



Nunavut

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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 | Not applicable |
| Total full-day spaces | 794 | 922 | +128 |
| Percentage of full-day spaces that were for-profit | 0% | 0% | - |
| Percentage of growth of full-day spaces that was for-profit | - | - | Not applicable |

■ 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 |
| Total | 9,800 |

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 |
| Total | 4,400 |

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 |
| Total | 35 | 0 | 11,105 | 80 | 20 |

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 |
| Total | 5,465 | 105 | 5,405 | 1,095 |

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

Website: gov.nu.ca/en/education-and-schools

Legislation

Nunavut. Legislative Assembly. [Education Act](#). SNu2008, C15.

Provision

Kindergarten provision

Definition Part-day program for all five-year-olds.

Eligibility Five years old by December 31.

Compulsory schooling Not compulsory, but most eligible children attend.

Entitlement All eligible children have access.

Instructional hours per day Approximately three hours (485 – 570 hours per year).

Class size 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 |
| Total kindergarten enrolment | 786 |



■ 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
Website: 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 Qaujimagatuqangit (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 Inunnguiniirmut Tukimuaqtittijit, 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)

| Position and level | Step/years of experience | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 1/0 | 2/1 | 3/2 | 4/3 | 5/4 | 6/5+ |
| Management category – Level 1 | \$38.90 | \$39.90 | \$40.92 | \$41.97 | \$43.04 | \$44.14 |
| Management category – Level 2 | \$41.66 | \$42.72 | \$43.83 | \$44.95 | \$46.09 | \$47.27 |
| Management category – Level 3 | \$44.61 | \$45.76 | \$46.93 | \$48.14 | \$49.36 | \$50.63 |
| ECE – Level 1 | \$27.45 | \$28.16 | \$28.87 | \$29.61 | \$30.37 | \$31.15 |
| ECE – Level 2 | \$29.40 | \$30.15 | \$30.92 | \$31.72 | \$32.53 | \$33.36 |
| ECE – Level 3 | \$31.48 | \$32.29 | \$33.12 | \$33.96 | \$34.84 | \$35.73 |
| Program support | \$24.88 | \$25.52 | \$26.17 | \$26.84 | \$27.52 | \$28.23 |
| Centre support | \$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+ |
| Management category – Level 1 | \$41.87 | \$42.94 | \$44.03 | \$45.16 | \$46.32 | \$47.50 |
| Management category – Level 2 | \$44.84 | \$45.98 | \$47.17 | \$48.37 | \$49.60 | \$50.88 |
| Management category – Level 3 | \$48.02 | \$49.25 | \$50.51 | \$51.81 | \$53.13 | \$54.49 |
| ECE – Level 1 | \$29.54 | \$30.30 | \$31.07 | \$31.87 | \$32.68 | \$33.52 |
| ECE – Level 2 | \$31.64 | \$32.45 | \$33.28 | \$34.14 | \$35.01 | \$35.91 |
| ECE – Level 3 | \$33.88 | \$34.75 | \$35.65 | \$36.55 | \$37.49 | \$38.45 |
| Program support | \$26.78 | \$27.46 | \$28.17 | \$28.88 | \$29.62 | \$30.38 |
| Centre support | \$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 | 9 |
| | 13 – 24 months | 1:4 | 8 | 12 |
| | 25 – 36 months | 1:6 | 12 | 18 |
| | 3 years | 1:8 | 16 | 25 |
| | 4 years | 1:9 | 18 | 27 |
| | 5 – 11 years | 1:10 | 20 | 30 |
| <i>Mixed age group</i> | 0 – 24 months | 1:4 | 8 | <i>Not applicable</i> |
| | 25 months – 6 years | 1:8 | 16 | <i>Not applicable</i> |
| | 5 years, 8 months – 11 years (child has started kindergarten) | 1:10 | 30 | <i>Not applicable</i> |

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)

| | 2024 | 2025 |
|---|--------------|--------------|
| Full-day centre spaces | | |
| Infant (<2 years) | 223 | 224 |
| Preschool-age (2 – 5 years, including kindergarten-age children) | 658 | 698 |
| Total full-day centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years) | 881 | 922 |
| Part-day centre spaces | | |
| Preschool-age (2 – 5 years, including kindergarten-age children) | 216 | 216 |
| Total centre spaces (children 0 – 5 years) | 1,097 | 1,138 |
| Before- and after-school care centre spaces (licensed or regulated) | | |
| 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> | | |
| Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years) | 1,259 | 1,300 |
| Family child care licensed capacity | | |
| 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 |
| Total family child care spaces | 56 | 64 |
| TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity) | 1,315 | 1,364 |

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

Centre-based child care

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Total number of centres | 47 |
| Total number of licences | 50 |

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.

Centre-based programs

| | |
|---|----|
| 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 |

Regulated family child care

| | |
|--|---|
| Individually licensed family child care homes (active) | 7 |
|--|---|

Participation in CWELCC

| | |
|---|----|
| 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 |

Total number of child care centres receiving CWELCC funding 45

Total number of licensed family child care homes receiving CWELCC funding 7

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-day¹</i> | <i>BASC²</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| For-profit | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Non-profit | 786 | 70 | 122 | 978 |
| Public | 95 | 146 | 40 | 281 |

¹ Nursery school.

² Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years).

Auspice (2025)

Centre spaces by auspice

| <i>Auspice</i> | <i>Full-day</i> | <i>Part-day¹</i> | <i>BASC²</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| For-profit | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Non-profit | 827 | 70 | 122 | 1,019 |
| Public | 95 | 146 | 40 | 281 |

¹ Nursery school.

² 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 spaces¹</i> | <i>BASC spaces²</i> | <i>Total spaces</i> |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Municipality | 5 | 5 | 29 | 22 | 0 | 51 |
| School authority | 8 | 8 | 54 | 86 | 40 | 180 |
| Other government agency ³ | 1 | 1 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 12 |
| Total | 14 | 14 | 95 | 108 | 40 | 243 |

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.

¹ Nursery school.

² Before- and after-school care (children 5 – 12 years)

³ 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 |
| Total children receiving fee subsidies | 14 |

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 |
| Total full-day centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years) | 665 |

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.

| | |
|--|------------|
| Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 5 years) | 975 |
|--|------------|

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

| | |
|---|--------------|
| Kindergarten-age and Grades 1 – 6 | 171 |
| Total centre enrolment (children 0 – 12 years) | 1,146 |

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 |
| <i>Total full-day family child care enrolment (children 0 – 5 years)</i> | 40 |

Part-day family child care enrolment

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Attending full-day school | 3 |
| <i>Total family child care enrolment (children 0 – 12 years)</i> | 43 |

| | |
|---|--------------|
| TOTAL REGULATED ENROLMENT (centre and family child care enrolment) | 1,189 |
|---|--------------|

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 Qaujimagatuqangit (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

| <i>Program</i> | <i>Amount</i> |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Operating funds | \$3,857,879 |
| Workforce Recruitment and Retention | \$2,297,902 |
| Fee reduction | \$6,612,155 |
| Total operational funding | \$12,767,936 |

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> |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Start-up funding | \$110,160 |
| Infrastructure Funding Program | \$2,386,979 |
| Total one-time funding | \$2,497,139 |

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 Subsidy | \$5,680 |
| Young Parents Stay Learning | \$16,730 |
| Total fee subsidies | \$22,410 |

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.

| | |
|---|---------------------|
| TOTAL SPENDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (operational funding, one-time funding, and fee subsidies) | \$15,287,485 |
|---|---------------------|

Other ELCC funding

| <i>Program</i> | <i>Amount</i> |
|--|--------------------|
| 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 |
| Total other ELCC funding | \$2,387,344 |

Federal transfers to Nunavut

| <i>Federal transfer</i> | <i>Amount</i> |
|---|---------------|
| 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).