



# Quebec

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# 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.

<b>Net growth in full-day centre spaces for children 0 – 5 years (2021 – 2025)</b>			
	<i>2021</i>	<i>2025</i>	<i>Increase (decrease) 2021 – 2025</i>
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.

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### 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>

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### 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>

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**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>

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**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>

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**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>

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### 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: [fgj\\_presco@education.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:fgj_presco@education.gouv.qc.ca)

Website: [quebec.ca/education/](http://quebec.ca/education/)

[prescolaire-primaire-et-secondaire/](http://prescolaire-primaire-et-secondaire/)

[programmes-formations-evaluation/](http://programmes-formations-evaluation/)

[programme-formation-ecole-quebecoise/](http://programme-formation-ecole-quebecoise/)

[education-prescolaire](http://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

**Definition** Full school-day program for all five-year-old children. Available in English and French in public and publicly funded private schools.

**Eligibility** Five years old by September 30.

**Compulsory schooling** Not compulsory.

**Entitlement** All eligible children have access.

**Instructional hours per day** Full school-day (23.5 hours per week for 36 weeks).

**Class size** Maximum 19 children or 14 children in multi-age groups.

##### Maternelle 4 ans provision

**Definition** Full school-day program being phased in for four-year-olds. Available in English and French in public and publicly funded private schools.

**Eligibility** Four years old by September 30.

**Compulsory schooling** Not compulsory.

**Entitlement** Access is uneven, as the program is being phased in.

**Instructional hours per day** Full school-day (23.5 hours per week for 36 weeks).

**Class size** 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/gardereries-et-services-de-garde](http://quebec.ca/famille-et-soutien-aux-personnes/enfance/gardereries-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

Level	Hourly rate		
	April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024	April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025	April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026
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 Québec 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)

<b>Full-day centre spaces</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
<i>Centres de la petite enfance</i> (CPEs)	107,078	110,358
Publicly funded <i>garderies</i>	64,632	67,994
Unfunded <i>garderies</i>	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>

<b>Full-day centre spaces by age</b>	<b>2024</b>			
	<i>CPEs</i>	<i>Publicly funded garderies</i>	<i>Unfunded garderies</i>	<i>Total</i>
<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>
	<b>2025</b>			
	<i>CPEs</i>	<i>Publicly funded garderies</i>	<i>Unfunded garderies</i>	<i>Total</i>
<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>
<i>Note: CPEs are non-profit child care centres. Both publicly funded and unfunded garderies are primarily for-profit.</i>				

<b>Before- and after-school care centre enrolment</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
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>268,782</b>	<b>271,655</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.*

<b>Total centre spaces (children 0 – 12 years)</b>	<b>500,423</b>	<b>508,657</b>
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## Family child care licensed capacity

<b>Total family child care spaces</b>	<b>71,781</b>	<b>72,773</b>
<b>TOTAL REGULATED SPACES (centre spaces and family child care licensed capacity)</b>	<b>572,204</b>	<b>581,430</b>

*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.*

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

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### Centre-based child care

<b>Total number of centres (children 0 – 5, not yet in kindergarten or school)</b>	<b>3,754</b>
<b>Total number of before- and after-school care centres (children approximately 4 – 12 years)</b>	<b>1,893</b>

*Note: Before- and after-school programs in Quebec are regulated but not licensed. This figure reflects programs in public schools only.*

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### 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.*

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### Regulated family child care

Individually licensed family child care homes (active)	11,893
Home Child Care Coordinating Offices	160

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## Auspice (2024)

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### 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

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### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>BASC<sup>1</sup></i>	<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>

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<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

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## Auspice (2025)

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### Centre spaces by auspice

<i>Auspice</i>	<i>Full-day</i>	<i>BASC<sup>1</sup></i>	<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>

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<sup>1</sup> Before- and after-school care (children 4 – 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>BASC spaces<sup>1</sup></i>
School authority	<i>Not applicable</i>	1,893	0	268,782
Indigenous governing body	2	2	69	<i>Not applicable</i>

*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
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## REGULATED CHILD CARE ENROLMENT STATISTICS

### Number of children enrolled (2024)

<b>Full-day centre enrolment</b>	<i>CPEs</i>	<i>Publicly funded garderies</i>	<i>Unfunded garderies</i>
<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>

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**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.*

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**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>

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## 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

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
CPEs and funded <i>garderies</i>	\$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)

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
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

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
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

<i>Program</i>	<i>Amount</i>
<i>Not applicable</i>	<i>Not applicable</i>

*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**

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## 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>

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## 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).

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