

Nunavut



OVERVIEW

Nunavut’s regulated child care and kindergarten are the responsibility of the Department of Education. Kindergarten is a part day program for all five year olds. Nunavut education officials are considering full day kindergarten as a pilot project in few communities.

Regulated child care programs for children aged 0 – 12 are all non-profit. Individually licensed family child care homes are called “family day homes” in Nunavut and are considered non-profit.

The Department of Education’s Early Learning and Child Care Division is responsible for promoting early childhood development, licensing and monitoring early childhood facilities, and developing linguistically and culturally appropriate early childhood resources. Regional offices act as liaisons between non-profit providers and the Early Learning and Child Care Division to administer applications and coordinate services.

Nunavut, previously part of the Northwest Territories, is the result of a land claim agreement that took effect April 1st, 1999 and is considered to be entirely Indigenous land. There are no reserves. Nunavut’s population is predominantly Inuit.

Nunavut signed the [Canada-Nunavut Early Learning and Child Care Agreement](#) on September 20th, 2017. The agreement allocated just over \$7 million over three years to Nunavut’s child care, with a focus on providing more child care spaces, professional development opportunities for the workforce and greater incorporation of Nunavut’s official languages into programs.

TERRITORIAL CONTEXT

Please note that some of the following figures are rounded, while totals are based on exact figures and may therefore not equal the sum of the rounded figures shown here.

Number of children 0 – 12 years (aggregated) (2019 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0 – 2	2,400
3 – 5	2,000
6 – 12	5,300
Total	9,700

Number of children 0 – 12 with employed mothers (aggregated) (2019 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0 – 2	900
3 – 5	900
6 – 12	2,400
Total	4,200

Number of children 0 – 14 identifying with an Indigenous group (2016)

Age	First Nations	Métis	Inuk (Inuit)	Multiple	Other
0 – 4	10	15	3,800	10	0
5 – 9	15	10	3,865	10	0
10 – 14	10	10	3,240	10	0
Total	35	25	10,905	30	0

Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2019 rounded estimate)

Not available

Living arrangements of child by age by number of parents (2016)

Age	Living with two parents	Living with one parent	Lone mother	Lone father
0 – 4	2,970	1,045	780	260
5 – 9	2,905	955	745	210
10 – 14	2,305	785	555	230

Languages spoken most often at home (2016)

Age	English	French	Non-official	Multiple
0 – 4	1,860	40	2,195	60
5 – 9	1,775	30	2,235	70
10 – 14	1,515	15	1,825	55
Total	5,155	90	6,255	180

Median after tax income among families with children aged 0 – 5 years (2015) (\$)

Two parent families	Lone parent families	Male lone parent families	Female lone parent families
65,109	21,824	11,168	24,309

PARENTAL LEAVE AND BENEFITS

Maternity leave (Pregnancy leave)

17 weeks. Pregnant employees must be employed by an employer for 12 consecutive months to be eligible for pregnancy leave.

Parental leave

37 weeks may be shared between the parents. If maternity leave is also taken the leaves are to be taken consecutively to total a maximum of 52 weeks of combined maternity and parental leave.

Adoption leave

37 weeks

Benefits

Maternity and parental leave provisions in Canada outside Quebec, are divided between federal and provincial/territorial governments. Benefits are paid by the federal government under the Employment Insurance program (EI), while provincial/territorial provisions for job-protected leave are established in each jurisdiction's employment standards legislation. The federal benefit covers 15 weeks of maternity leave for eligible employees who are birth mothers, up to 12 weeks prior to the expected date of birth, and up to 17 weeks following the date of birth. There are two federal benefit options for parental leave: the Standard Parental Benefit and the Extended Parental Benefit. The Standard Parental Benefit covers 35 weeks of paid leave taken over a 12 month period, paid at 55% of average weekly insurable earnings, up to \$573/week (2020) for either eligible parent, including adoptive parents. The Extended Parental Benefit allows 61 weeks of parental leave benefits taken over an 18 month period paid at 33% of average weekly earnings up to \$344/week (2020) for either eligible parent including adoptive parents.

The Parental Sharing Benefit is available to non birth (second) parents. It covers an additional five weeks of benefits if both parents have shared the Standard Benefit option (40 weeks total) or an additional eight weeks of benefits under the Extended option if both parents have shared the Extended Benefit option (69 weeks total). It is paid at either the Standard or the Extended rate.

Note: For further details about the EI federal benefit, Quebec benefit and leave provisions, and all provincial/territorial provisions for job-protected leave, see the PARENTAL LEAVE AND BENEFITS section of this publication.

KINDERGARTEN

TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

Curriculum and School Services
Department of Education
P.O. Box 1000, Station 960
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0
Phone: 867-975-5666
Website: <https://www.gov.nu.ca/education/>

LEGISLATION

Nunavut. Legislative Assembly. *Education Act*. S. Nu. 2008, c. 15. (Current to: January 23, 2014)

KINDERGARTEN SERVICES

Kindergarten is delivered in public schools under regional school operations and is a part day program.

AGE ELIGIBILITY

Five years old by December 31 of the school year.

KINDERGARTEN ENROLMENT

850 children.

COMPULSORY

Access to kindergarten is legislated and it is an entitlement. Attendance is not compulsory but most children attend.

HOURS

The requirement is for no fewer than 485 and no more than 570 instructional hours per year and no more than six hours per day.

CLASS SIZE

There is no class size limit.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Kindergarten teachers must hold a valid Nunavut teaching certificate, requiring a four year Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) or a two year post degree Bachelor of Education After Degree (BEAD).

Kindergarten certification requires a two year program in ECE, successful completion of two academic years of classroom teaching, and completion of courses for one year of teacher training, or a Letter of Authority—which requires one year ECE or some course work towards a B.Ed. and must be renewed annually.

Most kindergarten teachers have a B.Ed. or Letter of Authority as a Language Specialist, which means that they speak an Inuit language. All but five kindergarten classes are in Inuit languages. A kindergarten teacher who has only a Language Specialist qualification (Letter of Authority) must be participating in teacher training.

CURRICULUM

The kindergarten curriculum used reflects education best practices, Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, and the philosophical approaches of the Department of Education.

[Kindergarten curriculum guide](#)

SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN

Not available

K – 12 per pupil spending – Not available

REGULATED CHILD CARE

TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

Department of Education
Government of Nunavut
Early Childhood Division
Box 1000, Station 200
Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0
Telephone: (867)975-5600
Website: <https://www.gov.nu.ca/education/information/early-childhood-education-0>

LEGISLATION

Nunavut. Legislative Assembly. *Northwest Territories Child Day Care Act* and Child Day Care Standards and Regulations, 1994. Consolidation of *Child Day Care Act* and Child Day Care Standards and Regulations, S. Nu. 2017. (Current to: 2017)

CHILD CARE SERVICES

UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

Unregulated family child care

Maximum number of children permitted: Four, including the caregiver's own children up to 12 years old.

REGULATED CHILD CARE

Day care centres

Group care, instruction and supervision for five or more children aged 0 – 12 years by a person who is not a relative of the majority of the children.

Nursery schools

Programs for children under six years of age for four consecutive hours or less per day, including Aboriginal Head Start Programs, which are licensed by the territory.

Family day homes

Care in a private home for up to eight children under 12 years (including the caregiver's own children).

After school care

Care outside school hours for school-aged children, up to and including 11 years of age.

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

A framework and action plan for early childhood development is in development.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Early Learning and Child Care is responsible for promoting early childhood development by providing support for special needs children between 0 – 6 years of age and training opportunities for early childhood program educators, staff and parents.

There are no segregated child care programs for children with special needs. Centres and other care providers are funded through daily operating grants to provide the necessary supports, which are based on the age of the child and the area in which the centre is located.

Parents are eligible for fee subsidy for their children with special needs even if they are not employed or at school. This subsidy eligibility requires a financial needs assessment and parents must have a medical referral from a recognised health care professional for the child to be in developmental care.

INDIGENOUS CHILD CARE

Nunavut is the result of one land claim agreement that took effect April 1st, 1999. Thus, the whole territory is now considered to be Indigenous land (there are no reserves). Thus, federal programs for Indigenous ELCC are relevant for all of Nunavut.

The federal government has engaged with Indigenous peoples and organizations across the country to review and renew Indigenous labour market programs. Following extensive engagement between the Government and various Indigenous partners, the Indigenous Skills and Employment Training (ISET) Program has replaced the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS).

First Nations and Inuit Child Care Initiative (FNICCI), which is now included in ISET, aims to provide child care for First Nations and Inuit children (0 – 6) whose parents are beginning new employment or participating in a training program. FNICCI operates under a mandate to increase the number of spaces while offering quality child care programming in collaboration with elders. Services are intended to be rooted in the cultures and languages of the Indigenous communities they serve. FNICCI supports staff and centres through operating grants and trainings in 59 centres in Nunavut.

Additionally, there are seven Aboriginal Head Start programs in Nunavut funded by the federal government.

SPACE STATISTICS

Number of regulated child care spaces (2019)			
<i>Centre based programs</i>			
Age group	Full day	Part day	Total
Infant (< two years)	179		179
Preschool age (two years – school entry)	520	272	792
School-age (kindergarten – 12 years)	-	157	157
Total regulated centre based spaces			
	699	429	1128
<i>Family child care</i>			
Infant (< two years)	4		4
Preschool-age (two years – school entry)	7		7
School-age (kindergarten – 12 years)		5	5
Total regulated family child care spaces			
	11	5	16
Total number of regulated child care spaces			
	710	434	1144
Children with special needs in regulated child care (2019)			
<i>Note: Information not available</i>			

Number of child care programs (2019)

<i>Centre based programs</i>	
Full day centres	31
Part day nursery schools/ preschools	15
Stand alone school-age centres	7
Total centre based programs	53
<i>School based child care centres</i>	
For preschool-age children (included in centre based)	13
For school-age children (included in centre based)	5
Total school based child care programs	18
<i>Family child care homes</i>	
Individually licensed family child care providers	2

Children receiving fee subsidy (2019)

Daycare User Subsidy	40 families
Young Parents Stay Learning Program	67 families

Sponsorship of part and full time regulated centre based spaces (2019)

Note: All centres are non-profit and family child care homes are considered to be non-profit.

PARENT FEES (2019)

Average daily parent fees for centre based child care

Age group	Full time fees	Part time fees
Infant	\$42.96	\$21.30
Preschoolers	\$43.71	\$23.00
School-age		\$21.40

Note: This information comes from the application for the Program Contributions collected each year.

In 2019, a national survey of child care fees in Canada's large cities included Iqaluit:

<i>Median monthly fees for full time child care</i>		
Infant	Toddler	Preschooler
\$1,300	\$1,213	\$1,213

Note: These median monthly figures include fees from centre based child care and home child care.

Source: Macdonald, D., & Friendly, M. (2020). In Progress: Child care fees in Canada 2019. Ottawa: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

REGULATED CENTRES

Maximum centre size: not specified

Maximum staff:child ratios and group sizes for individual age group

Age group	Staff:child ratios	Max. group sizes
0 – 12 months	1:3	6
13 – 24 months	1:4	8
23 – 35 months	1:6	12
3 years	1:8	16
4 years	1:9	18
5 – 11 years	1:10	20

Maximum room size

Age group	Max. number of children in a room
0 – 12 months	9
13 – 24 months	12
25 – 35 months	18
3 years	25
4 years	27
5 – 11 years	30

Note: At least two staff must be on duty when more than six children are being cared for.

Maximum staff: child ratios and group size for mixed age groupings

Age group	Staff: child ratio	Max. group size
0 – 24 months	1:4	8
2 – 5 years	1:8	16
5 – 11 years	1:10	20

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Centre staff requirements

There are no early childhood training requirements. Staff must be at least 19 years of age, have an awareness of early childhood development theory, have an awareness of the basic health and safety measures, have up to date immunizations, provide a doctor's note documenting good health if needed, have a first aid certificate, and submit to an RCMP Security Clearance. It is also detailed in the *Child Day Care Act* that staff must be able to communicate with and be accepted by the children, as well as representing the cultural background of the children.

STAFF WAGES

Median annual employment income (\$) and median hourly wage rate (\$) for Early Childhood Educators and Assistants working in day care services full time, full year.

Median annual employment income \$36,557

Median hourly employment income \$17.58 - 20.08/hr
(calculated using 2080 hrs/year (40 hrs week)
and 1280 hrs/year (35 hrs/week)

Source: Canadian Census, 2016

Note: These data include Early Childhood Educators and Assistants, as defined in NOC 4214, working in the day care services industry in centre based environments with children aged 0 – 12 years, as defined in NAICS 6244. Included as individuals who worked full-time (30+ hours/week) and full-year (48+ weeks/year), did not work at home, and were not self-employed. Included are supervisors but not managers. Employment income refers to income from all jobs if the Early Childhood Educator or Assistant holds a second job providing a wage, salary or commissions.

REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE

Model of organization

Individually licensed

Maximum capacity

The provider may care for a maximum of eight children under 12 years old, including the provider's children. No more than six of the children may be younger than five years old, no more than three children may be younger than three years, and no more than two children may be younger than two years.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Homes are visited at least once a year by staff from the Early Childhood Program, as well as a representative from each of the Public Health Department and the Fire Marshall's office.

Provider requirements

There are no early childhood training requirements. Providers must be at least 19 years of age, have an awareness of early childhood development theory, have up to date immunizations, provide a doctor's note stating good health, have a first aid certificate, submit to a RCMP Security Clearance, and represent the cultural background of the children.

FUNDING

CHILD CARE SERVICES ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING

Funding is only available to non-profit regulated centres and family day homes except fee subsidies, which may be used in unregulated child care.

TYPES OF FUNDING

Fee subsidies

Eligibility for families

Social criteria

Parents must be in working, school or a training program to be eligible for the Daycare User Subsidy. An exemption is allowed for those children with additional needs where it is recommended by a health professional that the child attend a licensed child care facility.

Eligibility for fee subsidy (net income, 2019)

Subsidy eligibility based on a needs test, which takes into consideration family income, and eligible living expenses (rent, utilities, actual child care costs – food and clothing is based on a scale).

Which service providers are eligible to deliver subsidized child care?

Fee subsidies may be used in both regulated and unregulated child care, both part time and full time are eligible.

Surcharges above the fee subsidy

There is no minimum user fee or fee cap. Programs may surcharge subsidized parents above the fee subsidy.

Subsidy rates

The subsidy rate is the maximum amount paid by the provincial/territorial government to the service to cover all or part of the parent fee.

Subsidy rates - Daycare User Subsidy Program and Young Parents Stay Learning Program (up to July 31, 2019)

Type of care	Full time	Part time
Licensed centre	\$700	350
Licensed family day home	\$600	\$300
Unlicensed child care	\$500	\$250
Out of school care	--	\$145

Note: Since August 1, 2019, the territorial government has paid the child care facility's full posted rate for the Young Parents Stay Learning Program.

Are all eligible families entitled to a fee subsidy?

All eligible families approved until the budget is exhausted (which has not happened to date).

Are there other programs that subsidize the individual family or child?

Young Parents Stay Learning: Since June 2009, all parents who are working toward a high school diploma may be eligible for child care subsidy under this program regardless of their age. Students under 18 who are attending a post secondary institution within Nunavut may also be eligible.

Eligibility for Young Parents Stay Learning does not require a needs test. The parent must use regulated child care if available; unregulated care may be approved in certain circumstances.

Maximum rates and payments in the Young Parents Stay Learning are the same as the regular subsidy rates. The parent's school attendance records are sent to the early childhood officer along with the child's attendance records; there is an expectation that the parent will be attending school unless he or she is ill or has an excused absence.

Operational (previously Recurring) funding

Operating funding

Operation and Maintenance (O & M)

O & M program contribution money is annual funding that can be used for any operating expenses.

An allocation of \$2.42–\$17.25 per space per day (depending on the age of the child and the location of the program) is available to non-profit, regulated centres and family day care homes.

Through the bilateral agreement with the federal government, facilities may also receive an additional top up of \$0.48 to \$6.90 per space per day (depending on the age of the child and the location of the program).

One time funding

Start up funding

Available to non-profit, regulated centres and family day care homes including part time, infant, after school, and special needs spaces. Funding ranges from \$300–\$3,420/ space depending on the geographic area of the program and the ages of the children served.

Security and Safety Funding

The Security and Safety Funding program was developed and implemented in the fall of 2014 and concluded on March 31st, 2017. Each licensed facility was eligible once every three years for up to \$40,000. This money was allocated for upgrades and repairs that contribute to security and safety features.

Other funding

Healthy Children Initiative

The Department of Education offers funding to early childhood programs (licensed and unlicensed) and additional programs and services for individual children aged 0–6 years who require extra supports to reach their full potential. Funding is available for community programs or for individual children. Programs eligible for funding can support children with special needs in a variety of ways and may take a variety of forms: parent and child groups, parenting workshops, equipment, and expert services, etc.

Early Childhood Education Inuit Language and Culture Funding

The *Nunavut Education Act* states that District Education Authorities (DEAs) shall provide funding for early childhood programs that promote fluency in the Inuit language and knowledge of Inuit culture. DEAs are able to access funding to support existing early childhood programs (licensed and unlicensed) that promote Inuit language and culture, or they can get funding to create and operate their own early childhood education programs.

1 This funding is for early childhood programs to enhance development opportunities of children 0 – 6 years of age. This can be for licensed or unlicensed early childhood program.

2 This funding is for programs to enhance Inuit language and knowledge of the Inuit culture for children 0 – 6 years of age. This can be for licensed or unlicensed early childhood programs.

TERRITORIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2018-2019)

Fee subsidies

Daycare User Subsidy	\$477,000
Young Parents Stay Learning	\$170,000

Total fee subsidies **\$647,000**

Operational (previously Recurring) funding

Start up and operating grants **\$2,150,000**

Total territorial allocation for regulated child care
\$2,797,000

Note: Federal funding of \$2,381,762 through the Canada – Nunavut Early Learning and Child Care Agreement for 2018-2019 is not included in the territorial allocations.

TOTAL ALLOCATION **\$5,178,762**

Total territorial allocation for regulated child care + \$2,381,762 federal funding through the Canada-Nunavut Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (2018-2019)

Other funding

Healthy Child Initiative ¹	\$908,000
ECE Inuit Language & Culture Funding ²	\$1,000,000

Total Other funding **\$1,908,000**

FEDERAL FUNDING UNDER THE CANADA-NUNAVUT EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE AGREEMENT (2018-2019)

Federal funding

Operation & Maintenance Top-up	\$1,118,250
Child Care Space Creation in Underserved Communities	\$220,000
Territory-Wide ELCC Training Session and Financial Literacy Training	\$353,512
Educational Programming Resources and Training	\$690,000

Total federal funding **\$2,381,762**
