

The [Five-year Retention Funding](#) program is designed for licensed home-based facility operators that have been in continuous operation for five

years or more. To qualify as continuously operated, the program operators must have maintained their home-based facility licence for at least five years, including during leaves such as maternity or parental leave and during times spent studying early learning and child care. Eligible home-based facility operators will receive \$2,500 per year starting on their five-year anniversary of continuous operation. For instance, a home-based facility licensed in January 2020 began receiving this funding in January 2025 and will continue to receive it annually until it closes.

### **SUPPORTING CHILD INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION**

The [Supporting Child Inclusion and Participation](#) (SCIP) program funds eligible organizations to create community play-based early childhood programs for families. It provides supports for children with developmental needs who require enhanced or individual assistance to safely and fully participate in early learning. There are two types of SCIP funding: Early Years Community Program Funding and Early Learning and Child Care Inclusion Funding. See the Northwest Territories' ["Children with disabilities"](#) section for more information.

### **One-time funding**

#### **EARLY CHILDHOOD INFRASTRUCTURE FUND**

The [Early Childhood Infrastructure Fund](#) provides funding for projects that preserve or expand existing infrastructure of licensed centre-based child care spaces or create new licensed centre-based child care spaces. To be eligible for funding, a centre must be a non-profit organization or operated by an Indigenous government. Funding priority is given to communities with limited or non-existent child care programming. Available funding of \$5.9 million was allocated for 2024 –

2025. The amount applicants receive is determined based on each proposal and available funding.

### **NEW CHILD CARE SPACES FUND**

The [New Child Care Spaces Fund](#) was established in 2017 as part of the 2017 – 2021 Canada-Northwest Territories Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement to replace the former Start-up Subsidy. This application-based funding assists with the creation of new licensed early learning and child care spaces by providing funding for the purchase of equipment and supplies. This funding cannot be used toward staffing or lease payments. It is also available to licensed facilities that wish to re-profile spaces based on community needs. Licensed home-based facilities are eligible to receive a flat amount based on the zone they are in, whereas centre-based facilities receive a fixed amount per type of licensed space.

---

#### **New Child Care Spaces Fund payment per full-day centre space (2025)**

	<b>Zone A</b>	<b>Zone B</b>
Infant/child with disability	\$2,500	\$4,200
Preschool-age	\$1,700	\$2,800
Out-Of-School	\$500	\$1,000

#### **Flat rate payment**

Home-based facility	\$3,000	\$4,500
---------------------	---------	---------

*Note: Zone A is Behchokǫ̀, Dettah, Enterprise, Fort Liard, Fort Providence, Fort Resolution, Fort Simpson, Fort Smith, Hay River, Jean Marie River, Kakisa, Kátł'odeeche First Nation, Ndilo, Wrigley, and Yellowknife.*

*Note: Zone B is Aklavik, Colville Lake, Délı̨nę, Fort Good Hope, Fort McPherson, Gamèti, Inuvik, Lutselk'ę, Nahanni Butte, Norman Wells, Paulatuk, Sachs Harbour, Sambaa K'ę, Tsigehtchic, Tuktoyaktuk, Tulita, Ulukhaktok, Wekweètı̨, and Whati.*

*Note: Part-time spaces are funded at half the full-time rate. Programs located in government-owned buildings, including schools, are funded at 75% of the full-time rate.*

## HEALTH AND SAFETY FUNDING

The Health and Safety Funding program supports licensed child care programs with costs associated with repairs and maintenance required by annual health and fire safety inspections. [Home-based facilities](#) are eligible for one-time funding of up to \$10,000 during their start-up phase, while licensed [centre-based facilities](#) may receive up to \$10,000 per year, if necessary, to address deficiencies identified during a fire or environmental health inspection. This funding consists of two components: a maximum of \$5,000 can be used towards improvements required by environmental health inspections, and another \$5,000 maximum can be used towards improvements required by fire safety inspections.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT GRANTS

The Provider Enhancement Grant, the Early Childhood Cultural Resource Grant, and the Technology Grant were available through the Canada-Northwest Territories Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreement between April 1, 2021, and March 31, 2024.

The Provider Enhancement Grant provided one-time funding to licensed centre-based facilities and home-based facilities. It assisted licensed facilities with purchasing or replacing equipment, such as high chairs, car seats, playground equipment, furniture, and other learning materials.

The Early Childhood Cultural Resource Grant provided licensed centre-based ELCC facilities with funding to purchase culturally relevant materials and resources.

The Technology Grant was provided as a one-time grant to licensed centre-based facilities for the purchase of equipment, such as computers and printers, to support daily operations and participate in online learning opportunities. New

licensed centre-based programs and/or programs that did not previously receive the Technology Grant were eligible for the funding in 2021 – 2022.

## Fee subsidies

The Northwest Territories does not have a stand-alone child care subsidy program. The [Income Assistance Program](#), though not specific to child care, offers financial support to assist with child care expenses for children enrolled in an ELCC facility. Applicants may also be eligible for support for school-break camps and occasional babysitting.

## Other ELCC funding

### EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE SCHOLARSHIP

[Early Learning and Child Care Scholarship](#) funding supports both full-time and part-time post-secondary students enrolled in diploma or degree programs in early childhood development. Up to \$500 per course is available for part-time students, with a maximum of \$2,500 per school year, and \$5,000 per school year is available for full-time students. To be eligible, applicants must be residents of the Northwest Territories and enrolled in accredited institutions, either in-person or online. Preference may be given to first-year students, those who have not previously received the scholarship, individuals from smaller Northwest Territories communities, and those planning to return to the Northwest Territories after graduation to work in early childhood development. Part-time applicants currently employed in licensed child care programs are also considered.

## **FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024)**

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

### **Operational funding**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Early Childhood Program (ECP) Operating Subsidy	\$4,792,609
Child Care Fee Reduction	\$4,786,319
Program Sustainability Grant	\$399,364
Supporting Child Inclusion and Participation Additional Staff (One-to-one or one-to-multiple staff to child support)	\$957,910
Supporting Child Inclusion and Participation (Quality Enhancement Funding)	\$122,605

*Note: The Supporting Child Inclusion and Participation program was reorganized and renamed in April 2025.*

<b>Total operational funding</b>	<b>\$11,058,807</b>
----------------------------------	---------------------

*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, disability funding, and other grants/funding paid on a recurring basis.*

### **One-time funding – capital (major and minor)**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Early Childhood Infrastructure Fund	\$646,360
New Child Care Spaces Fund	\$95,641

### **One-time funding – other**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Retention Incentive Grant	\$2,239,399
Health and Safety Funding	\$66,370
Program Quality Enhancement	\$11,000
<b>Total one-time funding</b>	<b>\$3,058,770</b>

*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.*

### **Fee subsidies**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Income Assistance Program	Not available
<b>TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, and fee subsidies)</b>	<b>\$14,117,577</b>

### **Other ELCC funding**

<b>Program</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Early Learning and Child Care Scholarship	\$130,000
Post-secondary Learning Opportunity	\$1,616,933
Professional Development and Training (Salaries and Operational Expenditure)	\$600,569
Supporting Child Inclusion and Participation (Community Initiatives)	\$271,610
Supporting Child Inclusion and Participation (Small Community Sustainability)	\$57,230
<b>Total other ELCC funding</b>	<b>\$2,676,342</b>

---

## Federal transfers to the Northwest Territories

---

<i>Federal transfer</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$2,605,471
Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care	\$9,722,813
Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$2,295,426

---

*Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to the Northwest Territories for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements, as they are updated annually in line with population estimates. 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 (2025).

---



# Nunavut

Overview	389	<b>CHILD CARE FUNDING</b>	<b>408</b>
Territorial context	390	Eligibility for CWELCC funding	408
<b>KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA</b>	<b>392</b>	Child care services' eligibility for funding	408
Kindergarten for five-year-olds	392	Types of funding	408
Curriculum framework	392	Funding for regulated child care (fiscal year 2023 – 2024)	411
Enrolment	392		
Recent or anticipated developments	393		
<b>CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS</b>	<b>394</b>		
Administration	394		
Curriculum framework	395		
Children with disabilities	395		
First Nations, Métis, and Inuit child care	396		
Parent fees	397		
Workforce	398		
Standards and regulations	399		
Of interest	402		
<b>CHILD CARE DATA</b>	<b>403</b>		
Regulated child care space statistics	403		
Regulated child care enrolment statistics	406		

# Nunavut

## OVERVIEW

In Nunavut, the Department of Education is responsible for regulated child care centres, family child care, kindergarten, and school-age child care.

Licensed child care includes child care centres, part-day nursery schools, school-age child care (termed Out-Of-School Day Care), and family child care.

Centre-based child care is delivered by non-profit and public operators, including hamlets and school authorities. There is no for-profit child care in Nunavut.

Family child care homes (termed Family Home Day Cares) are individually licensed.

Part-day kindergarten is available for all five-year-olds. It is not compulsory. Nunavut is phasing in full school-day kindergarten across the territory. There is no kindergarten for four-year-olds.

As of December 1, 2022, parent fees for infants and preschool-age children (who have not yet entered Grade 1) in child care centres and family child care homes receiving operating grants were set at a maximum fee of \$10/day or \$217/month. Nunavut also provides an income-tested Daycare Subsidy for low-income families, which can be used in licensed and unlicensed child care.

Nunavut introduced the Early Learning and Child Care Wage Scale in 2023. Wage rates were increased on April 1, 2024, and the Nunavut Northern Allowance was integrated into the wage scale. It applies to staff working in licensed centres for children 0 – 6 years and Family Home Day Care operators. After-school programs are not included.

Nunavut signed the Canada-Nunavut Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement in January 2022. It allocated \$61 million over five years to the territory.

In March 2025, Nunavut accepted the federal offer to extend its bilateral agreement until 2031.

### Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)

	2021	2025	Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025
Non-profit and public	794	922	+128
For-profit	0	0	<i>Not applicable</i>
<b>Total full-day spaces</b>	<b>794</b>	<b>922</b>	<b>+128</b>
Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit	0%	0%	-
Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit	-	-	<i>Not applicable</i>

## ■ TERRITORIAL CONTEXT

Some of the following figures are rounded; however, the totals are based on exact figures. Therefore, totals may not equal the sum of the rounded figures.

### Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	1,800
3 – 5	2,600
6 – 12	5,400
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,800</b>

### Number of children 0 – 12 years with employed mothers (aggregated) (2024 rounded estimate)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Number of children</i>
0 – 2	600
3 – 5	1,100
6 – 12	2,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,400</b>

### 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	15	0	3,985	30	10
5 – 9	10	0	3,670	25	10
10 – 14	10	0	3,450	25	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11,105</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>20</b>

### Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2024 rounded estimate)

*Not available*

### Living arrangements by age of child (2021)

<i>Age</i>	<i>Living with two parents</i>	<i>Living with one parent</i>			<i>Total</i>
		<i>Lone mother</i>	<i>Lone father</i>		
0 – 4	2,895	930	395		1,325
5 – 9	2,695	805	295		1,105
10 – 14	2,445	735	260		995

---

**Languages spoken most often at home (2021)**

<i>Age</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Non-official</i>	<i>Multiple</i>
0 – 4	1,950	30	2,050	355
5 – 9	1,880	45	1,670	390
10 – 14	1,635	30	1,690	345
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,465</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>5,405</b>	<b>1,095</b>

---

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

<i>Two-parent families</i>	<i>Male lone parent</i>	<i>Female lone parent</i>
\$118,000	\$42,400	\$52,000

---

## KINDERGARTEN POLICY, PROGRAMS, AND DATA

### KINDERGARTEN FOR FIVE-YEAR-OLDS

#### Territorial responsibility

Department of Education  
Phone: 867-975-5666  
Email: [info.edu@gov.nu.ca](mailto:info.edu@gov.nu.ca)  
Website: [gov.nu.ca/en/education-and-schools](http://gov.nu.ca/en/education-and-schools)

#### Legislation

Nunavut Legislative Assembly. *Education Act*.  
SNu2008, C15.

#### Provision

##### Kindergarten provision

<b>Definition</b>	Part-day program for all five-year-olds.
<b>Eligibility</b>	Five years old by December 31.
<b>Compulsory schooling</b>	Not compulsory, but most eligible children attend.
<b>Entitlement</b>	All eligible children have access.
<b>Instructional hours per day</b>	Approximately three hours (485 – 570 hours per year).
<b>Class size</b>	No set class sizes.

##### Teacher qualifications and certification

To be a qualified kindergarten teacher in Nunavut requires:

- A Bachelor of Education degree (Interim Professional);
- A two-year teacher training program while working toward completion of a Bachelor of Education degree (Interim Standard); or

- A two-year early childhood education program (Interim Kindergarten) combined with a 25-hour teacher training program while working toward completion of a one-year teacher training program.

In cases where no qualified educator is available, a person may be hired on a Letter of Authority to teach kindergarten.

Kindergarten teachers are not required to have an early childhood qualification.

### CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

A new kindergarten to Grade 6 Nunavut curriculum was announced on [March 13, 2025](#), and was first implemented in kindergarten programs in the 2025 – 2026 school year.

The [kindergarten curriculum](#) (2025) is a mandatory framework for kindergarten in all public schools in Nunavut. Teaching materials are available in Inuktitut and English.

### ENROLMENT

#### Kindergarten enrolment (2024 – 2025 school year)

##### Enrolment in public schools

Full school-day kindergarten for 5-year-olds	213
Part-day kindergarten for 5-year-olds	573
<b>Total kindergarten enrolment</b>	<b>786</b>



## ■ RECENT OR ANTICIPATED DEVELOPMENTS

### Full-day Kindergarten Pilot

The Department of Education is phasing in [full school-day kindergarten](#) programs across Nunavut, with a maximum of six instructional hours per day. The first step of the system-wide rollout was the introduction of full school-day programs in five schools during the 2023 – 2024 school year, followed by the implementation of full-day kindergarten in seven more schools in 2024 – 2025. The Department is exploring options for further roll-out.

# CHILD CARE POLICY AND PROGRAMS

## ■ ADMINISTRATION

### Territorial responsibility

Department of Education  
Early Learning and Child Care Division  
Phone: 867-975-5600  
Email: [info.edu@gov.nu.ca](mailto:info.edu@gov.nu.ca)  
Website: [gov.nu.ca/education/information/early-learning-and-child-care](http://gov.nu.ca/education/information/early-learning-and-child-care)

### Legislation

Nunavut. Legislative Assembly. [Consolidation of Child Day Care Act](#). RSNWT(Nu) 1988, c. C-5

Nunavut. Legislative Assembly. [Consolidation of Child Day Care Standards Regulations](#).

RRNWT(Nu) 1990, c. C-3

Nunavut has developed new early learning and child care legislation. Public consultations were held in 2024, and a [concluding report](#) was published November 6, 2024.

Bill 66, [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#), was introduced on February 24, 2025, and received assent on June 3, 2025. It proposes to replace the *Child Day Care Act* Nunavut inherited when it became a territory in 1999. See the [Government of Nunavut website](#) for further information about the substantial changes in this bill.

### Service descriptions

#### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

There are no health, safety, or training requirements or provision for public oversight in unregulated child care. There may be attention by public officials on a complaint basis. See the [Consolidation of Child Day Care Act](#) for more information.

#### Family child care

A maximum of four children up to 12 years old, including the caregiver's own children, are permitted in unregulated family child care.

#### REGULATED CHILD CARE

##### Child care centre

Child care centres (termed Child Day Care Facilities) provide group child care for five or more children aged 0 – 12 years by a person who is not a relative of a majority of the children. Child care centres can provide full-day (five or more consecutive hours/day) or part-day (less than five consecutive hours/day) care.

##### Nursery school

Nursery schools (termed Nursery School Day Care) are for children under six years of age for four consecutive hours or less per day, including Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC), which is licensed by the territory.

##### School-age child care

School-age child care (termed Out-Of-School Day Care) programs are provided after the completion of the school day for school-age children from Grades 1 – 6. Some schools offering full-day kindergarten accept school-age children from kindergarten to Grade 6. Children in kindergarten are usually included in the preschool/full-day child care age group.

#### Family child care

Regulated family child care (termed Family Home Day Care) is operated within the private residence of the provider. A Family Home Day Care may care for a maximum of eight children under 12 years old, including the provider's own children.

## CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

[Nunavut Early Learning and Child Care Quality Framework](#) (2023) is a voluntary curriculum framework designed for various early learning child care settings in Nunavut, including licensed child care centres, Family Home Day Cares, and community-based programs. It focuses on children from birth to six years old. The framework recognizes that programs and services must be grounded in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (traditional knowledge) and driven by the goals of revitalizing and retaining Inuit language and culture.

[Early Learning and Child Care Quality Framework Action Plan 2024 – 2033](#) (2024) is a companion action plan that outlines the steps the Department of Education will take to implement the *Nunavut Early Learning and Child Care Quality Framework*.

## CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

### Terminology and approach

Nunavut uses the term “children with special needs” to refer to children with disabilities.

In Nunavut, all licensed child care centres, unlicensed early learning programs, Family Home Day Cares, and other eligible organizations can receive funding through the [Healthy Children Initiative](#) to support inclusion.

Healthy Children Initiative funding is available for two categories of programs: Supportive Child Services, which is specific to the individual child, and Community Initiatives, which covers the whole child care program.

There are no specific qualifications or requirements for staff who work with children with disabilities.

### Programs supporting inclusion in ELCC

The Healthy Children Initiative supports communities in developing programs that best meet the needs of local children as well as initiatives that provide services to children requiring intensive or specific assistance to participate in early learning and child care programs, from the prenatal period to age six, and their families.

In Nunavut, there is no child care service solely or primarily for children with disabilities.

### Access to inclusive ELCC

Child care programs are not required to accept children with disabilities.

Healthy Children Initiative funding is available to cover all eligible children. A diagnosis or other documentation is required for a child’s eligibility for the Supportive Child Services funding stream. Service providers must complete a proposal outlining the support services required, why the services are needed, who will participate, the organizations involved, success criteria, and a detailed budget. A support letter from a health professional may be included but is not mandatory.

Newly constructed or renovated facilities are required to meet the accessibility standards in the [National Building Code](#).

A new [Inclusion and Equity Fund](#) program became available to licensed child care centres serving children aged 0 – 6 to purchase adaptive furniture, accessible play equipment, or other materials to enhance inclusive and equitable programming.

In Nunavut, there is no wait, delay, or administrative barrier for receiving inclusion funding.

See [Early Learning and Child Care Strategic Action Plan for Inclusion and Equity 2023 – 2026](#) for more information about Nunavut’s inclusion policies.

## ■ FIRST NATIONS, MÉTIS, AND INUIT CHILD CARE

In Nunavut, 84% of Nunavummiut (individuals living in Nunavut) identified as Inuit in the most recent census (2021). In the 24 communities outside Iqaluit, the territorial capital, the population is 90 – 95% Inuit. As such, all licensed child care centres in Nunavut primarily serve Inuit children, with the exception of French language centres.

The territory of Nunavut is the result of one land claim agreement that took effect April 1, 1999. The entire territory is part of Inuit Nunangat; there are no reserves.

Nunavut is divided into three administrative regions: Qikiqtaaluk (Baffin), Kivalliq, and Kitikmeot.

The Government of Nunavut licenses all child care centres in the territory, including the seven AHSUNC programs. These are included in the overall territorial space statistics.

### Indigenous-specific resources/initiatives

The Department of Education's Early Learning and Child Care Division provides resources to support culturally and linguistically appropriate programming in all licensed child care centres. The materials are Nunavut-focused (Inuit homeland) and available in all official languages: Inuktut, English, and French.

In addition to federal and territorial government spending, regional Inuit organizations provide funding, which varies between the regions. This funding provides additional operations and maintenance funding for licensed child care centres where at least 50% of the children enrolled and the membership of the board of directors are Inuit. It also provides additional wage subsidies, specifically for Nunavut Inuit.

Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI) coordinates and manages Inuit responsibilities set out in the Nunavut Agreement and ensures that the federal and territorial governments fulfill their obligations. NTI disperses federal Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care (IELCC) funding to the Regional Inuit Organizations (RIAs) Kitikmeot Inuit Association, Kivalliq Inuit Association, and Qikiqtani Inuit Association. It also chairs Inunnguinirmut Tukimuaqtittijiit, a committee comprised of NTI, the three RIAs, and Kakivak Association, with the Department of Education participating by invitation to collaborate on ELCC matters.

Kakivak, a community and economic development organization in the Qikiqtani (formerly known as Baffin) region, has received federal funding to build new licensed child care centres; four projects are underway in the region.

Kakivak also offers a staff incentive for all Inuit employees working in a child care centre in the Qikiqtani region. This program provides a \$7/hour wage top-up for each Inuit employee working in a child care centre. In 2021 – 2022, 196 Inuit child care employees in 17 child care centres accessed this wage top-up through Kakivak.

The Kitikmeot Inuit Association provides a \$2/hour top-up to all ELCC centre staff in its region. It also provides funding to some ELCC centres to offset the costs associated with some of their staff.

During the 2024 – 2025 academic year, Nunavut Arctic College offered the Early Childhood Educator certificate program through its Iqaluit campus. The program is offered in English and Inuktitut and is grounded in Inuit values. Previous ECE course offerings in Arviat and Igloolik were available to those who were already employed in licensed child care centres.

## PARENT FEES

As of December 1, 2022, parent fees for infants and preschool-age children (who have not yet entered Grade 1) in child care centres and family child care homes receiving operating grants were set at a maximum fee of \$10/day or \$217/month.

Before the implementation of the \$10/day fee, average parent fees for infants and preschool-age children ranged from \$45 – \$65/day.

Fees for school-age children range from \$17.00 to \$21.20 per day. One after-school program does not charge a fee.

### Additional fees

Operators are not permitted to charge waitlist fees or additional fees for food, transportation, extended hours, or field trips.

### Parent fee subsidies

The [Daycare Subsidy](#) is available to provide financial support to low-income families who reside in Nunavut to help make child care more affordable while they pursue education or training opportunities outside the home. All eligible families are entitled to a fee subsidy. There is no waitlist.

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible for a Daycare Subsidy, parents must be 18 years or older and either working, in school, or in a training program.

### FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY

Subsidy eligibility is based on a needs test that considers family income and eligible living expenses (rent, utilities, food and clothing, and actual child care costs).

## SUBSIDY RATES

The subsidy rate is the amount paid by the territorial government to the service on behalf of an eligible parent to cover all or part of the parent fee.

### Maximum monthly fee subsidy rates for licensed child care (2021)

Type of care	Full-time	Part-time
Licensed centre	\$700	\$350
Licensed Family Home Day Care	\$600	\$300
School-age care	–	\$145

Nunavut also provides subsidies for unlicensed care at a monthly rate of \$500 for full-day care and \$250 for part-day care.

### Additional programs that subsidize individual families

The [Young Parents Stay Learning \(YPSL\) Program](#) is a subsidy program to help young parents with the cost of child care while the parent attends school. Any elementary, middle, or high school student (or student under age 18 attending a post-secondary program) in Nunavut who has one or more children is eligible for the subsidy.

The parent must use regulated child care if available; unregulated care may be approved in certain circumstances. A parent may not also use the Daycare Subsidy.

Since fee reduction came into effect on December 1, 2022, YPSL covers the \$10/day parent fee, with the remainder of the cost covered by the federal funding (in licensed centres under the \$10/day program).

## ■ WORKFORCE

### Child care centre staff wages

#### TERRITORIAL WAGE DATA

Current average wage data are not available.

#### WAGE ENHANCEMENT

In the 2021 – 2022 fiscal year, a wage top-up and retention bonus were implemented as [interim measures](#) for staff at licensed child care facilities. The wage top-up was \$4.50/hour above workers' current pay, with over \$2.5 million allocated to support 52 child care centres during the fiscal year. Additionally, a retention bonus was offered to full-time, part-time, and casual child care workers, totaling over \$2.6 million for 47 child care centres.

In addition to the wage top-up and retention bonuses, increased operating funding was available to licensed facilities through the Canada-Nunavut Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (Multilateral Framework 2020 – 2021). This funding aimed to improve staff wages, maintain

fees, and allow for a cost-of-living increase of no more than 3% per year. To be eligible for this funding, licensed facilities were required to pay staff \$20/hour or more.

The wage top-up ended September 30, 2023, and was replaced by the wage grid.

#### TERRITORIAL WAGE GRID FOR CENTRE STAFF

On October 1, 2023, Nunavut introduced the Early Learning and Child Care Wage Scale (grid) for educators, with 2023, 2024, and 2025 versions for licensed child care centre staff serving children 0 – 6 years old and Family Home Day Care operators. After-school programs are not included.

Effective April 1, 2024, the starting hourly wage for an ECE with no experience or qualifications was \$27.45. Employees also receive an hourly Nunavut northern allowance ranging from \$7.70 to \$14.63.

As of March 31, 2025, 89% of licensed child care centres for children 0 – 5 years of age had signed onto the ELCC Wage Scale.

#### Hourly wage grid (effective April 1, 2024)

<i>Position and level</i>	<i>Step/years of experience</i>					
	<i>1/0</i>	<i>2/1</i>	<i>3/2</i>	<i>4/3</i>	<i>5/4</i>	<i>6/5+</i>
<i>Management category – Level 1</i>	\$38.90	\$39.90	\$40.92	\$41.97	\$43.04	\$44.14
<i>Management category – Level 2</i>	\$41.66	\$42.72	\$43.83	\$44.95	\$46.09	\$42.27
<i>Management category – Level 3</i>	\$44.61	\$45.76	\$46.93	\$48.14	\$49.36	\$50.63
<i>ECE – Level 1</i>	\$27.45	\$28.16	\$28.87	\$29.61	\$30.37	\$31.15
<i>ECE – Level 2</i>	\$29.40	\$30.15	\$30.92	\$31.72	\$32.53	\$33.36
<i>ECE – Level 3</i>	\$31.48	\$32.29	\$33.12	\$33.96	\$34.84	\$35.73
<i>Program support</i>	\$24.88	\$25.52	\$26.17	\$26.84	\$27.52	\$28.23
<i>Centre support</i>	\$24.63	\$25.27	\$25.91	\$26.58	\$27.26	\$27.96

*Note: A northern allowance ranging from \$7.70/hour to \$14.63/hour is available.*

## Hourly wage grid (effective April 1, 2025)

Position and level	Step/years of experience					
	1/0	2/1	3/2	4/3	5/4	6/5+
<b>Management category – Level 1</b>	\$41.87	\$42.94	\$44.03	\$45.16	\$46.32	\$47.50
<b>Management category – Level 2</b>	\$44.84	\$45.98	\$47.17	\$48.37	\$49.60	\$50.88
<b>Management category – Level 3</b>	\$48.02	\$49.25	\$50.51	\$51.81	\$53.13	\$54.49
<b>ECE – Level 1</b>	\$29.54	\$30.30	\$31.07	\$31.87	\$32.68	\$33.52
<b>ECE – Level 2</b>	\$31.64	\$32.45	\$33.28	\$34.14	\$35.01	\$35.91
<b>ECE – Level 3</b>	\$33.88	\$34.75	\$35.65	\$36.55	\$37.49	\$38.45
<b>Program support</b>	\$26.78	\$27.46	\$28.17	\$28.88	\$29.62	\$30.38
<b>Centre support</b>	\$26.51	\$27.19	\$27.89	\$28.60	\$29.34	\$30.09

Note: A northern living allowance ranging from \$7.70/hour to \$14.63/hour is available. As of April 1, 2025, all rates on the ELCC Wage Scale are increased by 7.5% to help bridge the gap between the April 1, 2024, consumer price index adjustment and the [Government of Nunavut's recent 9% wage increase](#).

## Staff benefits

Nunavut does not have territory-wide benefits for the child care workforce.

## Early childhood certification

There is no territorial early childhood certification process.

[Nunavut Arctic College](#) offers an ECE Applied Certificate Program and a two-year ECE Diploma Program. In addition, the Department of Education's Early Childhood Education staff offer training to groups and individuals interested in improving their early child care skills in both program management and early childhood practice.

## STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

Child care centres and family child care homes must adhere to standards and regulations regarding staffing requirements, grouping of children, and licensing. Some additional key elements of child care standards and regulations, such as physical environments and food

provision, are covered in the comparative tables in this publication, while others may be found in the [Consolidation of Child Day Care Act](#) and [Consolidation of Child Day Care Standards Regulations](#).

On February 24, 2025, the Government of Nunavut tabled Bill 66, [Early Learning and Child Care Act](#). This proposed legislation will replace the current *Child Day Care Act*.

The proposed legislation ensures that Nunavut's early learning and child care programs are accessible, affordable, inclusive, and rooted in Inuit culture, values, and language. Bill 66 also introduces:

- Improved licensing requirements and duties for operators to enhance safety and accountability;
- Creation of the Early Learning and Child Care Council, a body to provide guidance and oversight;
- Expanded accessibility, affordability, and inclusivity for families across the territory; and
- Enhanced support for the wellbeing of children, caregivers, and educators.

The legislation in place in mid-2025 that Bill 66 will replace was most recently amended in 2020, and the regulations in 2018. There have been no substantive changes to the Act or the regulations.

### Regulated child care centres

Child care centres are licensed under the [Child Day Care Act](#) and [Child Day Care Standards Regulations](#).

### STAFF:CHILD RATIO AND GROUP SIZE

Nunavut does not specify a maximum number of children permitted in a child care centre.

When more than six children are present at a child care centre, at least two staff members must be on duty. One of the two staff members must have no responsibilities other than care of the children attending the facility.

#### Staff:child ratio and maximum group size

<i>Age group</i>	<i>Staff:child ratio</i>	<i>Maximum group size</i>	<i>Maximum children in a room</i>
<i>Single age group</i>	0 – 12 months	1:3	6
	13 – 24 months	1:4	8
	25 – 36 months	1:6	12
	3 years	1:8	16
	4 years	1:9	18
	5 – 11 years	1:10	20
<i>Mixed age group</i>	0 – 24 months	1:4	8
	25 months – 6 years	1:8	16
	5 years, 8 months – 11 years (child has started kindergarten)	1:10	30

*Note: Maximum group sizes and room sizes do not apply when children are having meals, taking naps, or participating in special activities.*

### STAFFING REQUIREMENTS FOR CENTRES

#### Qualification requirements for staffing a centre

In Nunavut, staff requirements are specified at the centre level.

Centre staff are not required to have formal postsecondary early childhood education qualifications.

Staff involved in the delivery of the daily program are encouraged, but not required, to participate in professional training.

#### Qualification requirements for on-site centre directors/supervisors

One individual must be designated to be in charge of the day-to-day operation of the centre. This individual must meet the requirements of a primary staff person.

#### Other requirements

Primary staff must be at least 19 years of age. Support staff may be under the age of 19 but must be supervised by a primary staff person at all times.

Permanent staff must have a certificate of medical examination. Casual and temporary staff and volunteers must be in good health.



All staff must have up-to-date immunization records, first aid and CPR certificates, and a criminal record check.

Every primary staff person must be aware of early childhood development theory and able to apply that theory to the program.

### **LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED CHILD CARE CENTRES**

A child care centre licence is usually valid for two years. Centres are inspected annually by the Regional Early Childhood Officer, Fire Marshal, and Environmental Health Officer. A licence will automatically be renewed if the inspection reports show that the operator and facility are in compliance with the Act and Regulations.

A facility can be inspected by the departments at any time.

See [Understanding Nunavut's Child Day Care Regulations: A Manual for Early Childhood Programs](#) (Section 2: Licences) for more detailed information.

### **Regulated family child care**

In Nunavut, regulated family child care (termed Family Home Day Care) is regulated under the [Child Day Care Act](#) and [Child Day Care Standards Regulations](#).

Family child care must be provided in the provider's personal residence.

### **MODEL OF ORGANIZATION**

Family child care providers are individually licensed.

### **MAXIMUM CAPACITY**

A family child care provider may care for a maximum of eight children under 12 years old, including their own children. Additional age limitations include:

- No more than six of the children may be five years or younger;
- No more than three children may be younger than three years; and
- No more than two children may be younger than two years.

### **FAMILY CHILD CARE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS**

Family child care providers are not required to have formal early childhood education qualifications. Providers are encouraged, but not required, to participate in professional training.

Family Home Day Care providers must be at least 19 years of age and have up-to-date immunization records, a medical note stating they are in good health, a criminal record check, and first aid and CPR certificates.

Criminal record checks are also required for any adult who ordinarily resides in the private residence in which family child care is provided.

### **LICENSING AND MONITORING OF REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE HOMES**

A family child care licence is usually valid for two years. Family Home Day Cares are inspected annually by the Regional Early Childhood Officer, Fire Marshal, and Environmental Health Officer. A licence will automatically be renewed if the inspection reports show that the provider and home are in compliance with the Act and Regulations.

A Family Home Day Care can be inspected by the departments at any time.

See [Understanding Nunavut's Child Day Care Regulations: A Manual for Early Childhood Programs](#) (Section 2: Licences) for more detailed information.



## ■ OF INTEREST

### **Municipal role**

In Nunavut, municipalities do not have a mandated role in child care governance, funding, or administration. Some, however, operate child care programs. This includes five licensed child care centres operated by hamlets (municipal government), two full-time child care centres, one part-time preschool, and two Aboriginal Head Start programs. In addition, eight centres are operated by District School Authorities.

## CHILD CARE DATA

### ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE SPACE STATISTICS

#### Number of spaces (2024, 2025)

Category	2024	2025
<b>Full-day centre spaces</b>		
Infant (<2 years)	223	224
Preschool-age (2 – 5 years, including kindergarten-age children)	658	698
<b>Total full-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>881</b>	<b>922</b>
<b>Part-day centre spaces</b>		
Preschool-age (2 – 5 years, including kindergarten-age children)	216	216
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>1,097</b>	<b>1,138</b>
<b>Before- and after-school care centre spaces (licensed or regulated)</b>		
Grades 1 – 6	162	162
<i>Note: As of March 31, 2024, only five schools in Nunavut offered full school-day kindergarten. As a result, many kindergarten-age children accessed full-day child care.</i>		
<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>1,259</b>	<b>1,300</b>
<b>Family child care licensed capacity</b>		
Full-day infant (<2 years)	14	16
Full-day preschool-age (2 – 5 years, including kindergarten-age children)	28	32
Part-day (children attending full-day school)	14	16
<b>Total family child care spaces</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)</b>	<b>1,315</b>	<b>1,364</b>

#### Number of child care centres and family child care homes (2024)

##### Centre-based child care

<b>Total number of centres</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Total number of licences</b>	<b>50</b>

*Note: Nunavut's total number of centres reported in ECEC 2023 reflected total licences, not centres. The total number of centres in Nunavut in 2023 was 47.*

*Note: Between 2023 and 2024, Nunavut combined several licences in instances where rooms in the same centre had previously been licensed separately. This accounts for the decline in licences in that period.*




---

<b>Centre-based programs</b>	
Centres providing a full-day program	35
Centres providing a part-day (nursery school) program	10
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 5 – 12 years)	6
Centres providing infant care (<2 years)	32
Centres providing preschool-age care (2 – 5 years)	44
Centres providing a Francophone child care program	2
Centres providing non-standard hours care (as defined by the territory)	0
Centres in publicly delivered and funded schools (K – Grade 12)	13
<b>Regulated family child care</b>	
Individually licensed family child care homes (active)	7
<b>Participation in CWELCC</b>	
Centres providing a full-day program	33
Centres providing a part-day (nursery school) program	10
Centres providing a before- and after-school program for children attending kindergarten or school (approximately 5 – 12 years)	3
<b>Total number of child care centres receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Total number of licensed family child care homes receiving CWELCC funding</b>	<b>7</b>

---

## Auspice (2024)

---

### Centres by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Number of centres</i>
For-profit	0
Non-profit	33
Public	14

---

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>Part-day</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	0	0	0	0
Non-profit	786	70	122	978
Public	95	146	40	281

<sup>1</sup> Nursery school.

<sup>2</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

### Auspice (2025)

### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>Part-day</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>BASC</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>Total</i>
For-profit	0	0	0	0
Non-profit	827	70	122	1,019
Public	95	146	40	281

<sup>1</sup> Nursery school.

<sup>2</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

### Publicly operated child care (2024)

#### Publicly operated child care

<i>Entity type</i>	<i>Licence holders</i>	<i>Centres</i>	<i>Full-day spaces</i>	<i>Part-day spaces</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>BASC spaces</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>Total spaces</i>
Municipality	5	5	29	22	0	51
School authority	8	8	54	86	40	180
Other government agency <sup>3</sup>	1	1	12	0	0	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>243</b>

*Note: The total number of part-day public spaces reported in this table is 38 less than the corresponding figure reported in “Centre spaces by auspice” above.*

<sup>1</sup> Nursery school.

<sup>2</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years)

<sup>3</sup> The Nunavut Department of Family Services operates one centre.

## Fee subsidies (2024)

### Number of children receiving fee subsidies

Daycare Subsidy - full subsidy	4
Young Parents Stay Learning - partial subsidy	10
<b>Total children receiving fee subsidies</b>	<b>14</b>

*Note: The Daycare Subsidy provides fee subsidies in both licensed and unlicensed care. This number includes only those children in licensed child care.*

## Disability support (2024)

### Number of children receiving disability support

Children in licensed, regulated, or approved child care receiving disability/special needs support funding	1
--	---

## ■ REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

### Number of children enrolled (2024)

#### Full-day centre enrolment

Infant (<2 years)	164
Preschool-age (2 – 5 years, including kindergarten-age children)	501
<b>Total full-day centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>665</b>

#### Part-day centre enrolment

Preschool-age (2 – 5 years, including kindergarten-age children)	310
--	-----

*Note: Enrolment exceeds the total number of licensed part-day spaces as attendance is part-time and more than one child may occupy a space.*

<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>975</b>
--	------------

#### Before- and after-school care enrolment (licensed or regulated)

Kindergarten-age and Grades 1 – 6	171
<b>Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>1,146</b>

*Note: Six licensed child care centres did not report enrolment for March 2024, and are therefore not included in these figures.*

---

**Full-day family child care enrolment**

Infant (<2 years)	5
Preschool-age (2 – 5 years, including kindergarten-age children)	35
<b>Total full-day family child care enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</b>	<b>40</b>

---

**Part-day family child care enrolment**

Attending full-day school	3
<b>Total family child care enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>TOTAL REGULATED ENROLMENT (centre and family child care enrolment)</b>	<b>1,189</b>

---

## CHILD CARE FUNDING

The types of funding available for child care services in Nunavut include operational funding, one-time funding, fee subsidies, and other ELCC funding programs. See the [Grants and Contributions Policy](#) for more information.

### ■ ELIGIBILITY FOR CWELCC FUNDING

The CWELCC plan provides federal funds to provinces and territories for early learning and child care operational and one-time funding and fee subsidies for licensed child care for children aged 0 – 5. Funded new child care expansion is to be public and non-profit unless otherwise specified in the jurisdiction's agreement. Provinces and territories also contribute their own funds and design their own policies and provision within this framework.

In Nunavut, the following are eligible for operational funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools); and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

Nunavut has no for-profit centres and does not fund them. New for-profit centres are not eligible for operational funding.

In Nunavut, the following are eligible for capital funding under CWELCC:

- Licensed full-day centres;
- Licensed part-day centres (preschools/nursery schools); and
- Licensed/approved family child care.

New for-profit centres are not eligible for capital funding.

### ■ CHILD CARE SERVICES' ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

Funding is available to all licensed non-profit child care centres and Family Home Day Cares. There is no for-profit child care.

All full- and part-day regulated child care operators that pass the standard assessment are eligible to deliver subsidized child care.

### ■ TYPES OF FUNDING

#### **Operational funding**

#### **EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE WAGE SCALE**

On October 1, 2023, Nunavut introduced an Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Wage Scale for educators, with 2023, 2024, and 2025 versions available for licensed child care centre staff serving children 0 – 6 years and Family Home Day Care operators. After-school programs are not included. See Nunavut's "[Workforce](#)" section for further details.

#### **OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE FUNDING**

Operations and Maintenance (O&M) and O&M top-up funding are available annually for operating expenses. This funding allocates \$2.42 – \$17.25 per space per day to non-profit centres and regulated Family Home Day Cares, depending on the age of the child, the composition of the program, and whether the centre is in a privately owned or public building. Facilities may also receive an additional top-up of \$0.48 – \$6.90 per space per day, depending on the age of the child and the location of the program. In order for facilities to receive this funding, staff wages must meet or exceed the minimum of \$20/hour, and funding must be used



to maintain parental fees at the current rate, while ensuring that parental fees were not greater than \$65/day during the 2020 – 2024 fiscal years.

## One-time funding

### INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING PROGRAM

The Department of Education's ELCC division provides Infrastructure Funding Program funds to expand child care availability in Nunavut for children aged 0 – 6 years. More than \$6 million in federal funding is allocated for the 2025 – 2026 fiscal year, with funds awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. This funding supports the establishment of new licensed child care centres, renovations to existing centres to increase capacity, and the completion of ongoing projects. Priority is given to underserved communities with few or no licensed child care options.

Eligible applicants include licensed child care centres, individuals opening Family Home Day Cares, District Education Authorities and Commission scolaire francophone du Nunavut, hamlets and municipalities, and non-profit and non-governmental organizations. Applications are accepted on an annual basis.

### CHILD CARE SPACE CREATION IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

This funding is available on a first-come, first-served application basis and prioritizes facilities in underserved communities where few or no other ELCC facilities are operational. The purpose of this funding is to support an increase in child care spaces in underserved communities by providing funding for renovations or for necessary maintenance and repair. The maximum amounts are based on need and funding availability.

### START-UP CONTRIBUTIONS

One-time start-up funding for non-profit organizations is available to help child care

facilities purchase the toys, equipment, and program materials needed to open. This funding cannot be used to purchase, construct, or significantly renovate a building. It is available to licensed non-profit centres and Family Home Day Cares including part-time, infant, after-school, and disability (termed special needs) spaces. Funding ranges from \$300 – \$3,420 per space depending on the geographic area of the program and the ages of the children served.

### MINOR HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and safety funding is available to help with the costs associated with minor repairs, modifications, or additional equipment required to meet fire, health, and safety regulations. Child care facilities operating in government buildings are not eligible for this funding. This funding program was available with a maximum funding amount of \$5,000 in 2023 – 2024, but no applications for funding were received. The maximum was increased to \$10,000 in October 2024 and the funding shifted to a grant when the Department of Education [Grants and Contributions Policy](#) was updated.

### Fee subsidies

#### DAYCARE SUBSIDY

The Daycare Subsidy is available to provide financial support to low-income families who reside in Nunavut to help make child care more affordable while they pursue education or training opportunities outside the home. See Nunavut's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

#### YOUNG PARENTS STAY LEARNING

The Young Parents Stay Learning Program is a subsidy program to help young parents with the cost of child care while the parent attends school. See Nunavut's "[Parent fees](#)" section for more information.

## Other ELCC funding

### HEALTHY CHILDREN INITIATIVE

The Healthy Children Initiative supports communities in developing programs that best meet the needs of local children as well as initiatives that provide services to children requiring intensive or specific assistance to participate in early learning and child care programs, from the prenatal period to age six, and their families. See Nunavut's "[Children with disabilities](#)" section for more information.

### EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING RESOURCES AND TRAINING

The Department of Education develops and delivers culturally and linguistically appropriate [program resources](#) and training to support the delivery of consistent, high-quality instruction in ELCC facilities. The resources identify methodologies, activities, and themes to use and implement in the day-to-day delivery of programming. These resources focus on approaches to program delivery that are inclusive, aligning with the principles of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (traditional knowledge). This approach is also consistent with the principles of the *Strategic Action Plan for Inclusion and Equity*, the *Nunavut Early Learning and Child Care Quality Framework*, and the *Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework*. In 2023 – 2024, training was delivered at licensed child care centres and a territory-wide Managers Training in Iqaluit in February 2024.

### INUIT LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

In keeping with Section 17 of the [Nunavut Education Act](#), the Early Childhood Education – Inuit Language and Culture program provides contributions to District Education Authorities

(DEAs) for the provision of early childhood programs rooted in Inuit language and culture for children 0 – 6 years. DEAs can access funding to enhance activities and instruction with Elders and/or cultural experts, enhance activities and instruction through resource development, and/or enhance Inuit language and culture through family events. This funding is restricted to DEAs and the Commission scolaire francophone du Nunavut (CSFN). If funds remain after all DEAs and the CSFN have had the opportunity to access funding, non-profit organizations and licensed child care centres in good standing with the Nunavut legal registries, including Family Home Day Cares in Nunavut, may apply directly to the Department of Education for funds.

### EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE TRAINING SESSIONS

ELCC training and professional development sessions may be offered in communities, regions, or the territory, depending on need. The sessions provide an opportunity for at least one staff person from each licensed ELCC facility to come together to share best practices, identify common challenges and issues, and access training, professional development, and in-service opportunities. Training topics currently delivered are administration and manager training, program planning, room arrangement, use of ELCC resources, *Child Day Care Act* and Regulations, Board of Director workshops, and hygiene. In 2023 – 2024, 53% of ELCC centre child care workers participated in some professional development. In 2024 – 2025, the Department of Education's ELCC division focused on in-centre training and delivered hands-on training in licensed child care centres in 16 communities across all three Nunavut regions.

## ■ FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (FISCAL YEAR 2023 – 2024)

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

### Operational funding

Program	Amount
Operating funds	\$3,857,879
Workforce Recruitment and Retention	\$2,297,902
Fee reduction	\$6,612,155
<b>Total operational funding</b>	<b>\$12,767,936</b>

*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, disability funding, and other grants/funding paid on a recurring basis.*

### One-time funding – capital (major and minor)

Program	Amount
Start-up funding	\$110,160
Infrastructure Funding Program	\$2,386,979
<b>Total one-time funding</b>	<b>\$2,497,139</b>

*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.*

### Fee subsidies

Program	Amount
Daycare Subsidy	\$5,680
Young Parents Stay Learning	\$16,730
<b>Total fee subsidies</b>	<b>\$22,410</b>

*Note: The amount of Daycare Subsidy for children receiving this subsidy has been estimated based on one region reporting an expenditure of \$1,502 for one child.*

*Note: These are fee subsidies in licensed, regulated, or approved child care. The subsidies are associated with an individual child and family. There are territorial eligibility criteria. Fee subsidies are sent directly to service providers.*

<b>TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, and fee subsidies)</b>	<b>\$15,287,485</b>
---	---------------------

### Other ELCC funding

Program	Amount
Healthy Children Initiative	\$307,884
Early Childhood Education Inuit Language and Culture Funding	\$699,558
Educational Programming Resources and Training	\$1,021,197
Nunavut ELCC Quality Framework development	\$65,482
Development and implementation of the Strategic Action Plan for Inclusion and Equity	\$293,223
<b>Total other ELCC funding</b>	<b>\$2,387,344</b>

### Federal transfers to Nunavut

Federal transfer	Amount
Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework – Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements	\$2,547,592
Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care	\$13,411,367
Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund	\$2,325,421

*Note: The federal transfers above represent the funds allocated to Nunavut for fiscal year 2023 – 2024. These funds may be slightly different from those included in the original agreements, as they are updated annually in line with population estimates. 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 (2025).*



# The big picture

<b>TABLE 1</b>	Number of licensed centre spaces by age category (2024, 2025).	413
<b>TABLE 2</b>	Number of child care centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years by program type and kindergarten provision (2024, 2025).	414
<b>TABLE 3</b>	Number of child care spaces by program type and percent of children 0 – 12 years for whom a regulated space was available (2024, 2025).	416
<b>TABLE 4</b>	Number and percent of centre spaces for infants (2025).	417
<b>TABLE 5</b>	Percent of centre spaces that were for-profit by type (2024, 2025).	418
<b>TABLE 6</b>	Selected characteristics of kindergarten programs (2025).	419
<b>TABLE 7</b>	Selected characteristics of regulated family child care (2025).	423
<b>TABLE 8</b>	Characteristics of before- and after-school programs (2025).	427
<b>TABLE 9</b>	Selected characteristics of unregulated child care (2025).	430
<b>TABLE 10</b>	First Nations, Métis, and Inuit licensed child care services on reserves or Inuit lands (2025).	433
<b>TABLE 11</b>	Child care fee subsidy provision and eligibility (2025).	434
<b>TABLE 12</b>	Inclusion supports in regulated child care (2025).	438
<b>TABLE 13</b>	Child care workforce: Wages, benefits, and certification (2025).	441
<b>TABLE 14</b>	Workforce qualification requirements for full-day child care centres (2025).	442
<b>TABLE 15</b>	Food provision in licensed full-day child care centres (2025).	444
<b>TABLE 16</b>	Outdoor play requirements in licensed child care centres (2025).	446
<b>TABLE 17</b>	Child care types and auspices eligible for CWELCC funding (2025).	449
<b>TABLE 18</b>	Number of centres and family child care homes funded by CWELCC (2024).	450

TABLE 1

Number of licensed centre spaces by age category (2024, 2025).

PT	2024			2025		
	Full- and part-day infant and toddler spaces	Full- and part-day preschool-age spaces	Part-day kindergarten-age <sup>1</sup> and school-age spaces	Full- and part-day infant and toddler spaces	Full- and part-day preschool-age spaces	Part-day kindergarten-age <sup>1</sup> and school-age spaces
NL	1,538	4,361	2,681	1,731	4,794	3,861
PE <sup>2</sup>	573	3,685	2,640	741	3,685	2,592
NS <sup>3</sup>	6,033	5,619	7,397 <sup>4</sup>	Not available (6,033 - placeholder)	Not available (5,619 - placeholder)	7,651 <sup>4</sup>
NB	2,335	14,425	17,093	2,523	15,234	17,028
QC <sup>5</sup>	34,364	197,277	268,782	36,090	200,912	271,655
ON <sup>6</sup>	72,456	128,872	315,127	76,158	134,955	321,412
MB	3,452	22,147	13,221	3,700	23,206	13,639
SK	6,128	10,053	1,645	6,481	10,994	1,635
AB <sup>7</sup>	37,700	63,290	58,700	42,600	70,680	62,500
BC <sup>8</sup>	20,406	69,731	45,437	23,395	74,486	49,450
YT <sup>9</sup>	615	761	393	Not available (615 - placeholder)	Not available (761 - placeholder)	Not available (393 - placeholder)
NT	202	608	798	206	616	815
NU	233	874	162	224	914	162
CA <sup>10</sup>	<b>186,035</b>	<b>521,703</b>	<b>734,076</b>	<b>200,497</b>	<b>546,856</b>	<b>752,793</b>

Note: Due to differences among jurisdictions in how spaces are licensed and tracked, some data in these columns may overlap. See the “Space and Enrolment Statistics” sections in each province and territory for more detailed information.

Note: The number of spaces in the table represents licensed spaces unless otherwise noted.

<sup>1</sup> In some provinces, a child who is in part-day kindergarten may be enrolled in a preschool-age child care space; this is not represented in this column.

<sup>2</sup> Prince Edward Island’s data are broken down into infants only (columns 1 and 4) and toddlers/preschool-age grouped together (columns 2 and 5).

<sup>3</sup> In 2024 and 2025, Nova Scotia did not report on licensed spaces for children 0 – 5 by age group or by full-day and part-day spaces. As a result, further breakdowns are not available. For this table, enrolment figures are used for 2024 in place of regulated spaces. Enrolment data for 2025 was not collected for this report.

<sup>4</sup> Nova Scotia’s kindergarten-age and school-age spaces include Nova Scotia Before and After Programs (NS-BAP) spaces, which are not licensed but considered regulated. There were 2,952 NS-BAP spaces in 2024 and 3,048 in 2025.

<sup>5</sup> Quebec’s kindergarten-age and school-age child care program are not licensed but considered regulated.

<sup>6</sup> Ontario’s preschool-age figures include “family age” multi-age group spaces not broken down by age. There were 1,012 of these spaces in 2024 and 1,001 in 2025.

<sup>7</sup> Alberta’s preschool-age figures include “innovation” multi-age group spaces not broken down by age. There were 490 of these spaces in 2024 and 480 in 2025.

<sup>8</sup> British Columbia’s preschool-age figures include multi-age spaces not broken down by age (children 18 months – 5 years, not yet in school). There were 4,105 of these spaces in 2024 and 4,189 in 2025.

<sup>9</sup> As the Yukon does not license by age group, enrolment figures are used for 2024 in place of licensed capacity. Enrolment data for 2025 was not collected for this report.

<sup>10</sup> For this report enrolment data for 2025 was not collected. For Nova Scotia and the Yukon, enrolment numbers from 2024 have been used as placeholders to calculate Canada’s total for 2025.

TABLE 2

Number of child care centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years by program type and kindergarten provision (2024, 2025).

PT	2024			2025			Kindergarten for four- and five-year-olds <sup>1</sup>
	Total number of full- and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	Number of full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	Number of part-day (nursery school/preschool) centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	Total number of full- and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	Number of full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	Number of part-day (nursery school/preschool) centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	
NL	5,899	5,786	113	6,525	6,424	101	Full school-day for all five-year-olds. Four-year-old kindergarten delivered as licensed child care in schools is being phased in.
PE	4,258	4,066	192	4,656	4,606	50	Full school-day for all five-year-olds. Four-year-old kindergarten is operated as a part-day program in licensed child care centres.
NS <sup>2</sup>	13,608	13,608	Not available	14,299	14,299	Not available	Full school-day for all four- and five-year-olds.
NB	16,760	16,113	647	17,757	17,183	574	Full school-day for five-year-olds.
QC <sup>3</sup>	231,641	231,641	Not available	237,002	237,002	Not available	Full school-day for five-year-olds. Four-year-old kindergarten is being phased in.
ON <sup>4,5</sup>	201,328	200,316	Not available	211,113	210,112	Not available	Full school-day for all four- and five-year-olds.
MB	25,599	22,865	2,734	26,906	24,091	2,815	Part-day for five-year-olds. Some school divisions offer part or full school-day for four-year-olds (termed nursery).

Note: Child care centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years old include full-day centre-based child care and part-day nursery schools/preschools. Before- and after-school child care spaces for children younger than age six are not included here.

<sup>1</sup> In some provinces, a child who is in part-day kindergarten may also be enrolled in a preschool-age child care space.

<sup>2</sup> A breakdown of full- and part-day spaces is not available for Nova Scotia. Full-day figures include a small number of part-day spaces.

<sup>3</sup> A breakdown of full- and part-day spaces is not available for Quebec. Quebec does not report part-day spaces.

<sup>4</sup> A breakdown of full- and part-day spaces is not available for Ontario. Full-day figures include a small number of part-day spaces.

<sup>5</sup> Ontario's total includes "family age" multi-age group spaces not broken down by age. There were 1,012 of these spaces in 2024 and 1,001 in 2025.

<sup>6</sup> Saskatchewan and the Yukon do not license part-day preschool programs.

<sup>7</sup> Alberta's total includes "innovative" multi-age group spaces not broken down by age. There were 490 of these spaces in 2024 and 480 in 2025.

<sup>8</sup> In British Columbia, full-day spaces include multi-age group spaces not broken down by age. There were 4,105 of these spaces in 2024 and 4,189 in 2025.

<sup>9</sup> As the Yukon does not license by age group, enrolment figures are used for 2024 in place of licensed capacity. Enrolment data for 2025 was not collected for this report, so 2024 enrolment data is used as a placeholder.

<sup>10</sup> The Northwest Territories licenses all centres for children not yet in school as full-day. Some may offer part-day programs.

<sup>11</sup> For the Yukon, enrolment numbers from 2024 have been used as placeholders to calculate Canada's total preschool-age spaces for 2025. Enrolment data for the Yukon were not collected for this report in 2025.

TABLE 2  
CONTINUED

Number of child care centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years by program type and kindergarten provision (2024, 2025).

PT	2024			2025			Kindergarten for four- and five-year-olds <sup>1</sup>
	Total number of full- and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	Number of full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	Number of part-day (nursery school/preschool) centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	Total number of full- and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	Number of full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	Number of part-day (nursery school/preschool) centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	
SK <sup>6</sup>	16,181	16,181	<i>Not applicable</i>	17,475	17,475	<i>Not applicable</i>	Part school-day every day or full school-day every other day for five-year-olds, and prekindergarten for some vulnerable three- and four-year-olds.
AB <sup>7</sup>	100,990	85,600	14,900	113,280	98,200	14,600	Part school-day every day or full school-day every other day for five-year-olds and four-year-olds who require additional specialized support.
BC <sup>8</sup>	90,137	68,707	17,325	97,881	77,440	16,252	Full school-day for five-year-olds.
YT <sup>6,9</sup>	1,376	1,376	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not available</i> (1,376 - placeholder)	<i>Not available</i> (1,376 - placeholder)	<i>Not applicable</i>	Part or full school-day for five-year-olds. Part or full school-day for four-year-olds is available in most rural schools.
NT <sup>10</sup>	810	810	<i>Not applicable</i>	822	822	<i>Not applicable</i>	Full school-day for five-year-olds. Part or full school-day for four-year-olds.
NU	1,097	881	216	1,138	992	216	Part-day for five-year-olds. Full school-day kindergarten is being phased in.
CA <sup>11</sup>	709,684	667,950	<i>Missing data</i>	750,230	710,022	<i>Missing data</i>	-

Note: Child care centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years old include full-day centre-based child care and part-day nursery schools/preschools. Before- and after-school child care spaces for children younger than age six are not included here.

<sup>1</sup> In some provinces, a child who is in part-day kindergarten may also be enrolled in a preschool-age child care space.

<sup>2</sup> A breakdown of full- and part-day spaces is not available for Nova Scotia. Full-day figures include a small number of part-day spaces.

<sup>3</sup> A breakdown of full- and part-day spaces is not available for Quebec. Quebec does not report part-day spaces.

<sup>4</sup> A breakdown of full- and part-day spaces is not available for Ontario. Full-day figures include a small number of part-day spaces.

<sup>5</sup> Ontario's total includes "family age" multi-age group spaces not broken down by age. There were 1,012 of these spaces in 2024 and 1,001 in 2025.

<sup>6</sup> Saskatchewan and the Yukon do not license part-day preschool programs.

<sup>7</sup> Alberta's total includes "innovative" multi-age group spaces not broken down by age. There were 490 of these spaces in 2024 and 480 in 2025.

<sup>8</sup> In British Columbia, full-day spaces include multi-age group spaces not broken down by age. There were 4,105 of these spaces in 2024 and 4,189 in 2025.

<sup>9</sup> As the Yukon does not license by age group, enrolment figures are used for 2024 in place of licensed capacity. Enrolment data for 2025 was not collected for this report, so 2024 enrolment data is used as a placeholder.

<sup>10</sup> The Northwest Territories licenses all centres for children not yet in school as full-day. Some may offer part-day programs.

<sup>11</sup> For the Yukon, enrolment numbers from 2024 have been used as placeholders to calculate Canada's total preschool-age spaces for 2025. Enrolment data for the Yukon were not collected for this report in 2025.

TABLE 3

Number of child care spaces by program type and percent of children 0 – 12 years for whom a regulated space was available (2024, 2025).

PT	2024					2025				
	Full- and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	Before- and after-school care spaces for children 4 – 12 years	Family child care spaces for children 0 – 12 years <sup>1</sup>	Total spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Percent of children 0 – 12 years for whom a full- or part-day space was available (%)	Full- and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	Before- and after-school care spaces for children 4 – 12 years	Family child care spaces for children 0 – 12 years <sup>1</sup>	Total spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Percent of children 0 – 12 years for whom a full- or part-day space was available (%)
NL	5,899	2,681	792	9,372	17	6,525	3,861	846	11,232	20
PE	4,258	2,640	134	7,032	33	4,656	2,592	159	7,407	35
NS <sup>2</sup>	13,608	7,397	1,404	22,409	18	14,299	7,651	1,746	23,696	19
NB	16,760	17,093	827	34,680	34	17,757	17,028	869	35,654	35
QC <sup>3</sup>	231,641	268,782	71,781	572,204	49	237,002	271,655	72,773	581,430	50
ON <sup>4</sup>	201,328	315,127	21,366	537,821	27	211,113	321,412	23,032	555,557	28
MB	25,599	13,221	3,050	41,870	20	26,906	13,639	3,104	43,649	21
SK	16,181	1,645	4,908	22,734	12	17,475	1,635	7,434	26,544	14
AB <sup>5</sup>	100,990	58,700	17,255	176,945	24	113,280	62,500	18,830	194,610	27
BC <sup>6</sup>	90,137	45,437	12,627	148,201	24	97,881	49,450	13,270	160,601	26
YT <sup>7</sup>	1,376	393	156	2,257	40	Not available (1,376 - placeholder)	Not available (393 - placeholder)	149	2,345	42
NT	810	798	328	1,936	28	822	815	360	1,997	29
NU	1,097	162	56	1,315	13	1,138	162	64	1,364	14
CA <sup>8</sup>	709,684	734,076	134,684	1,578,776	30	750,230	752,793	142,636	1,646,086	31

<sup>1</sup> Family child care spaces for children 0 – 12 years may be figures from either enrolment or licensed capacity.

<sup>2</sup> For the *Interim Space Statistics 2024* publication, Nova Scotia reported 1,728 regulated family child care spaces. However, this figure was as of December 2024. For consistency with the rest of the data in this report, we have included the number of spaces on March 30, 2024, here instead (1,404).

<sup>3</sup> Before- and after-school programs in Quebec are regulated but not licensed for a particular number of children. These data reflect the number of children enrolled in before- and after-school programs in public schools only.

<sup>4</sup> Ontario's full- and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years include "family age" multi-age group spaces not broken down by age. There were 1,012 of these spaces in 2024 and 1,001 in 2025.

<sup>5</sup> Alberta's full- and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years include "innovative" multi-age group spaces not broken down by age. There were 490 of these spaces in 2024 and 480 in 2025.

<sup>6</sup> British Columbia's full- and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years include "family age" multi-age group spaces not broken down by age. There were 4,105 of these spaces in 2024 and 4,189 in 2025.

<sup>7</sup> As the Yukon does not license by age group, enrolment figures were used in place of licensed capacity. Enrolment data for the Yukon was not collected for this report in 2025.

<sup>8</sup> For the Yukon, enrolment numbers from 2024 have been used as placeholders to calculate Canada's totals for 2025. Enrolment data for the Yukon was not collected for this report in 2025.

TABLE 4

Number and percent of centre spaces for infants (2025).

PT	Infant age group definition	Number of centre spaces for infants	Number of centre spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Percent of centre spaces that were for infants (%)
NL	0 – 24 months	147	10,386	1
PE	0 – 22 months	741	7,248	10
NS <sup>1</sup>	-	<i>Age breakdown not available</i>	21,950	<i>Not available</i>
NB	0 – 24 months	2,523	34,785	7
QC	<18 months	36,090	508,657	7
ON	<18 months	16,753	532,525	3
MB	0 – 2 years	3,700	40,545	9
SK	6 weeks – <18 months	1,703	19,110	9
AB	<19 months	14,500	175,780	8
BC	<36 months	11,700 <sup>2</sup>	97,881	12
YT <sup>3</sup>	<18 months	<i>Not available</i>	2,196	<i>Not available</i>
NT	<2 years	206	1,637	13
NU	<2 years	224	1,300	17
CA	-	<b>88,287</b>	<b>1,454,000</b>	<b>6</b>

<sup>1</sup> Nova Scotia did not report on licensed spaces for children 0 – 5 by age group or by full-day and part-day spaces; breakdowns are not available.

<sup>2</sup> British Columbia's age grouping includes children up to 36 months. Half of the total spaces (23,395) for this group have been used in this table for consistency with other jurisdictions.

<sup>3</sup> The Yukon does not license spaces by age group. Age group, breakdowns are not available.

TABLE 5

Percent of centre spaces that were for-profit by type (2024, 2025).

PT	2024			2025		
	Percent of total centre spaces for children 0 – 12 years that were for-profit (%)	Percent of part-day and BASC centre spaces for children 0 – 12 years that were for-profit (%)	Percent of full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years that were for-profit (%)	Percent of total centre spaces for children 0 – 12 years that were for-profit (%)	Percent of part-day and BASC centre spaces for children 0 – 12 years that were for-profit (%)	Percent of full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years that were for-profit (%)
NL	64	60	66	66	69	65
PE	64	60	67	68	60	72
NS <sup>1</sup>	46	<i>Not available</i>	<i>Not available</i>	44	<i>Not available</i>	<i>Not available</i>
NB	66	62	71	67	63	70
QC <sup>2</sup>	25	0	54	25	0	53
ON <sup>3</sup>	22	7.4	44	22	7.5	44
MB	5.2	2.3	7.2	6.0	2.9	8.0
SK	4.1	1.6	4.4	4.6	1.5	4.9
AB	65	55	73	65	56	73
BC <sup>4</sup>	54	39	67	53	37	67
YT <sup>5</sup>	61	<i>Not applicable</i>	61	60	<i>Not applicable</i>	60
NT	0	0	0	0	0	0
NU	0	0	0	0	0	0
CA <sup>5</sup>	32	13	52	32	14	53

Note: In this table, part-day includes both part-day nursery school/preschool spaces and before- and after-school spaces. Full-day centre spaces are for children 0 – 5 years not yet attending kindergarten or school.

<sup>1</sup> In Nova Scotia, the total centre spaces include full-day, part-day, before- and after-school care (BASC), and Nova Scotia Before and After Program (NS-BAP) spaces, as breakdowns were not available. This number is not comparable to previous years.

<sup>2</sup> Part-day and BASC centre spaces in Quebec represent only before- and after-school child care operated by school authorities.

<sup>3</sup> In Ontario and British Columbia, full-day spaces include multi-age group spaces not broken down by age.

<sup>4</sup> The Yukon's full-day spaces include BASC spaces (children 4 – 12 years). The Yukon does not license part-day centres for children 0 – 5 years (preschools).

<sup>5</sup> The Canada-wide totals row reflects the proportion and percentage of spaces by type across Canada that were for-profit.

**TABLE 6 Selected characteristics of kindergarten programs (2025).**

PT	Program title	Descriptions	ECE qualifications for kindergarten teachers	Before- and after-school care (BASC) for kindergarten-age children
NL	Prekindergarten	Four-year-olds, being phased in Non-compulsory Full school-day, full-year Licensed under child care legislation Delivered as a fee-based licensed non-profit program located in schools	Level III – Prekindergarten classification	Prekindergarten-age before- and after-school care
	Kindergarten	All five-year-olds Non-compulsory Full school-day	Post-secondary ECE qualifications not required	School-age child care centre
PE	Prekindergarten	All four-year-olds Non-compulsory Part school-day Licensed under child care legislation and delivered in child care centres	Two-year ECE diploma: Certified early childhood educators, preferably at the ECE 3 level	Preschool-age child care
	Kindergarten	All five-year-olds Compulsory, but participation can be delayed by one year Full school-day	Post-secondary ECE qualifications not required	School-age centre
NS	Pre-primary	All four-year-olds Voluntary and not a prerequisite to enter Grade Primary Full school-day	Two-year ECE diploma	School-age (before- and after-school care)
	Grade Primary	All five-year-olds Compulsory; participation can be delayed by one year Full school-day	Post-secondary ECE qualifications not required	Nova Scotia Before and After Program (NS-BAP)

**TABLE 6**  
*CONTINUED***Selected characteristics of kindergarten programs (2025).**

PT	Program title	Descriptions	ECE qualifications for kindergarten teachers	Before- and after-school care (BASC) for kindergarten-age children
NB	Kindergarten	All five-year-olds Compulsory; participation can be delayed by one year Full school-day	Post-secondary ECE qualifications not required	Before- and after-school program
QC	Kindergarten for four-year-olds ( <i>maternelle 4 ans</i> )	Four-year-olds, being phased in Non-compulsory Full school-day	Full-time licensed teacher and a half-time educational professional; BA with early childhood specialty and ECE diploma	School-age child care
	Kindergarten ( <i>maternelle 5 ans</i> )	All five-year-olds Non-compulsory Full school-day	<i>Baccalaureat</i> (Bachelor of Education) in Kindergarten and Elementary Education program	School-age child care
ON	Junior kindergarten and kindergarten	All four- and five-year-olds Non-compulsory Full school-day	A team of a certified teacher, for whom ECE qualifications are not required, and a registered early childhood educator (RECE)	Before- and after-school program Extended Day programs Authorized Recreational and Skill Building program
MB	Kindergarten	All five-year-olds Non-compulsory Part school-day	Post-secondary ECE qualifications not required	School-age centre
SK	Prekindergarten	Intended for vulnerable three- and four-year-olds Non-compulsory Part school-day	Post-secondary ECE qualifications not required	Preschool-age child care
	Kindergarten	All five-year-olds Non-compulsory Part or full school-day program	Post-secondary ECE qualifications not required	Preschool-age child care

**TABLE 6**  
*CONTINUED*

**Selected characteristics of kindergarten programs (2025).**

PT	Program title	Descriptions	ECE qualifications for kindergarten teachers	Before- and after-school care (BASC) for kindergarten-age children
AB	Early Childhood Services (ECS)/prekindergarten	Targeted to children under five years who require additional support	Post-secondary ECE qualifications not required	Out-of-School Care
		From 2 years 8 months to 5 years old Part school-day, but full school-day in some schools		
BC	Kindergarten	Included in ECS program All five-year-olds Non-compulsory Part school-day	Post-secondary ECE qualifications not required	Group Child Care (school-age) School-age on school grounds Recreational care
YT	Kindergarten for four-year-olds (K4)	All four-year-olds Non-compulsory Full school-day, but part school-day in some schools	Post-secondary ECE qualifications not required	School-age child care
	Kindergarten for five-year-olds (K5)	All five-year-olds Non-compulsory Full school-day, but part school-day in some schools	Post-secondary ECE qualifications not required	

**TABLE 6**  
*CONTINUED*

**Selected characteristics of kindergarten programs (2025).**

PT	Program title	Descriptions	ECE qualifications for kindergarten teachers	Before- and after-school care (BASC) for kindergarten-age children
NT	Junior kindergarten	All four-year-olds Non-compulsory Part or full school-day, depending on the community	Bachelor of Education or two-year ECE diploma accepted in combination with teacher qualifications	Out-of-school early learning and child care
	Kindergarten	All five-year-olds Not compulsory Full school-day program	Post-secondary ECE qualifications not required	
NU	Kindergarten	All five-year-olds Not compulsory Part school-day <sup>1</sup>	Post-secondary ECE qualifications not required	Out-of-school day care

*Note: For more details, see the PT sections.*

<sup>1</sup> In Nunavut, full-time kindergarten was being phased in across the territory beginning in 2023, with initial implementation in select schools and further expansion planned.

**TABLE 7 Selected characteristics of regulated family child care (2025).**

PT	Program name	Administration	Permitted locations	Number of permitted children	Minimum ECE qualifications/certification required for family child care home
NL <sup>1</sup>	Family Child Care <sup>2</sup>	Agency model	Provider's personal residence	<p>Seven maximum, including the provider's own children under school-age:</p> <p>Three, if all are infants;</p> <p>Five, if two are infants and three are toddlers;</p> <p>Six, if two are infants and two are toddlers;</p> <p>Seven, if none are infants or toddlers.</p> <p>Two providers must include their own infant/toddler/preschool-age children in the total child count, but may exempt up to two of their own school-age children from the number.</p>	<p>Providers must have Trainee level certification</p> <p>Infant-only group: Level I certification with an Infant classification required</p>
PE <sup>1</sup>	Family Child Care Home	Individual licence	Provider's personal residence	<p>One provider:</p> <p>Maximum eight, including the provider's own children</p> <p>Two providers may care for more children but must meet ratios; however, the maximum remains eight</p> <p>Indoor ratios:</p> <p>&lt;22 months 1:3</p> <p>22 months – 3 years 1:5</p> <p>Three years to school entry 1:10</p> <p>School-age 1:15</p> <p>Outdoor ratios:</p> <p>&lt;22 months 1:3</p> <p>22 months – 3 years 1:7</p> <p>Three years to school entry 1:15</p> <p>School-age 1:22</p>	<p>One certified family home child care provider with early childhood intern (ECI) designation or higher</p> <p>School-age child care certification is not applicable in family child care.</p>
NS	Family Home Child Care	Agency model	Provider's personal residence	<p>Maximum seven children, including the provider's own children</p> <p>If caring for four to seven children, allowed:</p> <p>A maximum of three children under three years;</p> <p>Of these, a maximum of two infants.</p> <p>Maximum of three infants only; no other children may be present</p> <p>School-age only: Maximum nine school-age children, including the provider's own children</p>	<p>Level 1 of the Canadian Child Care Federation's course</p>

<sup>1</sup> In Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the Yukon, a home child care provider may be assisted by another adult ("assistant") to care for additional children.

<sup>2</sup> In Newfoundland and Labrador, all providers are now required to be approved through a family child care agency.

<sup>3</sup> In Ontario, home child care agencies may also oversee the provision of child care in a child's own home.

<sup>4</sup> In Saskatchewan, legislation taking effect in 2026 will allow a Group Family Child Care Home to care for 16 children.

**TABLE 7**  
*CONTINUED*

**Selected characteristics of regulated family child care (2025).**

PT	Program name	Administration	Permitted locations	Number of permitted children	Minimum ECE qualifications/certification required for family child care home
NB	Early Learning and Child Care Home	Individual licence	Provider's personal residence	Only one of the following at one time: Three infants; Five preschool-age; Nine school-age; Six mixed-age, with no more than two infants.  The provider's own children are counted toward all maximums	Must have completed the 90-hour Introduction to Early Childhood Education course  NB does not have a certification process.
QC <sup>1</sup>	Home Educational Child Care	Agency model	Provider's personal residence	One provider: Maximum six children under nine years, including the provider's own children under nine years  Maximum two children <18 months  Two providers: Maximum nine children under nine years, including the provider's own children nine years.  Maximum four children <18 months	Provider: 45 hours of specified training within three years preceding request for recognition  Assistant: 12 hours of child development training within six months  Quebec does not have a certification process.
ON <sup>3</sup>	Home child care	Agency model	Not required to be a provider's residence or a home setting	Maximum six children up to 13 years, including the provider's own children (if under four years)  Of those six, no more than three children under two years	No qualifications specified.  Certification is not required.
MB <sup>1</sup>	Family Child Care  Group Family Child Care	Individual licence	Provider's personal residence  A group family child care home must be in the home of the a licensee	Family Child Care: Maximum eight children, including the provider's own children  Of these eight children: five may be under six years; no more than three may be under two years old  Group Family Child Care: 9 – 12 children <12 years old; no more than three children under two years old	Family Child Care: 40-hour early childhood education course within the first year of operation  Provider must have Child Care Assistant classification within one year.  Group Family Child Care Home: 40-hour early childhood education course within the first year of operation

<sup>1</sup> In Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the Yukon, a home child care provider may be assisted by another adult ("assistant") to care for additional children.

<sup>2</sup> In Newfoundland and Labrador, all providers are now required to be approved through a family child care agency.

<sup>3</sup> In Ontario, home child care agencies may also oversee the provision of child care in a child's own home.

<sup>4</sup> In Saskatchewan, legislation taking effect in 2026 will allow a Group Family Child Care Home to care for 16 children.

**TABLE 7**  
*CONTINUED*

**Selected characteristics of regulated family child care (2025).**

PT	Program name	Administration	Permitted locations	Number of permitted children	Minimum ECE qualifications/certification required for family child care home
SK <sup>1,4</sup>	Family Child Care Group Family Child Care Home	Individual licence	A residential premises, but the premises may be an owned or rented residential property in which the provider does not live	<p>Family child care: Maximum eight children (6 weeks – 12 years), including the provider's own children &lt;10 years</p> <p>Of these eight children: five may be infant/toddler/preschool-age (under six years)</p> <p>Of these five, two may be infants or toddlers (&lt;30 months)</p> <p>Group Family Child Care Home:<sup>4</sup> Maximum 12 children; including the provider's own children &lt;10 years</p> <p>Of those 12 children: 10 may be under six years old</p> <p>Of those 10: five may be infant or toddler (&lt;30 months)</p> <p>Of those five: no more than three may be infants</p>	<p>Family child care: 40-hour course within the first year of becoming regulated</p> <p>Group Family Child Care licensee: 40-hour course within the first year; must meet ECE Level I within three years of becoming regulated</p> <p>Assistant: None required</p>
AB <sup>1</sup>	Family Day Home	Agency model	Provider's personal residence	<p>Maximum six children, not including the provider's own children</p> <p>No more than two children under two years, or no more than three under three years, both including the provider's children</p> <p>Group family child care is no longer being expanded in Alberta, but existing homes are allowed to continue operating</p>	Level 1 certification within six months of operation
BC	Family Child Care	Individual licence	Provider's personal residence	<p>Maximum seven children, including the provider's own children</p> <p>If a child &lt;12 months is present: No more than three children &lt;48 months; Of those, only one infant &lt;12 months.</p> <p>If no child &lt;12 months is present: No more than four &lt;48 months; of those four, only two children &lt;24 months</p>	<p>At least 20 hours of courses in child development or related areas are required.</p> <p>ECE certification is not required, except for in-home multi-age child care, which requires a one-year ECE certificate.</p>

<sup>1</sup> In Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the Yukon, a home child care provider may be assisted by another adult ("assistant") to care for additional children.

<sup>2</sup> In Newfoundland and Labrador, all providers are now required to be approved through a family child care agency.

<sup>3</sup> In Ontario, home child care agencies may also oversee the provision of child care in a child's own home.

<sup>4</sup> In Saskatchewan, legislation taking effect in 2026 will allow a Group Family Child Care Home to care for 16 children.

**TABLE 7**  
*CONTINUED*

**Selected characteristics of regulated family child care (2025).**

PT	Program name	Administration	Permitted locations	Number of permitted children	Minimum ECE qualifications/certification required for family child care home
YT <sup>1</sup>	Family Day Home	Individual licence	Provider's personal residence	<p>Four to eight children, including the provider's own children</p> <p>Either:</p> <p>Four infants (under 18 months); or</p> <p>Six with no more than three children &lt;18 months; or</p> <p>Eight, if all children are &gt;18 months</p> <p>Four additional school-age children may attend if there is an additional caregiver</p>	60-hour introductory early childhood development course or equivalent within the first year of providing care
NT	Home-based facility	Individual licence	Provider's personal residence	<p>Maximum eight children (&lt;12 years), including the provider's own children</p> <p>No more than six may be under six years</p> <p>No more than two under two years</p>	Providers without relevant post-secondary education must take the territorial government's Early Childhood Essentials course.
NU	Family Home Day Care	Individual licence	Provider's personal residence	<p>Maximum eight children (&lt;12 years), including the provider's own children</p> <p>No more than six may be five years or younger</p> <p>No more than three under years</p> <p>No more than two under two years</p>	No qualifications required

<sup>1</sup> In Newfoundland and Labrador, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the Yukon, a home child care provider may be assisted by another adult ("assistant") to care for additional children.

<sup>2</sup> In Newfoundland and Labrador, all providers are now required to be approved through a family child care agency.

<sup>3</sup> In Ontario, home child care agencies may also oversee the provision of child care in a child's own home.

<sup>4</sup> In Saskatchewan, legislation taking effect in 2026 will allow a Group Family Child Care Home to care for 16 children.

**TABLE 8 Characteristics of before- and after-school programs (2025).**

PT	Program name	Age groups	Ratio	Group size	ECE qualifications required for the program to operate
NL	Prekindergarten-age	3 years 8 months – 5 years 9 months	1:10	20	One staff: Level III – Prekindergarten classification When group >10: Second staff: Trainee level – Preschool and Pre-K classification
	School-age child care centre	4 years 8 months – 13 years	1:15	30	One staff: Level I – School-age classification When group >15: Second staff: Trainee level – School-age classification
PE	School-age child care centres	5 – 12 years	1:15 indoors 1:22 outdoors	Not specified	One certified staff, any level other than Family Home Child Care Provider One additional certified staff, any level other than Family Home Child Care Provider
NS	Nova Scotia Before and After Program (NS-BAP; not licensed) <sup>1</sup>	4 – 12 year olds enrolled in the NS Pre-primary Program or public education system	Not specified	30	Not specified. A lead staff member with a degree or diploma in an area that qualifies them to work in an early childhood education or organized recreation setting must be onsite.
	School-age (before- and after-school care)	Kindergarten-age (4 – 5 years old) with >8 pre-primary children  School-age with >8 pre-primary children	1:12	30	2/3 of staff: Level 1 classification or school-age training approval Remaining staff: Entry level classification  If only two staff present: One staff Level 1 or school-age training approval
		School-age only: 5 – 12 years old	1:15	30	2/3 of staff: Level 1 classification or school-age training approval Remaining staff: Entry level classification
		School-age with <8 pre-primary children			If only two staff present: One staff Level 1 or school-age training approval
NB	Before- and after- school program	4+ years and attending school	1:15	30	Not specified

<sup>1</sup> In Nova Scotia, NS-BAP is delivered in public schools by approved child care, municipal recreation, or recognized non-profit recreation providers.

<sup>2</sup> In Quebec, school-age child care programs are not licensed but considered regulated. They are delivered by school authorities under the Education Act.

<sup>3</sup> In Ontario, school boards may provide before- and after-school care as licensed programs under agreements with third-party providers, as unlicensed Extended Day programs for kindergarten-age children, or as unlicensed Authorized Recreation and Skill Building programs by third-

party providers. Note that some previously unlicensed Extended Day programs have become licensed.

<sup>4</sup> In Ontario, licensed, Extended Day and before- and after-school programs serving children six years and older also accept non-ECE qualifications: diploma or degree in child and youth care or in recreation and leisure services, or certification with the Ontario College of Teachers.

<sup>5</sup> In Manitoba, before- and after-school programs operated by schools are not required to be licensed.

<sup>6</sup> In Saskatchewan, ECE training is not required for staff in programs operating less than 65 hours/month.

<sup>7</sup> In British Columbia, recreational care programs are not subject to a maximum group size, but the usable floor area must be deemed sufficient by a local medical health officer.

<sup>8</sup> In the Yukon, the age limit is 16 years old for children with special needs.

**TABLE 8**  
*CONTINUED*

**Characteristics of before- and after-school programs (2025).**

PT	Program name	Age groups	Ratio	Group size	ECE qualifications required for the program to operate
QC <sup>2</sup>	Services de garde en milieu scolaire (not licensed)	4 – 12 years	1:20	Not specified	Not specified
ON <sup>3</sup>	Before- and after- school program <sup>4</sup>	Kindergarten-age (44 months – <7 years)	1:13	26	1/2 of staff: Registered early childhood educator (RECE)
		Primary/junior school-age (68 months – <13 years)	1:15	30	1/2 of staff: RECE
		Junior school-age (9 – <13 years)	1:20	20	1/2 of staff: RECE
	Extended Day programs (not licensed)	Kindergarten-age (44 months – <7 years)	Not specified	Not specified	One RECE per group
	Authorized Recreational and Skill Building program (not licensed)	4 – 12 years	Not specified	Not specified	Not specified
MB	School-age centre <sup>5</sup>	6 – 12 years	1:15	30	1/2 of staff: ECE II or ECE III classification (at least one per group)
SK <sup>6</sup>	School-age child care (not in a school)	Grade 1 – 12 years	1:15	30	20% of staff: ECE Level III 30% of staff: ECE Level II
AB	Out-of-School Care	5 – 12 years	1:15	30	At least 1/4 of staff: Level 2 Remaining staff: Level 1 or higher

<sup>1</sup> In Nova Scotia, NS-BAP is delivered in public schools by approved child care, municipal recreation, or recognized non-profit recreation providers.

<sup>2</sup> In Quebec, school-age child care programs are not licensed but considered regulated. They are delivered by school authorities under the Education Act.

<sup>3</sup> In Ontario, school boards may provide before- and after-school care as licensed programs under agreements with third-party providers, as unlicensed Extended Day programs for kindergarten-age children, or as unlicensed Authorized Recreation and Skill Building programs by third-

party providers. Note that some previously unlicensed Extended Day programs have become licensed.

<sup>4</sup> In Ontario, licensed, Extended Day and before- and after-school programs serving children six years and older also accept non-ECE qualifications: diploma or degree in child and youth care or in recreation and leisure services, or certification with the Ontario College of Teachers.

<sup>5</sup> In Manitoba, before- and after-school programs operated by schools are not required to be licensed.

<sup>6</sup> In Saskatchewan, ECE training is not required for staff in programs operating less than 65 hours/month.

<sup>7</sup> In British Columbia, recreational care programs are not subject to a maximum group size, but the usable floor area must be deemed sufficient by a local medical health officer.

<sup>8</sup> In the Yukon, the age limit is 16 years old for children with special needs.

**TABLE 8**  
*CONTINUED*

**Characteristics of before- and after-school programs (2025).**

PT	Program name	Age groups	Ratio	Group size	ECE qualifications required for the program to operate
BC	Group Child Care (school-age)	30 months – 5 years	1:12 (If any preschool-age children not yet in school present)	24	1 – 8 children: One ECE 9 – 16 children: One ECE and one ECE assistant 17 – 25 children: One ECE and two ECE assistants
		30 months – 5 years	1:15 (Not including preschool-age children not yet in school)	30	1 – 8 children: One ECE 9 – 16 children: One ECE and one ECE assistant 17 – 25 children: One ECE and two ECE assistants
School-age on school grounds		Kindergarten-age and Grade 1	1:12	24	One staff: One 20-hour post-secondary course
		Grade 2 and older	1:15	30	
Recreational care		Kindergarten-age and Grade 1	1:12	No maximum <sup>7</sup>	One staff: One 20-hour post-secondary course
		Grade 2 and older	1:15		
YT	School-age child care (in full-time centres or stand-alone programs)	Kindergarten-age to 12 years <sup>8</sup>	1:12	24	20% of staff: Level 3 An additional 30%: Level 2 Remaining: Level 1
NT	Out-of-school ELCC (single age grouping)	4 year olds	1:9	18	One Level 1 ELCC educator
		5 – 12 years	1:10	30	One Level 1 ELCC educator
	Out-of-school day care (mixed age grouping)	3 years 8 months – 12 years	1:10	30	One Level 1 ELCC educator
NU	Out-of-school day care (single-age)	5 – 11 years	1:10	20	Not specified
	Out-of-school day care (mixed age)	5 years 8 months – 11 years	1:10	30	Not specified

<sup>1</sup> In Nova Scotia, NS-BAP is delivered in public schools by approved child care, municipal recreation, or recognized non-profit recreation providers.

<sup>2</sup> In Quebec, school-age child care programs are not licensed but considered regulated. They are delivered by school authorities under the Education Act.

<sup>3</sup> In Ontario, school boards may provide before- and after-school care as licensed programs under agreements with third-party providers, as unlicensed Extended Day programs for kindergarten-age children, or as unlicensed Authorized Recreation and Skill Building programs by third-

party providers. Note that some previously unlicensed Extended Day programs have become licensed.

<sup>4</sup> In Ontario, licensed, Extended Day and before- and after-school programs serving children six years and older also accept non-ECE qualifications: diploma or degree in child and youth care or in recreation and leisure services, or certification with the Ontario College of Teachers.

<sup>5</sup> In Manitoba, before- and after-school programs operated by schools are not required to be licensed.

<sup>6</sup> In Saskatchewan, ECE training is not required for staff in programs operating less than 65 hours/month.

<sup>7</sup> In British Columbia, recreational care programs are not subject to a maximum group size, but the usable floor area must be deemed sufficient by a local medical health officer.

<sup>8</sup> In the Yukon, the age limit is 16 years old for children with special needs.

**TABLE 9 Selected characteristics of unregulated child care (2025).**

PT	Unregulated family child care <sup>1</sup>	Centre-based child care programs for children 0 – 12 years that are exempt from licensing <sup>2</sup>	
	Maximum number of children	Does the maximum include the caregiver's own children?	
NL	Four children <13 years, no more than two children under two years Three children, if all are under two years May care for more than four children if operating less than 10 hours/week	Including provider's own children	A child care service offered for less than 10 hours/week
PE	Five children, no more than two infants Six children, if all are preschool-age Seven children, if all are school-age	Including provider's own children	None
NS	Six children, mixed ages Eight children, if all are school-age	Including provider's own children	Before- and after-school programs operated by approved municipal recreation or recognized non-profit recreation providers
NB	Age-specific limits: No more than two infants; or No more than four preschool-age children; or No more than eight school-age children  If children of different ages are together: No more than five children, only one may be an infant and at least one must be school-age	Including provider's own children	None
QC	Six children, no more than two <18 months <sup>3</sup>	Including provider's own children under nine years	Quebec before- and after-school care for 4 – 12 year olds located in schools and delivered by school authorities. They are not licensed but are funded and have some requirements.  <i>Halte-garderies</i> (drop-in, short-term, or occasional centres) are funded and exempt from licensing.  <i>Jardins d'enfants</i> (nursery schools) operating before October 25, 2005, for up to four hours/day and minimum seven children 2 – 5 years. Those opened after that date must be licensed.

<sup>1</sup> Unregulated family child care is only monitored by complaint.

<sup>2</sup> Other centre-based child care or other early years programs may be exempt from licensing, but they are usually of very short duration or seasonal, the parents may be on the premises, or they may be programs in which parents

or caregivers accompany the children, such as family resource programs.

<sup>3</sup> In Quebec, effective September 2026, legal unregulated (non-recognized) family child care will be limited to a maximum of two children unless the children are from the same household.

<sup>4</sup> In Saskatchewan, legislation taking effect in 2026 will allow (but not require) preschools to become licensed.

**TABLE 9**  
*CONTINUED*

**Selected characteristics of unregulated child care (2025).**

PT	<b>Unregulated family child care<sup>1</sup></b>		<b>Centre-based child care programs for children 0 – 12 years that are exempt from licensing<sup>2</sup></b>
	<b>Maximum number of children</b>	<b>Does the maximum include the caregiver's own children?</b>	
ON	Five children <13 years, no more than three under two years	Including provider's own children	Extended Day after-school programs for kindergarten-age children located in schools. They are not licensed but have some requirements. Authorized Recreational and Skill Building programs provide child care outside school hours for 4 – 12 year olds; include recreational, artistic, musical, or athletic skills or provide religious, culture, or linguistic activities.
MB	Four children <12 years old, with no more than two children under two years	Including provider's own children	Child care on school premises for children in kindergarten to Grade 6 Nursery schools operated as early intervention programs by a school, or an organization under contract with a school
SK	Eight children <10 years; five may be infants, toddlers, or preschool-age; two may be infants or toddlers  If three infants and toddlers are in care, the rest must be school-age	Including provider's own children under 10 years old	Part-day preschool provided for less than three hours/day <sup>4</sup> School-age child care for kindergarten-age and school-age children located in a school
AB	Six children	Not including provider's own children	None
BC	License-not-required: two children or a sibling group <13 years not related to the provider in provider's home  Registered licence-not-required child care (RLNR): up to two children of any age or a sibling group not related to them (by blood or marriage) in the provider's home  In-child's-own-home care: Unlicensed care arranged by parents at home (a nanny or a babysitter)  No specific qualifications are required for the child care provider	Including provider's own children  Including provider's own children  Not applicable as in-child's-own-home care does not allow children from other families to be included in care, and the provider cannot be a relative who lives in the home	An early learning program within the meaning of the <u>School Act</u>  A program directly operated and funded by a municipality for two hours or less per day Recreational, artistic, musical, or athletic skills, or religious programs Summer camp for children under six years old Day camp for children more than five years old

<sup>1</sup> Unregulated family child care is only monitored by complaint.

<sup>2</sup> Other centre-based child care or other early years programs may be exempt from licensing, but they are usually of very short duration or seasonal, the parents may be on the premises, or they may be programs in which parents

or caregivers accompany the children, such as family resource programs.

<sup>3</sup> In Quebec, effective September 2026, legal unregulated (non-recognized) family child care will be limited to a maximum of two children unless the children are from the same household.

<sup>4</sup> In Saskatchewan, legislation taking effect in 2026 will allow (but not require) preschools to become licensed.

TABLE 9  
CONTINUED

Selected characteristics of unregulated child care (2025).

PT	Unregulated family child care <sup>1</sup>	Centre-based child care programs for children 0 – 12 years that are exempt from licensing <sup>2</sup>
Maximum number of children	Does the maximum include the caregiver's own children?	
YT	Four children, no more than three children under school-age, or Eight school-age children	Not including provider's own children Preschool (centre-based program) for children 37 – 59 months and provided for less than three consecutive hours/day. Not required to be licensed.
NT	Fewer than five children, or fewer than two children under two years	Not including provider's own children Recreational, artistic, or instructional program that lasts no more than three hours/day and <10 hours/week Care provided in a school operated under the <i>Education Act</i> during regular school hours
NU	Four children up to 12 years old	Including provider's own children None

<sup>1</sup> Unregulated family child care is only monitored by complaint.

<sup>2</sup> Other centre-based child care or other early years programs may be exempt from licensing, but they are usually of very short duration or seasonal, the parents may be on the premises, or they may be programs in which parents

or caregivers accompany the children, such as family resource programs.

<sup>3</sup> In Quebec, effective September 2026, legal unregulated (non-recognized) family child care will be limited to a maximum of two children unless the children are from the same household.

<sup>4</sup> In Saskatchewan, legislation taking effect in 2026 will allow (but not require) preschools to become licensed.

**TABLE 10 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit licensed child care services on reserves or Inuit lands (2025).**

PT	Number of licensed programs on First Nations reserves or Inuit lands (centres and family child care)
NL	Five full-day centres <sup>1</sup> One family child care home
PE	Two full-day centres
NS	<i>Not applicable</i> <sup>2</sup>
NB	Six full-day centres
QC	69 full-day centres <sup>3</sup> Two family child care agencies
ON	72 centres Two home child care agencies
MB	One full-day centre
SK	Four full-day centres
AB	Six centres; four full-day programs, two part-day programs, one before- and after-school program
BC <sup>4</sup>	65 full-day centres Five licensed family child care homes
YT <sup>5</sup>	See footnote
NT <sup>6</sup>	See footnote
NU <sup>7</sup>	See footnote

Note: Inuit Nunangat (Inuit lands) comprises Inuvialuit (Northwest Territories and the Yukon), Nunavik (Northern Quebec), Nunatsiavut (Labrador), and all of Nunavut.

Where applicable, breakdowns of child care on Inuit lands and First Nations reserves are provided in footnotes.

Note: The licensed program numbers do not include Aboriginal Head Start on Reserve or Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities.

<sup>1</sup> Newfoundland and Labrador reports four centres on Inuit land, and one centre and one family child care home on reserve.

<sup>2</sup> Nova Scotia does not license child care on reserve.

<sup>3</sup> Quebec reports 21 centres and one family child care agency on Inuit land, and 48 centres and one agency on reserve.

<sup>4</sup> British Columbia's data may not be comparable to previous years.

<sup>5</sup> There are no First Nations reserves in the Yukon. However, there are self-governing First Nations and settlement areas, as well as Inuit land. Nine centres in the Yukon are operated by Indigenous governing bodies.

<sup>6</sup> In addition to two reserves in the Northwest Territories, there are other traditional territories in which Indigenous governing bodies have formal agreements with the territorial government and the Government of Canada, or are in the process of negotiating them. Outside Yellowknife

and Hay River, the majority of the population in the Northwest Territories is Indigenous. All child care in smaller communities primarily serves Indigenous children, and most is Indigenous-led. There are 18 centres in the Northwest Territories operated by Indigenous governing bodies.

<sup>7</sup> The whole territory of Nunavut is Inuit land, and more than 80% of the population is Inuit. As such, almost all licensed child care centres in Nunavut primarily serve Inuit children, and most are Inuit-led.

TABLE 11 Child care fee subsidy provision and eligibility (2025).

PT	Availability of fee subsidy program or alternative approach	Services eligible to receive subsidized children	Family financial eligibility	Additional eligibility criteria	Number of children subsidized	
					2023	2024
NL	Yes	All licensed centres, licensed family child care	Maximum net family annual income for full subsidy: • One child: \$41,000 • Two children: \$47,000	Employment, education, training; parent medical need; child development, referral	1,755	767
PE	Yes	All licensed centres, licensed family child care	Maximum net family annual income for full subsidy: • One parent, one child: \$30,000 • Two parents, two children: \$38,500 • Up to \$100,000 in assets	Employment, education, training; parent medical need; special need of child	818	798
NS	Yes	All licensed centres, licensed family child care	Maximum net family annual income for full subsidy: • \$35,000 • Up to \$50,000 in savings or liquid assets	No additional eligibility criteria	5,399	5,223
NB	Yes  Two fee subsidy programs: • Parent Subsidy Program (Designated) • Daycare Assistance Program (Undesignated)	All licensed centres, licensed family child care	Designated – Maximum gross family annual income for full subsidy: • \$37,500 <sup>1</sup>  Undesignated – Maximum net family annual income for full subsidy: • \$22,000	Employment, education, training; special circumstances	6,190	6,309

<sup>1</sup> Families with multiple children under age five enrolled in a designated facility do not pay more than 20% of their gross household annual income, regardless of income level. See New Brunswick's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>2</sup> Quebec has not used a parent fee subsidy program since operational funding was introduced in 1997. See Quebec's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>3</sup> In Ontario, the fee subsidy program is administered by 47 Social Service Managers (SSMs) at the municipal level of government.

<sup>4</sup> See Saskatchewan's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>5</sup> See Alberta's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>6</sup> Financial eligibility and subsidy rates vary for home-based and unlicensed programs. See British Columbia's "Parent fees" section for more information.

TABLE 11  
CONTINUED

Child care fee subsidy provision and eligibility (2025).

PT	Availability of fee subsidy program or alternative approach	Services eligible to receive subsidized children	Family financial eligibility	Additional eligibility criteria	Number of children subsidized	
					2023	2024
QC <sup>2</sup>	No subsidy program  Parents pay no child care fees if on any of four benefit programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aim for Employment Program</li><li>• Social Assistance Program</li><li>• Social Solidarity Program</li><li>• Economic Security Program for Cree Hunters</li></ul>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>
ON	Yes <sup>3</sup>	All licensed centres, licensed family child care, and unlicensed Extended Day and authorized Recreation and Skill Building programs  Operators must have a service contract with the local Service System Manager (SSM) and be part of CWELCC.	Based on family income and total cost of child care  Maximum net family annual income for full subsidy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$20,000</li><li>• Full subsidy for social assistance recipients (ON Works, ON Disability Support, in First Nations child care)</li></ul>	Hours of subsidized care based on time no parent is available for care due to employment, education/training or other approved activities  SSMs may also have their own criteria	83,410	79,214
MB	Yes	All licensed centres, licensed family child care	Maximum income for full subsidy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One parent, one child: \$23,883</li><li>• Two parents, two children: \$32,705</li></ul>	Employment, education, training; parents' medical need; child's additional support needs  No additional eligibility criteria in part-day nursery school	6,541	6,343

<sup>1</sup> Families with multiple children under age five enrolled in a designated facility do not pay more than 20% of their gross household annual income, regardless of income level. See New Brunswick's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>2</sup> Quebec has not used a parent fee subsidy program since operational funding was introduced in 1997. See Quebec's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>3</sup> In Ontario, the fee subsidy program is administered by 47 Social Service Managers (SSMs) at the municipal level of government.

<sup>4</sup> See Saskatchewan's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>5</sup> See Alberta's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>6</sup> Financial eligibility and subsidy rates vary for home-based and unlicensed programs. See British Columbia's "Parent fees" section for more information.

TABLE 11  
CONTINUED

Child care fee subsidy provision and eligibility (2025).

PT	Availability of fee subsidy program or alternative approach	Services eligible to receive subsidized children	Family financial eligibility	Additional eligibility criteria	Number of children subsidized	
					2023	2024
SK <sup>4</sup>	No subsidy program  The Saskatchewan Child Care Subsidy Program ended March 31, 2025.  Since January 2024, eligible child care expenses for eligible low-income working families can be paid under the Saskatchewan Employment Incentive.	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	784	355
AB <sup>5</sup>	No subsidy program  The Alberta fee subsidy program ended March 31, 2025.	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	74,200	82,700
BC	Yes	All licensed centres, licensed and unlicensed family child care	Maximum gross family annual income for full subsidy licensed programs: <sup>6</sup> • One parent, one child: \$45,000 • Two parents, two children: \$49,000	Employment, education, looking for work, in an employment program; medical condition; referral  No additional eligibility criteria in part-day preschool	38,090	36,209
YT	Yes	All licensed centres, licensed family child care	Maximum net family monthly income for full subsidy – Whitehorse: • One parent, one child: \$1,941 • Two parents, two children: \$2,859	Employment, education, looking for work; receiving medical treatment; special need of parent or child; child protection, short-term family crisis	278	378

<sup>1</sup> Families with multiple children under age five enrolled in a designated facility do not pay more than 20% of their gross household annual income, regardless of income level. See New Brunswick's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>2</sup> Quebec has not used a parent fee subsidy program since operational funding was introduced in 1997. See Quebec's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>3</sup> In Ontario, the fee subsidy program is administered by 47 Social Service Managers (SSMs) at the municipal level of government.

<sup>4</sup> See Saskatchewan's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>5</sup> See Alberta's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>6</sup> Financial eligibility and subsidy rates vary for home-based and unlicensed programs. See British Columbia's "Parent fees" section for more information.

TABLE 11  
CONTINUED

Child care fee subsidy provision and eligibility (2025).

PT	Availability of fee subsidy program or alternative approach	Services eligible to receive subsidized children	Family financial eligibility	Additional eligibility criteria	Number of children subsidized	
					2023	2024
NT	No stand-alone child care subsidy program.  A Child Care Allowance is provided through the Income Assistance program.	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	4	3
NU	Yes	All licensed centres, licensed family child care, and unlicensed child care providers	Based on needs test that takes family income and eligible living expenses into consideration	Employment, education, training; referred regarding child's additional needs	14	14

<sup>1</sup> Families with multiple children under age five enrolled in a designated facility do not pay more than 20% of their gross household annual income, regardless of income level. See New Brunswick's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>2</sup> Quebec has not used a parent fee subsidy program since operational funding was introduced in 1997. See Quebec's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>3</sup> In Ontario, the fee subsidy program is administered by 47 Social Service Managers (SSMs) at the municipal level of government.

<sup>4</sup> See Saskatchewan's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>5</sup> See Alberta's "Parent fees" section for more information.

<sup>6</sup> Financial eligibility and subsidy rates vary for home-based and unlicensed programs. See British Columbia's "Parent fees" section for more information.

TABLE 12 Inclusion supports in regulated child care (2025).

PT	Types of support	Service eligibility	Child eligibility for funding	Diagnosis/ referral required	Mandatory to accept a child with a disability
NL	<u>Child Care Inclusion Program</u> : Two types of supports (consultative support and grants) assist with the cost of related professional learning, enhanced ratio, staff wages, and benefits.	All licensed programs. Those receiving Operating Grants are required to participate.	Funding is for the overall program.	No	No
PE	<u>Special Needs Grant</u> : Funding to hire special needs assistant.	All licensed programs.	Child is under age 12 and requires additional support. In some cases, funding supports the overall centre.	No	Yes, Early Years Centres are required to accept.
	<u>Preschool Autism Funding</u> : Funding to hire an autism assistant for intensive behavioural intervention (IBI).	All licensed programs.	Child is enrolled in Early Years Autism Service.	Required	
NS	<u>Inclusion Support Grant</u> : Funding for additional staff, training, consultation, and assistive equipment.	All licensed programs.	Funding supports the overall program.	No	No
NB	<u>Inclusion Support Program</u> : Two options – Individualized Support and Shared Support for additional staffing.	All licensed programs.	Child is age 12 or younger. Parents are working or in school.	No	No
QC	<u>Allowance for Integrating a Disabled Child (Allocation pour l'intégration en service de garde)</u> : Funding to support staffing, or purchase or adapt materials or the facility.  <u>Exceptional Support Measure (Mesure exceptionnelle de soutien à l'intégration en service de garde)</u> : funds additional hours of assistance needed for child with significant barriers in the integration process.	Publicly funded centres and family child care homes.	Child is age 0 – 5, has “significant and persistent disability.”	Required	No

<sup>1</sup> In Saskatchewan, child care homes can only apply for one type of grant.

<sup>2</sup> In British Columbia, capital funding programs such as the New Spaces Fund prioritize project applications that create inclusive and accessible child care spaces.

TABLE 12  
CONTINUED

**Inclusion supports in regulated child care (2025).**

PT	Types of support	Service eligibility	Child eligibility for funding	Diagnosis/ referral required	Mandatory to accept a child with a disability
ON	<p><u><a href="#">Special Needs Resourcing</a></u>: Funding for hiring resource consultants or supplemental staff, training, and adaptive equipment.</p> <p>Note that the Ontario government requires local Service System Managers (SSMs) to spend a minimum of 8.5% of their provincial funding on children with special needs.</p> <p>Individual SSMs have the discretion to make determinations about inclusion policy and provision.</p>	Eligible licensed programs participating in CWELCC.	<p>Child with special needs under 13 years of age.</p> <p>A child whose cognitive, physical, social, emotional, or communicative needs, or whose needs relating to overall development, are of such a nature that additional support is required.</p>	This may be determined by individual SSMs.	This may be determined by individual SSMs.
MB	<p><u><a href="#">Child Care Inclusion Support Program</a></u>: Staffing grant (additional staff) or specialized grant (equipment or training). The Guaranteed Space Payment (for family child care only) reserves a space within total licensed spaces.</p>	All licensed non-profit facility types.	Child has developmental disabilities or life-long medical conditions.	No	
SK	<p>Child Care Inclusion: Funding for additional staff, training, assistive equipment, or space modification (includes: <u><a href="#">Individual Inclusion Grant</a></u>, <u><a href="#">Enhanced Accessibility Grant</a></u>, <u><a href="#">Adapted Equipment Grant</a></u>).</p> <p><u><a href="#">Early Learning Intensive Support</a></u>: Funding for additional spaces and educational assistants for children with disabilities in prekindergarten.</p>	<p>Licensed non-profit centres and homes<sup>1</sup>.</p> <p>Prekindergarten (not licensed)</p>	<p>Child has developmental needs.</p> <p>Child is 3 – 4 years; priority given to age four and those not enrolled in other early learning programs.</p>	Required	No
AB	<p><u><a href="#">Inclusive Child Care</a></u>: Funding to community agencies to support child care program capacity-building, training, intensive consultation, and coaching.</p> <p><u><a href="#">Family Support for Children with Disabilities</a></u>: Develops an individual service plan; can fund an aide to enable participation in child care, coaching, and consultation.</p>	<p>All licensed programs.</p> <p>All licensed programs.</p>	<p>Funding is for the overall program.</p> <p>Child has a chronic condition; primary need is not medical care.</p>	<p>No</p> <p>Required</p>	<p>No</p> <p>No</p>

<sup>1</sup> In Saskatchewan, child care homes can only apply for one type of grant.

<sup>2</sup> In British Columbia, capital funding programs such as the New Spaces Fund prioritize project applications that create inclusive and accessible child care spaces.

TABLE 12  
CONTINUED

**Inclusion supports in regulated child care (2025).**

PT	Types of support	Service eligibility	Child eligibility for funding	Diagnosis/ referral required	Mandatory to accept a child with a disability
BC <sup>2</sup>	<p><u>Supported Child Development</u>: Supports additional staff, training, and consultation for a child's full participation in child care settings.</p> <p><u>Aboriginal Supported Child Development</u>: Supports unique Indigenous service needs.</p>	All licensed programs.	Child experiencing, or has increased likelihood of experiencing, developmental delay or disability; who requires support to optimize their development, functional abilities, and quality of life.	No Documentation required to determine eligibility for services.	No
YT	<u>Supported Child Care</u> : Supports extra staffing, help with staff development and programming, and assistance with materials, fees, and transportation.	All licensed programs.	Child is age 0 – 16 years and has a physical, emotional, behavioural, mental, developmental, communicative, or other identifiable and recognized disorder.	Required	No
NT	<p><u>Supporting Child Inclusion and Participation</u>: Provides emergency needs funding (additional staffing), inclusion funding (training and resource purchases), and small community sustainability funding (for programs in small communities).</p> <p>Early Childhood Program (ECP) Operating Subsidy: Provides increased daily rates for special needs spaces.</p>	All licensed programs.	Child is age 0 – 6 years; has developmental needs and/or is equity-seeking.	No	No
NU	<p><u>Healthy Children Initiative</u>: Supportive Child Services: Provides support services to individual children and funding for additional staff.</p> <p><u>Inclusion and Equity Fund</u>: Provides project-based funding for equipment.</p> <p>Community Initiatives: Covers whole child care program.</p>	All licensed, some unlicensed child care.	Child is age 0 – 6 years.	Required for Supportive Child Services Documentation required	<i>Not applicable</i>

<sup>1</sup> In Saskatchewan, child care homes can only apply for one type of grant.

<sup>2</sup> In British Columbia, capital funding programs such as the New Spaces Fund prioritize project applications that create inclusive and accessible child care spaces.

**TABLE 13 Child care workforce<sup>1</sup>: Wages, benefits, and certification (2025).**

PT	Wage grid or wage enhancement <sup>2</sup>	Contributions to/provision of benefits or pension plan	Certification scheme
NL	Wage grid	Group medical benefits	Certification required for all staff in all licensed child care
PE	Wage grid	Defined contribution pension plan; employer portion is paid by government	Certification required for all staff in all licensed child care
NS	Wage grid	Defined benefit pension plan and comprehensive group benefits plan	Classification required for all centre-based child care staff
NB	Wage grid and wage top-up	None	No certification process
QC	Wage scale <sup>3</sup>	Defined benefit pension plan and group insurance	No certification process
ON	Wage floor, wage ceiling, wage top-up, wage enhancement	None	Certification (registration with the College of Early Childhood Educators) required for specified proportion of staff per group in child care centres
MB	Wage floor and wage targets (optional)	Provincial funding for retirement support programs	Provincial classification required for all centre-based child care staff
SK	Wage enhancement	None	Certification required for all centre-based child care staff (65+ hours/month)
AB	Wage top-up	None	Certification required for all staff in all licensed child care
BC	Wage enhancement	None	Certification required for staff in child care centres below school-age
YT	Wage floor, wage enhancement	Funding provided to employers to select/offer comprehensive benefits package	Certification required for all staff in all licensed child care
NT	Wage grid	None	Certification required for all staff in centre-based child care
NU	Wage grid	None	No certification process

Note: All staff/providers include centre-based staff and family child care providers.

<sup>1</sup> In some provinces/territories, family child care providers may be eligible for wage improvement, benefits and/or certification. Additionally, some centre staff may not be eligible for these measures. Please see provincial/territorial sections for more details.

<sup>2</sup> Wage enhancement and wage top-up can be used interchangeably.

<sup>3</sup> Wage scale (term used by Quebec) and wage grid are used interchangeably.

**TABLE 14 Workforce qualification requirements for full-day child care centres (2025).**

PT	Are staff qualification requirements specified by centre or room/group level?	Are all staff working with children in a child care centre required to have some ECE training?	What ECE education is required to be “qualified”?	What number/percent of qualified staff are required?	What are the qualifications for director/supervisor/administrator?
NL	Room level	Yes Trainee level: Orientation course and registration in ECE program	One-year ECE certificate (Level 1)	Per room, one Level 1; classification must match the age group served	Two-year ECE diploma (Level 2)
PE	Centre level	Yes Early childhood intern: Three 30-hour early childhood courses	Two-year diploma (ECE level)	Per centre, one ECE	Early childhood supervisor: Two-year ECE diploma or a degree in human studies Early childhood director: ECE degree, or a degree in human studies
NS	Centre level	Yes Entry level: 16 online sessions	One-year certificate (ECE Level 1)	Per centre, 2/3 of staff must have at least ECE Level 1; the remaining must have at least entry level	Two-year ECE diploma <sup>1</sup>
NB	Centre level	Yes Entry level: Introduction to ECE course	One-year certificate (no certification process)	Per centre, 50% of staff must have a one-year ECE certificate	One-year ECE certificate or equivalent training
QC	Centre level	No	Three-year ECE diploma (Diplôme d'études collégiales; DEC), no certification process, or equivalent	Per centre, 2/3 must have DEC	Not specified
ON	Group/room level	No	Two-year diploma (Registered Early Childhood Educator; RECE)	Per room, 1/3 to 2/3 must be RECEs, depending on age group	Two-year ECE diploma and registration with College of Early Childhood Educators
MB	Both centre and group levels	Yes Early childhood assistant: 40 hours training	Two-year ECE diploma (ECE II)	Per centre, full-time centres require 2/3 qualified (ECE II/III) staff, with at least one qualified educator per group	Full-time centre director must be ECE III Nursery school director must be ECE II

Note: PSE refers to post-secondary education.

<sup>1</sup> In Nova Scotia, a centre director who began working as a director before May 1, 2012, may have Level 1 classification.

TABLE 14  
CONTINUED

## Workforce qualification requirements for full-day child care centres (2025).

PT	Are staff qualification requirements specified by centre or room/group level?	Are all staff working with children in a child care centre required to have some ECE training?	What ECE education is required to be “qualified”?	What number/percent of qualified staff are required?	What are the qualifications for director/supervisor/administrator?
SK	Centre level	Yes ECE Level I: Orientation course	One-year certificate (ECE Level II)	Per centre, at least 20% must be Level III and 30% Level II among those working 65+ hours per month	Supervisor: Level I – Either PSE ECE orientation course or three approved ECE courses Director: Level III – Two-year ECE diploma or equivalent coursework
AB	Centre level	Yes Level 1: One of: • 45-hour, three-credit PSE ECE course; • AB ECE orientation course; • AB high school child care courses; or • ELCC-approved coursework equivalencies	One-year certificate (Level 2) or equivalent	Per centre, 1/3 must be Level 2	Level 3: Two-year ECE diploma or equivalent
BC	Group level	Yes ECE assistant: One course	One-year certificate	Per group, specified number of certified staff based on age group and group size	Not specified
YT	Centre level	Yes Level 1: 60 hours of coursework or equivalent	60 hours of coursework or equivalent (Level 1)	Per centre: 20% Level 3, 30% Level 2, 50% Level 1	Not specified
NT	Centre level	Yes Level 1: Early Childhood Essentials course + 1 year experience or equivalent	Early Childhood Essentials course or equivalent (Level 1)	Per centre: one ELCC educator (Level 1 – 4) at all times; assistants cannot outnumber educators	Not specified
NU	Centre level	No	<i>Not applicable</i>	Post-secondary ECE training is not required	Not specified

Note: PSE refers to post-secondary education.

<sup>1</sup> In Nova Scotia, a centre director who began working as a director before May 1, 2012, may have Level 1 classification.

**TABLE 15 Food provision in licensed full-day child care centres (2025).**

PT	Are centres required to supply food/meals?	Are additional parent fees to cover provided food/meals permitted?	What is the scheduling of serving food?
NL	Yes: There is provision for exemptions.	No: Centres are not permitted to charge additional fees as food costs are built into operating funding.	Food/beverage must be offered every three hours. Breakfast must be provided to children attending before 7:30 am and dinner to those attending after 6:30 pm. Two snacks daily.
PE	Yes: Early Years Centres (designated centres) are required to supply meals and snacks.  No: Non-designated centres are not required to supply.	No: Meals and snacks are provided in Early Years Centres as part of operating funding.	Three meals and two snacks must be provided to children in attendance for three hours or more.
NS	Yes.	Yes: Centres are permitted to charge additional fees for food.	A meal during regular meal times and a snack before or after a meal period are required.
NB	Yes: Designated centres are required to provide meals and snacks.  No: Non-designated centres are not required to supply.	Yes: Non-designated centres are permitted to charge additional fees for food.  No: Designated centres are not permitted to charge additional fees for food.	A snack must be provided at least every three hours and a meal served at each recognized meal period.
QC	Yes: Funded centres.  No: Unfunded centres.	Yes: Funded and unfunded centres.	Snacks and meals must be provided whenever the child is present during scheduled snack and meal times (noon meal, evening meal, or breakfast).
ON	Yes: Meals and snacks must be supplied to children between 12 and 44 months old attending for six hours or more.	No: Meals and snacks are covered as part of base fees, which are funded through operational funding.	Where the child is present at meal time, a meal must be provided.  Two snacks in addition to any meals are required for programs of six hours and more.
MB	No: Centres may provide meals/ snacks or require families to provide them.	Yes: Centres are permitted to charge additional fees for food.	A meal must be served if a child is in attendance during a meal period.  A snack must be served after three hours when a child attends outside a meal period.
SK	Yes: Centres must supply meals and snacks for children who are six months or older.	Yes: A fee for food is a separate fee from the “base fee.”	Not specified.

TABLE 15  
CONTINUED

**Food provision in licensed full-day child care centres (2025).**

PT	Are centres required to supply food/meals?	Are additional parent fees to cover provided food/meals permitted?	What is the scheduling of serving food?
AB	No: Centres may supply or require families to supply meals and snacks.	Yes: Centres are permitted to charge additional fees for food.	Not specified.
BC	No: Centres may supply or require families to supply meals and snacks.	Yes: Centres are permitted to charge additional fees for food. No: \$10 a Day ChildCareBC centres under the Operating Funding Model are not permitted to charge additional fees.	Not specified.
YT	No: Centres may or may not be funded to have a meal plan.  Centres must have sufficient quantities of food for all children in attendance.	Yes: If the centre is not funded to provide meals.  No: If the centre is funded to provide meals.	A morning meal, a mid-day meal, or an evening meal must be served.  A mid-morning, mid-afternoon, or mid-evening snack must be served.
NT	Yes.	No: Centres are not permitted to charge additional fees beyond the defined child care fees, and “child care fees” include food.	Children 10 and under must be served a snack or meal at least every two-and-a-half hours.  Children 10 years+ must be served a snack or meal at least every three hours.
NU	No: Programs may supply or require families to supply meals and snacks.	No: Centres are not permitted to charge additional fees for food.	Children 10 and under must be served a snack or meal at least every two-and-a-half hours.  Children 10 years+ must be served a snack or meal at least every three hours.

**TABLE 16** **Outdoor play requirements in licensed child care centres (2025).**

PT	Required outdoor time	Outdoor space requirements	Location of outdoor play area
NL	Daily outdoor activity morning and afternoon, except when extreme weather conditions exist.  Duration not specified.	7 m <sup>2</sup> multiplied by the maximum number of children who may participate in the child care at one time.  If there is an infant group, there must be a separate, enclosed outdoor play area that meets all the same requirements as any other outdoor play area.  A hard surface shall not cover more than half of the outdoor play area.  The play area must be enclosed by a fence that is at least 1.2 m high and has, at maximum, 9 centimetres between every slat.	Full-time programs must have an outdoor play area as part of the facility for exclusive use of children participating in the child care service.  Programs not offering full-day child care may use a public area within a “reasonable distance.”
PE	Must be included in the daily schedule.  Duration not specified.	7 m <sup>2</sup> /child.  May share outdoor space with another centre as long as it is used by one operator at a time.  Securely enclosed on all sides.  Potable water must be safely accessible in or from the outdoor activity space by children at the centre.	Adjacent to the centre, but an outdoor space within a “reasonable distance” may be allowed.
NS <sup>1</sup>	Daily outdoor activity morning and afternoon, except when extreme weather conditions exist.  Duration not specified.	7 m <sup>2</sup> /child, capable of accommodating the largest group of children who regularly attend.  Must be enclosed by a fence at least 1.2 m high.	For full-day and school-age programs, outdoor spaces must be located at the facility or at another safe and suitable location for children’s age range. If infants are enrolled, a separate fenced outdoor play space for infants must be provided at the facility or in the immediate vicinity.
NB	At least one hour for every four hours of care provided, except when wind chill or temperature is below -20 °C, or when it is 33 °C or higher with humidity.	4.5 m <sup>2</sup> /child, capable of accommodating at least half of the maximum licensed capacity.  Includes a shaded area of at least 0.45 m <sup>2</sup> /child for full-time and part-time centres with infant or preschool children.  Consists of more than one surface to permit different types of play.  Must be enclosed by a fence at least 1.22 m high.	Full-time centres: less than 350 m from the indoor play area.  Part-time centres serving school-age children only: less than 700 m away.  Full- and part-time centres serving infants must have a separate infant outdoor space, or infants and another age group must use the outdoor space at different times.
QC <sup>2</sup>	At least 60 minutes every day.	4 m <sup>2</sup> /child and can accommodate one third of the licensed capacity.  Must be enclosed by a fence at least 1.2 m high.	Must be within 500 m of the facility, in a private fenced area or fenced public park.

<sup>1</sup> In Nova Scotia, outdoor play spaces located at a school are exempt from the space and fencing requirements in section 22(3) of the Early Learning and Child Care Regulations.

<sup>2</sup> In Quebec, space requirements do not apply to an outdoor play area located in a public park.

**TABLE 16**  
*CONTINUED*

**Outdoor play requirements in licensed child care centres (2025).**

PT	Required outdoor time	Outdoor space requirements	Location of outdoor play area
ON	Full-day programs: 2 hours/day when weather permits.  Before- and after-school: 30 min/day when weather permits.	Full-day programs: 5.6 m <sup>2</sup> /child based on the licensed capacity. When capacity exceeds 64 children, play space may be divided so no more than 64 children use a fenced area at once.  Must be enclosed by a fence at least 1.2 m high furnished with one or more gates that are securely closed at all times, unless otherwise approved by a director.	Is at ground level and adjacent to the premises, unless otherwise approved by a director.
MB	Must be included in the daily schedule, except when wind chill or temperature is below -25 °C, or according to the policy of the school division where the facility is located.  Duration not specified.	7 m <sup>2</sup> /child and can accommodate the greater of 55 m <sup>2</sup> or 50% of licensed capacity.  If outdoor space is adjacent to the centre, it must be fenced and at least half the surface must be natural. If not adjacent, the operator must ensure safe access.	Full-day programs: within 350 m of the centre.  School-age programs: within 700 m of the centre.
SK	Not specified.	7 m <sup>2</sup> /child.	Half the outdoor play area must be adjacent to the centre and the remainder must be within walking distance, determined in relation to the youngest licensed age category.
AB	Not specified.	2 m <sup>2</sup> /child under 19 months old and 4.5 m <sup>2</sup> /child for 19 months and older, and can accommodate 50% of the licensed capacity.  Enclosed on all sides.	On the premises, adjacent to, or within “easy and safe walking distance” from the centre.  Out-of-school care programs: does not have to be on or adjacent to the centre.
BC	Must be included in the daily schedule (except for Occasional Child Care programs) when weather permits.  Duration not specified.	6 m <sup>2</sup> /child; or if more than one type of program, for the largest maximum group size permitted.  Outdoor play areas may only be shared at the same time if the programs are the same type and all regulatory requirements are met.	Not specified.

<sup>1</sup> In Nova Scotia, outdoor play spaces located at a school are exempt from the space and fencing requirements in section 22(3) of the Early Learning and Child Care Regulations.

<sup>2</sup> In Quebec, space requirements do not apply to an outdoor play area located in a public park.

**TABLE 16**  
*CONTINUED*

**Outdoor play requirements in licensed child care centres (2025).**

PT	Required outdoor time	Outdoor space requirements	Location of outdoor play area
YT	Must be included in the daily schedule.  Duration not specified.	5 m <sup>2</sup> /child for each child using the outdoor space (not for each child enrolled in the program).  Must be enclosed by a fence that is at least 1.2 m high, except for public playgrounds  Must provide an area for sand play, a quiet area, and other activities.	Adjacent to the centre or within “easy and safe walking distance” for the age group.
NT	Must be included in the daily schedule, except in case of inclement weather, wildlife warnings, or warnings for potential dangerous conditions for the area.  Promote physical fitness for at least 30 minutes each day.	5 m <sup>2</sup> /child.  Enclosed by a fence that is at least 1.5 m high if the surrounding environment is hazardous to children.	Adjacent to or within “walking distance” of the centre and suitable for the number, ages, and development of the children attending the program.
NU	Must be included in the daily schedule, except when weather is inclement.  Duration not specified.	5 m <sup>2</sup> /child for outdoor spaces adjacent to the centre.  Fenced if the surrounding environment is potentially hazardous to children.	Adjacent to or within “walking distance” of the centre.

<sup>1</sup> In Nova Scotia, outdoor play spaces located at a school are exempt from the space and fencing requirements in section 22(3) of the Early Learning and Child Care Regulations.

<sup>2</sup> In Quebec, space requirements do not apply to an outdoor play area located in a public park.

TABLE 17 Child care types and auspices eligible for CWELCC funding (2025).

PT	Operational funding					Capital funding <sup>1</sup>				
	Full-day centre-based	Part-day centre-based	Before- and after-school care for 4- and 5-year-olds	Family child care	New/expanded for-profits	Full-day centre-based	Part-day centre-based	Before- and after-school care for 4- and 5-year-olds	Family child care	New/expanded for-profits
NL	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
PE	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
NS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
NB	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes <sup>2</sup>	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
QC <sup>3</sup>	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
ON	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>4</sup>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
MB	Yes	Yes	Not applicable <sup>5</sup>	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
SK <sup>6</sup>	Yes	Not applicable	No	Yes	No	Yes	Not applicable	No	Yes	No
AB	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes <sup>7</sup>	Yes	No	No	No	No
BC	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
YT <sup>6</sup>	Yes	Not applicable	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not applicable	Yes	Yes	No
NT	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
NU	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No

Note: From the federal government's perspective, all types of licensed child care programs for children 0 - 5 years are eligible for CWELCC funding, including existing for-profit child care. However, high-level policy states that expansion should be primarily non-profit and public. Several provinces negotiated specific for-profit expansion numbers under CWELCC (see footnotes).

Note: CWELCC only funds licensed child care programs. Unlicensed child care programs, authorized recreational programs, and school boards—operated extended day or before- and after-school programs are not eligible for CWELCC funding.

<sup>1</sup> Some PTs provide capital funding outside CWELCC.

<sup>2</sup> The first Canada-New Brunswick agreement specified that a number of new/expanded for-profit spaces could be funded under CWELCC.

<sup>3</sup> CWELCC is not applicable to Quebec, as under Quebec's asymmetrical agreement, federal conditions do not pertain.

<sup>4</sup> The first Canada-Ontario agreement specified that a number of new/expanded for-profit spaces could be funded under CWELCC.

<sup>5</sup> In Manitoba, before- and after-school child care is for 6 - 12 year olds.

<sup>6</sup> Part-day preschools are not required to be licensed in Saskatchewan and the Yukon, so they are not eligible for CWELCC funding.

<sup>7</sup> The first Canada-Alberta agreement specified that a number of new/expanded for-profit spaces could be funded under CWELCC.

TABLE 18

## Number of centres and family child care homes funded by CWELCC (2024).

PT	Number of centres funded by CWELCC	Total number of centres	Number of active family child care homes funded by CWELCC	Total number of active family child care homes
NL	213	218	126 <sup>1</sup>	126
PE	76	151	17	17
NS	318	325	234	234
NB <sup>2</sup>	379	553	108	124
QC <sup>3</sup>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>
ON	5,281	5,836	<i>Not available</i> <sup>4</sup>	4,426 <sup>5</sup>
MB	632	759	325 <sup>6</sup>	400 <sup>7</sup>
SK	399	400	482	482 <sup>8</sup>
AB	2,500	2,500	<i>Not available</i> <sup>9</sup>	2,615 <sup>10</sup>
BC	3,301	3,727	1,657	1,725
YT	59	59	18	18
NT	49	49	41	41
NU	45	47	7	7

Note: The numbers of centres in this table include all centres – full-day, part-day, and before- and after-school care.

Note: Centres in operation but not receiving CWELCC funding may not be eligible due to children's age groups, auspice, or operator/provincial/territorial policy choice.

<sup>1</sup> In Newfoundland and Labrador, a single province-wide family child care agency receives CWELCC funding that is then distributed to 126 agency-based family child care homes.

<sup>2</sup> In previous versions of *ECEC in Canada*, New Brunswick has reported individual licences in place of centres. For consistency with other

jurisdictions, the 2024 centre data reflect the number of centres so are not comparable to previous years.

<sup>3</sup> Quebec signed an asymmetrical agreement with the federal government recognizing that Quebec's early learning and child care is under the exclusive jurisdiction of Quebec.

<sup>4</sup> In Ontario, 139 family child care agencies receive CWELCC funding; the number of active family child care homes funded by CWELCC was not available.

<sup>5</sup> In Ontario, there are 151 family child care agencies.

<sup>6</sup> In Manitoba, the number of family child care homes receiving CWELCC

funding includes 28 group family child care homes.

<sup>7</sup> In Manitoba, the total number of active family child care homes includes 35 group family child care homes.

<sup>8</sup> In Saskatchewan, the total number of active family child care homes includes 355 group family child care homes.

<sup>9</sup> In Alberta, there are 82 child care agencies and 15 group family child care homes receiving CWELCC funding. The number of CWELCC-funded agency-approved family child care homes was not available.

<sup>10</sup> In Alberta, the total number of active family child care homes includes 15 group family child care homes.



# The long view

<b>TABLE 19</b>	Total number of regulated child care spaces (centre spaces and family child care) for children 0 – 12 years (2019 – 2025).	452
<b>TABLE 20</b>	Number of child care spaces by program type for children 0 – 12 years (2019 – 2025).	453
<b>TABLE 21</b>	Percent of 0 – 12 year olds for whom a regulated space was available (2019 – 2025).	454
<b>TABLE 22</b>	Percent of centre spaces that were for-profit by type (2021 – 2025).	455
<b>TABLE 23</b>	Number of children by age group (rounded estimates in thousands) (2019 – 2024).	456
<b>TABLE 24</b>	Number of children by age group with employed mothers (rounded estimate in thousands) (2019 – 2024).	457
<b>TABLE 25</b>	Workforce participation rate of mothers by age of youngest child (rounded estimates) (2019 – 2024).	458
<b>TABLE 26</b>	Number of regulated child care centres (2019 – 2024).	461
<b>TABLE 27</b>	Number of active regulated family child care homes (2019 – 2024).	462
<b>TABLE 28</b>	Total public spending for regulated child care (rounded, in millions) (2018 - 2019 to 2023 - 2024).	463
<b>TABLE 29</b>	Federal child care funding (rounded, in millions) since CWELCC was initiated (2021 – 2024).	464

**TABLE 19 Total number of regulated child care spaces (centre spaces and family child care) for children 0 – 12 years (2019 – 2025)<sup>1</sup>.**

PT	2019	2021	2023	2024	2025
NL	8,110	8,042	8,555	9,372	11,232
PE	5,693	6,393	6,716	7,032	7,407
NS	19,016	16,738 <sup>2</sup>	19,991	22,409	23,696
NB	30,363	32,416	33,521	34,680	35,654
QC	663,601	620,132	553,316 <sup>3</sup>	572,204 <sup>4</sup>	581,430
ON	466,935	477,272	521,951	537,821	555,557
MB	37,459	38,397	40,913	41,870	43,649
SK	16,797	17,666	20,307	22,734	26,544
AB	138,892	140,509	162,000	176,945	194,610
BC	115,487	127,362	139,053	148,201	160,601
YT	1,297	1,869	2,228	2,257	2,345
NT	1,864	2,003	1,932	1,936	1,997
NU	1,144	1,247	1,246	1,315	1,364
CA	1,506,658	1,490,046	1,511,729	1,578,776	1,646,086

<sup>1</sup> For previous years back to 1992, see Table 24, *ECEC in Canada 2021*.

<sup>2</sup> The Nova Scotia figure for regulated spaces in 2021 did not include 672 spaces in the Nova Scotia Before and After Program (NS-BAP), thus under-representing Nova Scotia spaces. (NS-BAP is unlicensed but is included as regulated/authorized).

<sup>3</sup> In 2022, Quebec changed the way before- and after-school spaces are calculated. As a result, the figures from 2023 onward are not comparable to previous years.

<sup>4</sup> In Quebec, the 2024 total centre spaces and total regulated spaces have been revised since the publication of the *Interim Space Statistics 2024* report. In that report, 2025 before- and after-school care (BASC) data were used, instead of 2024 BASC data.

TABLE 20

## Number of child care spaces by program type for children 0 – 12 years (2019 – 2025).

PT	2019				2021				2023				2024				2025			
	Full-and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	BASC spaces for children 4 – 12 years	Family child care spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Total spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Full-and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	BASC spaces for children 4 – 12 years	Family child care spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Total spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Full-and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	BASC spaces for children 4 – 12 years	Family child care spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Total spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Full-and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	BASC spaces for children 4 – 12 years	Family child care spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Total spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Full-and part-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years	BASC spaces for children 4 – 12 years	Family child care spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Total spaces for children 0 – 12 years
NL	6,382	954	774	8,110	4,702	2,717	623	8,042	5,372	2,530	653	8,555	5,899	2,681	792	9,372	6,525	3,861	846	11,232
PE	3,645	2,029	19	5,693	3,925	2,439	29	6,393	4,155 <sup>1</sup>	2,629	84	6,868	4,258	2,640	134	7,032	4,656	2,592	159	7,407
NS	12,951	4,098	1,967	19,016	11,959	4,261 <sup>2</sup>	1,190	17,410	12,773	6,118	1,100	19,991	13,608	7,397	1,404 <sup>3</sup>	22,409 <sup>4</sup>	14,299	7,651	1,746	23,696
NB	14,024	15,212	1,127	30,363	15,222	16,214	980	32,416	16,376	16,563	582	33,521	16,760	17,093	827	34,680	17,757	17,028	869	35,654
QC <sup>5</sup>	213,119	246,593	87,433	547,145	214,168	223,253	65,281	502,702	225,251	262,611	65,454	553,316	231,641	268,782	71,781	572,204	237,002	271,655	72,773	581,430
ON <sup>6</sup>	172,951	273,645	20,339	466,935	180,758	283,780	12,734	477,272	194,352	310,703	16,896	521,951	201,328	315,127	21,366	537,821	211,113	321,412	23,032	555,557
MB	22,495	11,678	3,286	37,459	22,949	12,136	3,312	38,397	24,922	12,942	3,049	40,913	25,599	13,221	3,050	41,870	26,906	13,639	3,104	43,649
SK <sup>7</sup>	12,970	1,635	2,192	16,797	13,735	1,625	2,306	17,666	15,206	1,620	3,481	20,307	16,181	1,645	4,908	22,734	17,475	1,635	7,434	26,544
AB <sup>6</sup>	67,610	59,360	11,922	138,892	80,816	50,985	8,708	140,509	92,010	55,600	14,390	162,000	100,990	58,700	17,255	176,945	113,280	62,500	18,830	194,610
BC <sup>6</sup>	67,780	35,683	12,024	115,487	76,214	38,419	12,729	127,362	84,439	42,272	12,342	139,053	90,137	45,437	12,627	148,201	97,881	49,450	13,270	160,601
YT <sup>7,8</sup>	935	165	197	1,297	1,070	388	210	1,869	1,440	395	183	2,228	1,376	393	156	2,257	Not available (1,376 - placeholder)	Not available (393 - placeholder)	149	2,345
NT	779	677	408	1,864	763	808	432	2,003	820	792	320	1,932	810	798	328	1,936	822	815	360	1,997
NU	971	157	16	1,144	1,052	155	40	1,247	1,060	152	34	1,246	1,097	162	56	1,315	1,138	162	64	1,364
CA <sup>9</sup>	596,612	651,886	141,704	1,390,202	627,333	637,180	108,574	1,373,288	678,176	714,927	118,568	1,511,881	709,684	734,076	134,684	1,578,776	750,230	752,793	142,636	1,646,086

Note: Family child care spaces for children 0 – 12 years may reflect either enrolment or licensed capacity, as consistent data were not available.

<sup>1</sup> Due to a change in how part-day spaces are counted, Prince Edward Island's 2023 part-day figures have been revised from previous versions of *ECEC in Canada* to allow comparison to 2024's figures. As a result, the figures from 2023 onward are not comparable to previous years.

<sup>2</sup> Nova Scotia's BASC spaces for 2021 have been revised to include spaces in Nova Scotia Before and After Programs (NS-BAP), to allow comparison with 2023, 2024, and 2025 figures.

<sup>3</sup> For the *Interim Space Statistics 2024* publication, Nova Scotia reported 1,728 regulated family child care

spaces. However, this figure was as of December 2024. For consistency with the rest of the data in this report, we have included the number of spaces on March 30, 2024, here instead.

<sup>4</sup> The total number of regulated spaces for 2024 has been updated since the *Interim Space Statistics 2024* publication to reflect the revised figure adjusted by Nova Scotia's total family child care spaces.

<sup>5</sup> In the 2022 – 2023 school year, Quebec changed the way it reports BASC spaces. Quebec's 2019 and 2021 BASC spaces in this table have been revised from previous versions of *ECEC in Canada* to make them comparable to the following years' data.

<sup>6</sup> In all years, Ontario's, Alberta's, and British Columbia's centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years include multi-age group spaces not broken down by age.

<sup>7</sup> Saskatchewan and the Yukon do not license part-day centres for children 0 – 5 years (preschools).

<sup>8</sup> The Yukon does not license by age group. All 2019 figures are enrolment. In 2021, 2023, and 2024, enrolment figures have been used for full-day, part-day, and BASC spaces, while family child care and total spaces for children 0 – 12 years reflect licensed capacity. Enrolment data for 2025 was not collected for this report.

<sup>9</sup> For the Yukon, enrolment numbers from 2024 have been used as placeholders to calculate Canada's total for 2025. Enrolment data for Yukon was not collected for this report in 2025.

TABLE 21

Percent of 0 – 12 year olds for whom a regulated space was available (2019 – 2025).

PT	2019		2021		2023		2024		2025	
	Total spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Percent of children 0 – 12 years for whom a full- or part-day space was available (%)	Total spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Percent of children 0 – 12 years for whom a full- or part-day space was available (%)	Total spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Percent of children 0 – 12 years for whom a full- or part-day space was available (%)	Total spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Percent of children 0 – 12 years for whom a full- or part-day space was available (%)	Total spaces for children 0 – 12 years	Percent of children 0 – 12 years for whom a full- or part-day space was available (%)
NL	8,110	13	8,042	14	8,555	15	9,372	17	11,232	20
PE	5,693	27	6,393	31	6,868	32	7,032	33	7,407	35
NS <sup>1</sup>	19,016	17	17,410	15	19,991	17	22,409 <sup>2</sup>	19	23,969	20
NB	30,363	32	32,416	34	33,521	35	34,680	34	35,654	35
QC	547,145 <sup>3</sup>	47	502,702 <sup>3</sup>	44	553,316	48	572,204 <sup>4</sup>	49	581,430	50
ON	466,935	24	477,272	25	521,951	27	537,821	27	555,557	28
MB	37,459	19	38,397	18	40,913	20	41,870	20	43,649	21
SK	16,797	10	17,666	10	20,307	11	22,734	12	26,544	14
AB	138,892	20	140,509	20	162,000	23	176,945	24	194,610	27
BC	115,487	20	127,362	21	139,053	23	148,201	24	160,601	26
YT	1,297	25	1,869	32	2,228	37	2,257	40	2,345	42
NT	1,864	23	2,003	27	1,932	28	1,936	28	1,997	29
NU	1,144	12	1,247	12	1,246	12	1,315	13	1,364	14
CA	1,390,202	27	1,373,288	27	1,511,881	30	1,578,776	30	1,646,359	31

Note: Total spaces include regulated spaces in full-day, part-day, and before- and after-school care centres (BASC) and regulated family child care spaces or enrolment for children 0 – 12 years.

Note: Percent of children for whom a space was available represents the total number of regulated spaces as a percentage of the total number of children 0 – 12 years in the province or territory. The Canada-wide row represents the total number of regulated spaces across Canada as a percentage of the total number of children 0 – 12 years in Canada.

<sup>1</sup> Nova Scotia's total spaces for 2021 have been revised from previous versions of *ECEC in Canada* to include spaces in Nova Scotia Before and After Programs (NS-BAP) to allow comparison with 2023 and 2024.

<sup>2</sup> The total number of regulated spaces for 2024 has been updated since the *Interim Space Statistics 2024* publication to reflect the revised figure adjusted by Nova Scotia's total family child care spaces.

<sup>3</sup> Due to a change in how Quebec reports before- and after-school care spaces, Quebec's 2019 and 2021 spaces in this table have been revised from previous versions of *ECEC in Canada* to allow comparison with the 2023, 2024, and 2025 figures.

<sup>4</sup> Quebec's 2024 total centre spaces and total regulated spaces have been revised since the publication of the *Interim Space Statistics 2024* report. In that report, 2025 BASC data were used in place of 2024 BASC data.

TABLE 22 Percent of centre spaces that were for-profit by type (2021 – 2025).

PT	2021		2023		2024		2025	
	Percent of full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years that were for-profit (%)	Percent of part-day and BASC centre spaces for children 0 – 12 years that were for-profit (%)	Percent of full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years that were for-profit (%)	Percent of part-day and BASC centre spaces for children 0 – 12 years that were for-profit (%)	Percent of full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years that were for-profit (%)	Percent of part-day and BASC centre spaces for children 0 – 12 years that were for-profit (%)	Percent of full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years that were for-profit (%)	Percent of part-day and BASC centre spaces for children 0 – 12 years that were for-profit (%)
NL	74	63	70	61	66	60	65	69
PE	69	54	69	58	67	60	72	60
NS	57	49	56	40	Not available <sup>1</sup>	Not available	Not available <sup>1</sup>	Not available
NB	71	57	72	62	71	62	70	63
QC <sup>2</sup>	55	0	54	0	54	0	53	0
ON	42	7.8	43	7.4	44	7.4	44	7.5
MB	6.5	3.2	7.2	3.2	7.2	2.3	8.0	2.9
SK <sup>3</sup>	1.9	0.7	3.9	1.4	4.4	1.6	4.9	1.5
AB	76	57	75	55	73	55	73	56
BC	65	43	67	41	67	39	67	37
YT <sup>4,5</sup>	57	Not applicable, Not available	59	Not applicable, Not available	61	Not applicable, Not available	60	Not applicable, Not available
NT <sup>6</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NU <sup>6</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CA <sup>7</sup>	52	12	52	14	52	13 <sup>8</sup>	53	14 <sup>8</sup>

Note: Consistent Canada-wide data on the breakdown of full- and part-day spaces by auspice was not available before 2021.

Note: This table includes regulated full-day, part-day (nursery school/preschool), and before- and after-school centre spaces.

<sup>1</sup> In Nova Scotia, breakdown of full-day, part-day, before- and after-school care (BASC), and Nova Scotia Before and After Program (NS-BAP) spaces by auspice is not available.

<sup>2</sup> For-profit part-day and BASC centre spaces in Quebec only represent before- and after-school care, which is all operated by school authorities.

<sup>3</sup> Saskatchewan does not require part-day centre spaces (preschools) to be licensed; therefore, only before- and after-school centre spaces are included in the calculation.

<sup>4</sup> The Yukon does not require part-day centre spaces (preschools) to be licensed.

<sup>5</sup> The Yukon's full-day spaces include before- and after-school care spaces for children 4 – 12 years, as the territory does not license by age group.

<sup>6</sup> Northwest Territories and Nunavut have no for-profit centre spaces.

<sup>7</sup> The Canada-wide total for part-day and BASC centre spaces does not include the Yukon's for-profit BASC, as a breakdown was not available.

<sup>8</sup> Nova Scotia's part-day and BASC centre spaces are not included in these figures, as a breakdown was not available.

TABLE 23

**Number of children by age group (rounded estimates in thousands) (2019 – 2024)<sup>1</sup>.**

PT	Number of children 0 – 5 years			
	2019	2021	2023	2024
NL	25	24	23	21
PE	8.6	8.8	10	9
NS	51	48	49	49
NB	40	40	39	42
QC	509	501	489	499
ON	838	849	845	842
MB	91	94	92	92
SK	78	77	83	76
AB	314	308	289	311
BC	252	251	256	259
YT	2.4	2.2	2.3	2
NT	3.4	3.4	2.8	3
NU	4.5	4.2	4.8	4
CA <sup>2</sup>	2,217	2,210	2,184	2,208

<sup>1</sup> For previous years back to 1992, see [Table 26, ECEC in Canada 2021](#).

<sup>2</sup> Canada-wide totals may not add up due to rounding.

TABLE 23

**Number of children by age group (rounded estimates in thousands) (2019 – 2024)<sup>1</sup>.**

PT	Number of children 6 – 12 years			
	2019	2021	2023	2024
NL	37	34	34	35
PE	12	12	12	12
NS	62	68	71	73
NB	54	55	58	60
QC	647	650	671	672
ON	1,108	1,090	1,108	1,162
MB	110	116	115	119
SK	99	106	101	107
AB	384	389	408	415
BC	332	358	347	367
YT	3.2	3.6	3.8	4
NT	4.1	4.0	4.2	4
NU	5.5	6.0	5.2	5
CA <sup>2</sup>	2,858	2,891	2,938	3,035

TABLE 24

**Number of children by age group with employed mothers  
(rounded estimate in thousands) (2019 – 2024)<sup>1</sup>.**

PT	Number of children 0 – 5 years with employed mothers			
	2019	2021	2023	2024
NL	15	15	16	16
PE	6.2	6.4	7.6	7
NS	33	33	33	33
NB	28	28	27	28
QC	377	358	374	382
ON	519	542	574	563
MB	52	56	57	60
SK	52	52	53	50
AB	186	178	184	190
BC	167	162	172	164
YT	1.8	1.6	1.7	2
NT	2.4	2.2	1.9	2
NU	1.8	1.6	1.5	2
CA <sup>2</sup>	1,441	1,437	1,501	1,499

TABLE 24

**Number of children by age group with employed mothers  
(rounded estimate in thousands) (2019 – 2024)<sup>1</sup>.**

PT	Number of children 6 – 12 years with employed mothers			
	2019	2021	2023	2024
NL	23	22	24	25
PE	8.9	8.5	9	9
NS	44	47	49	52
NB	36	39	39	42
QC	480	476	516	505
ON	749	722	757	776
MB	70	75	79	80
SK	69	72	71	76
AB	255	243	281	280
BC	233	245	234	247
YT	2.2	2.7	2.9	3
NT	2.9	3.1	3.2	3
NU	2.5	2.6	2.3	3
CA <sup>2</sup>	1,976	1,959	2,066	2,101

<sup>1</sup> For previous years back to 1995, see [Table 27, ECEC in Canada 2021](#).

<sup>2</sup> Canada-wide totals may not add up due to rounding.

TABLE 25

Workforce participation rate of mothers by age of youngest child (rounded estimates) (2019 – 2024)<sup>1</sup>.

P	With youngest child 0 – 2 years		With youngest child 0 – 3 years			
	2019 (%)	2020 (%) <sup>2</sup>	2020 (%) <sup>2</sup>	2021 (%)	2023 (%)	2024 (%)
NL	68	71	76	75	83	84
PE	84	80	81	85	86	84
NS	74	74	78	79	80	78
NB	77	75	78	82	80	81
QC	80	78	81	81	84	84
ON	70	72	74	76	78	79
MB	65	68	71	71	74	76
SK	72	70	71	77	76	78
AB	66	70	72	69	73	71
BC	74	73	73	75	79	74
CA	73	73	75	76	79	79

Note: Comparable figures for mothers' employment rate are not available for the territories.

<sup>1</sup> For previous years back to 1998, see [Table 28](#), ECEC in Canada 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Note: In 2020, Statistics Canada changed how the Labour Force Survey calculates the workforce participation rate of mothers by age of youngest child. The youngest child age groupings changed from 0 – 2, 3 – 5, and

6 – 15 years to 0 – 3, 4 – 5, and 6 – 12 years. The new calculation also only includes mothers aged 25 years and older, instead of including mothers of all ages as used previously. In 2020, data were available for both the previous and new calculations. Both are included in the table. In 2021 and beyond, only the new groupings are included.

TABLE 25  
CONTINUED

Workforce participation rate of mothers by age of youngest child (rounded estimates) (2019 – 2024)<sup>1</sup>.

P	With youngest child 3 – 5 years		With youngest child 4 – 5 years			
	2019 (%)	2020 (%) <sup>2</sup>	2020 (%) <sup>2</sup>	2021 (%)	2023 (%)	2024 (%)
NL	76	86	88	80	85	91
PE	81	78	78	87	81	87
NS	79	82	83	81	78	85
NB	82	86	85	83	84	81
QC	84	86	86	86	89	87
ON	75	75	75	77	80	79
MB	75	73	81	81	78	81
SK	82	78	79	86	78	80
AB	76	73	74	68	83	79
BC	78	73	76	76	79	78
CA	<b>79</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>83</b>

Note: Comparable figures for mothers' employment rate are not available for the territories.

<sup>1</sup> For previous years back to 1998, see [Table 28, ECEC in Canada 2021](#).

<sup>2</sup> Note: In 2020, Statistics Canada changed how the Labour Force Survey calculates the workforce participation rate of mothers by age of youngest child. The youngest child age groupings changed from 0 – 2, 3 – 5, and

6 – 15 years to 0 – 3, 4 – 5, and 6 – 12 years. The new calculation also only includes mothers aged 25 years and older, instead of including mothers of all ages as used previously. In 2020, data were available for both the previous and new calculations. Both are included in the table. In 2021 and beyond, only the new groupings are included.

TABLE 25  
CONTINUED

Workforce participation rate of mothers by age of youngest child (rounded estimates) (2019 – 2024)<sup>1</sup>.

P	With youngest child 6 – 15 years		With youngest child 6 – 12 years			
	2019 (%)	2020 (%) <sup>2</sup>	2020 (%) <sup>2</sup>	2021 (%)	2023 (%)	2024 (%)
NL	82	84	83	80	87	88
PE	87	88	91	86	86	89
NS	86	85	86	87	85	87
NB	86	83	83	89	83	88
QC	89	87	87	87	90	90
ON	83	81	79	82	84	82
MB	84	82	81	85	88	86
SK	86	86	84	85	88	87
AB	85	84	83	84	84	83
BC	84	84	84	83	83	82
CA	<b>85</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>86</b>

Note: Comparable figures for mothers' employment rate are not available for the territories.

<sup>1</sup> For previous years back to 1998, see [Table 28, ECEC in Canada 2021](#).

<sup>2</sup> Note: In 2020, Statistics Canada changed how the Labour Force Survey calculates the workforce participation rate of mothers by age of youngest child. The youngest child age groupings changed from 0 – 2, 3 – 5, and

6 – 15 years to 0 – 3, 4 – 5, and 6 – 12 years. The new calculation also only includes mothers aged 25 years and older, instead of including mothers of all ages as used previously. In 2020, data were available for both the previous and new calculations. Both are included in the table. In 2021 and beyond, only the new groupings are included.

**TABLE 26** Number of regulated child care centres (2019 – 2024)<sup>1</sup>.

PT	2019	2021	2023	2024
NL	189	186	193	218
PE	144	150	152	151
NS	359	304	323 <sup>2</sup>	325
NB <sup>3</sup>	673	697	539	553
QC <sup>4</sup>	3,563	3,578	3,683	3,754
ON	5,523	5,506	5,776	5,836
MB	713	718	753	759
SK	335	346	378	400
AB	2,789	2,120 (est.)	2,300	2,500
BC	3,099	3,283	3,558	3,727
YT	40	49	57	59
NT	62	68	67	49 <sup>5</sup>
NU <sup>6</sup>	53	54	47	47
CA	<b>17,542</b>	<b>17,059</b>	<b>17,826</b>	<b>18,378</b>

Note: These figures represent all regulated centre-based facilities, including full-day, part-day, and before- and after-school child care. Family child care is not included in these figures.

<sup>1</sup> For previous years' data, see [Table 29, ECEC in Canada 2021](#).

<sup>2</sup> In *ECEC in Canada* 2023, Nova Scotia reported 337 total centres, which included 14 family child care agencies. This figure has been amended to reflect only the total number of centres.

<sup>3</sup> In previous versions of *ECEC in Canada*, New Brunswick reported individual centre-based licences in place of centres; each centre (facility) may hold multiple licences. For consistency with other jurisdictions, the 2023 and

2024 data in this table reflect centres (facilities). Therefore, the data from 2019 and 2021 are not comparable to 2023 and 2024. New Brunswick's total number of centre-based licences in 2023 was 720.

<sup>4</sup> Quebec's figures for 2023 and previous years do not include the number of school-age centres because the data was unavailable. Therefore, the Quebec figures considerably under-represent the number of regulated child care centres for children 0 – 12 years in Quebec. In 2024, the number of school-aged centres was available: Quebec had 1,893 before- and after-school care centres. This number is not reported in the table to allow comparison with previous years.

<sup>5</sup> Northwest Territories' total number of centres for previous years may not be comparable to 2024 because in previous years the total number of centres may have reflected the total number of licences.

<sup>6</sup> In previous versions of *ECEC in Canada*, Nunavut has reported individual licences in place of centres; each centre (facility) may hold multiple licences. In 2019 and 2021, this figure also included licensed family child care homes. For consistency with other jurisdictions, the 2023 and 2024 data in this table reflect centres (facilities). Therefore, the data from 2019 and 2021 are not comparable to 2023 and 2024. Nunavut's total number of centre-based licences in 2023 was 55.

TABLE 27

Number of active regulated family child care homes (2019 – 2024)<sup>1</sup>.

PT	2019	2021	2023	2024
NL	119	110	107	126
PE	3	4	11	17
NS	281	168	176	234
NB	177	145	127	124
QC	12,661	9,884	11,251	11,893
ON	3,918	3,210	3,524	4,426
MB	448	443	404 <sup>2</sup>	400
SK	238	242	346 <sup>3</sup>	482
AB	1,892	1,801	2,515 <sup>4</sup>	2,615
BC	1,700	1,755	1,694	1,725
YT	23	22	20	18
NT	51	51	40	41
NU	2	5	6	7
CA	21,513	17,840	20,221	22,108

Note: Regulated family child care homes include those that are individually licensed and those contracted/approved by a licensed agency.

<sup>1</sup> For previous years' data, see [Table 30](#), ECEC in Canada 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Manitoba figures include 370 individually licensed family child care homes and 34 group family child care homes.

<sup>3</sup> Saskatchewan figures include 109 individually licensed family child care homes and 237 group family child care homes.

<sup>4</sup> Alberta figures include 2,500 individually licensed family child care homes and 15 group family child care homes.

**TABLE 28 Total public spending for regulated child care (rounded, in millions) (2018 - 2019 to 2023 - 2024)<sup>1</sup>.**

PT	2018 – 2019 (\$)	2020 – 2021 (\$)	2022 – 2023 (\$)	2023 – 2024 (\$)
NL	47.7	61	84	115
PE	19.1	32.1	54	65
NS	65	76	148	191
NB	72	91	165	224
QC	2,654	3,067	3,203	4,391
ON	1,894	1,839	3,345	4,121
MB	174	175	399	344
SK	85	90	219	239
AB	351	281	975	1,152
BC	498	791	1,172	1,578
YT	9.5	12.3	29.9	32.4
NT	6.9	10.0	12.3	14.1
NU	5.2	8.0	11.7	15.3
CA	<b>5,881</b>	<b>6,534</b>	<b>9,818</b>	<b>12,482</b>

*Note: Due to the impact of COVID-19 on child care, the amounts for 2020 – 2021 are not comparable to previous or subsequent years and should not be used that way.*

*Note: Total spending by provinces/territories includes both their dollars and their share of total federal ELCC transfer funds.*

*Note: Figures over \$50 million have been rounded up to the nearest million.*

<sup>1</sup> For previous years back to 1992, see [Table 31](#), *ECEC in Canada 2021*.

TABLE 29 Federal child care funding (rounded, in millions) since CWELCC was initiated (2021 – 2024).

PT	2021 – 2022 (\$)			2022 – 2023 (\$)			2023 – 2024 (\$)		
	CWELCC	Multilateral Framework Agreement	ECE Workforce Fund <sup>1</sup>	CWELCC	Multilateral Framework Agreement	CWELCC	Multilateral Framework Agreement	ELCC Infrastructure Fund <sup>2</sup>	
NL	34.7	7.1	6.4	51	8.7	62	9	3	
PE	13.7	3.6	3.6	20.1	4.2	24.0	4.3	2.2	
NS	68	12	11	104	15	131	16	3	
NB	56	10	9	85	12	106	13	3	
QC <sup>3</sup>	660	86	91	1,000	113	1,237	121	13	
ON	1,100	147	150	1,681	195	2,079	212	20	
MB	129	16	19	196	20	240	22	4	
SK	114	14	17	173	17	208	18	4	
AB	401	45	56	613	60	757	65	9	
BC	352	53	49	539	70	664	76	8	
YT	5.5	2.4	2.5	7.4	2.6	8.4	2.6	2.3	
NT	6.3	2.4	2.6	8.5	2.6	9.7	2.6	2.3	
NU	8.1	2.4	2.8	11.3	2.5	13.4	2.5	2.3	
CA	2,948	399	420	4,489	524	5,538	566	75	

Source: Early Learning and Child Care Secretariat, Employment and Social Development Canada (2025). These numbers may be slightly different from those in the original bilateral agreements as they are readjusted to account for small shifts in population.

Note: For more information on federal funding, see [ECEC in Canada 2021](#).

Note: Figures over \$50 million have been rounded to the nearest million.

<sup>1</sup>The ECE Workforce Fund was only available in fiscal year 2021 – 2022.

<sup>2</sup>The ELCC Infrastructure Fund was introduced in 2023.

<sup>3</sup>Quebec's asymmetrical agreement with the federal government recognizes that Quebec's early learning and child care is under the exclusive jurisdiction of Quebec.