



## OVERVIEW

Provision of early childhood education and child care in Quebec is under two ministries, the ministère de l'Éducation et de l'enseignement supérieur (MEES) and the ministère de la Famille.

Quebec provides full day kindergarten (maternelle) under MEES for all five year olds and some part and full day kindergarten (pre maternelle) for some four year olds.

The pre maternelle program—originally focused on vulnerable communities—had been growing for some years. In November, 2019, the government passed legislation to amend the *Education Act*, enabling pre maternelle for all four year olds beginning in 2020-2021 regardless of the economic characteristics of the area in which they reside. Private school legislation will also be amended to enable private schools, which may receive some public funding in Quebec, to provide kindergarten for four year olds beginning in 2020-2021. The goal is to make kindergarten available to all four year olds within five years.

Attendance is optional in both kindergarten years.

The Ministère de la Famille is primarily responsible for child care for preschool-aged children, while MEES takes responsibility for out of school hours child care. Regulated child care includes centres (called facilities or installations) that are either child care centres (*centres de la petite enfance* or CPE) or day care centres (*garderies*) and home child care. Garderies are almost always for-profit. Child care centres (CPES) are always non-profit and often coordinate regulated home child care services as well.

Regulated or recognized home child care providers are supervised by Family Child Care Coordinating Offices (*bureaux coordonnateurs de la garde en milieu familial*), most of which are also CPEs. Quebec allows recognized home child care providers to provide child care to as many as nine children if they are assisted by another adult.

There is no publicly delivered preschool-age child care. School-age child care, which includes kindergarten-age children from age four, is operated by school authorities under MEES. School boards are required to provide school-age child care when there is sufficient demand. Parents pay a flat fee (annually indexed to inflation) for school-age child care when school is in session as they do for preschool-age child care.

Licensed child care centres and day care centres, as well as recognized home child care providers may offer part time services.

Quebec has not used fee subsidies to help individual eligible parents pay child care fees for some years. Instead, Quebec funds the majority of its services for children 0 – 12 years operationally using a provincial formula. Any parent of a child aged 0 – 5 years is eligible for a “reduced contribution” (“subsidized”) child care space if one is available, paying only the provincially determined flat fee regardless of parents’ employment status or income. Child care centres, regulated family child care providers and some for-profit centres are publicly funded in this way. Spaces in these programs are termed “reduced contribution”, or “subsidized” spaces.

When Quebec’s publicly funded child care program began in 1997, all parents paid a flat fee of \$5.00/day, later increased to \$7.00/day. In 2015, this was replaced by an additional fee on top of the basic fee for higher income families paid through a tax contribution; low income families continued to pay a basic flat fee of approximately \$8.00/day for each child. In 2019, the government announced the abolition of the additional geared to income parent payment conditional on legislative amendments.

All parents regardless of income using operationally funded reduced contribution services thus paid a flat daily fee of \$8.35 in 2020.

Since 2009, there have been two types of for-profit centres: a) funded (“reduced contribution”) for-profit centres—publicly funded programs for which parents pay geared to income fees as described above, and a second tier, b) unfunded for-profit centres for which parents receive a rebate through a [refundable tax credit](#) that reimburses between 26% and 75% of eligible child care expenses paid depending on their income. This tax credit reimbursement may also apply to some unregulated child care; to be eligible, the unregulated child care service provider must be registered as a corporation and provide receipts to parents.

In 2017, a report by the [Commission sur l’éducation à la petite enfance](#) (Institut du Nouveau Monde) carried out extensive consultations and recommended among other things that Quebec child care be made free of charge, that the quality of early childhood educational services should be improved, that the government should state that child day care services are – above all – educational services, and that early childhood educational services must reach and include children from disadvantaged communities and vulnerable situations.

## PROVINCIAL 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 (2019 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	74,400
1	77,700
2	85,300
3	93,000
4	87,800
5	90,800
6	90,500
7	96,900
8	85,800
9	93,600
10	96,600
11	97,200
12	86,300
Total	1,155,900

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

Age	Number of children
0 – 2	237,400
3 – 5	271,600
6 – 12	646,900
Total	1,155,900

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

Age	Number of children
0	56,500
1	55,800
2	65,100
3	69,300
4	63,600
5	66,700
6	66,400
7	71,600
8	65,700
9	69,700
10	72,500
11	70,500
12	63,200
Total	856,600

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

Age	Number of children
0 – 2	177,400
3 – 5	199,600
6 – 12	479,600
Total	856,600

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

Age	First Nations	Métis	Inuk (Inuit)	Multiple	Other
0 – 4	7,185	4,130	1,750	145	245
5 – 9	7,715	4,045	1,605	200	240
10 – 14	7,300	3,615	1,455	130	255
Total	22,205	11,790	4,815	475	740

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

Age of youngest child	Number of mothers	Participation rate (%)
0 – 2	183,200	79.8
3 – 5	138,600	83.6
0 – 5	321,800	81.4
6 – 15	341,200	88.7

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

Age	Living with two parents	Living with one parent	Lone mother	Lone father
0 – 4	384,615	57,065	47,135	9,925
5 – 9	367,420	96,960	73,470	23,490
10 – 14	305,960	106,970	79,890	27,075

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**Languages spoken most often at home (2016)**

Age	English	French	Non-official	Multiple
0 – 4	36,885	343,315	40,000	24,530
5 – 9	41,700	367,145	34,095	25,930
10 – 14	42,670	325,190	28,300	22,205
Total	121,255	1,035,650	102,295	72,655

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

Two parent families	Lone parent families	Male lone parent families	Female lone parent families
78,787	35,580	38,684	34,863

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**PARENTAL LEAVE AND BENEFITS**

In 2006, the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan (QPIP) replaced the benefits previously available to Quebec parents under the federal Employment Insurance (EI) plan. (In Canada outside Quebec, paid benefits are determined by the federal government; provisions for leave are determined by each province/territory). The Quebec government determines both benefits and leave provisions. QPIP stipulates that financial benefits are paid to all eligible workers—salaried or self employed—who take maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave, or adoption leave.

In 2020, parents could choose between two options: a longer Quebec Basic Plan (paid at an income replacement rate of 55-70%, up to a maximum) or a shorter Special Plan (paid at an income replacement rate of 75%, up to a maximum). In so choosing, they decide both the duration and their income replacement rate. The choice of plan is determined by the first parent in the family to receive benefits, and cannot be modified.

Both QPIP and EI are contributory programs. Income replacement rates and the maximum rate allowed for maternity and parental leave under QPIP are substantially higher than those in the rest of Canada under the EI program. As well, eligibility criteria for benefits are also much less stringent than in the rest of Canada and it is mandatory for self employed individuals to participate and to receive leave and benefits. QPIP also differs from the rest of Canada insofar as the period of leave does not have to be uninterrupted, so long as the employer agrees.

**Maternity leave**

Birth parent only; cannot be shared between the two parents.

*Basic Plan:* 18 weeks paid benefits at the rate of 70% of wages.

*Special Plan:* 15 weeks paid benefits at the rate of 75% of wages.

**Paternity leave**

Father only; cannot be shared between the two parents.

*Basic Plan:* Five weeks paid benefits at the rate of 70% of wages.

*Special Plan:* Three weeks paid benefits at the rate of 75% of wages.

**Parental benefits**

The total number of weeks of parental benefits can be taken by either parent or shared. Parents may take these weeks simultaneously or consecutively.

*Basic Plan:* 32 weeks of paid benefits, with the first seven weeks at an income replacement rate of 70%, and the following 25 weeks at the rate of 55% of wages.

*Special Plan:* 25 weeks of paid benefits at the rate of 75% of wages.

**Adoption leave**

*Basic Plan:* 37 weeks of paid benefits, with the first 12 weeks at the rate of 70%, and the following 25 weeks at the rate of 55% of wages.

*Special Plan:* 28 weeks of paid benefits at the rate of 75% of wages.

### Family related leave (other)

Ten days per year (unpaid).

*Note: In two women couples*, some parental benefits are available. *Two men same sex couples* are also entitled to some parental benefits, which are different from those for two women couples.

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

## KINDERGARTEN

### PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement Supérieur  
Direction de la formation générale des jeunes  
Responsable du programme d'éducation préscolaire et des services de garde en milieu scolaire  
Édifce Marie-Guyart, 17e étage  
1035, rue De La Chevrotière  
Québec, QC, G1R 5A5  
Telephone: (418) 644-5240 poste 2517  
Government website: <http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/accueil/>

### LEGISLATION

Quebec. National Assembly. *Education Act*. R.S.Q, c.I-13.3

Quebec. National Assembly. *An Act to amend the Education Act* concerning the Conseil scolaire de l'île de Montréal. Bill 41 (2001, c. 30).

Quebec. National Assembly. *An Act to amend the Education Act*, Bill 35. (2001, c. 46).

Quebec. National Assembly. *Education Act for Cree, Inuit and Naskapi Native Persons*. R.S.Q., c. I-14.

Québec. National Assembly. *Act Respecting Private Schools*, Chapter E 9.1

Québec. National Assembly. *Bill n°5: An Act to amend the Education Act* and other provisions regarding pre-school education services for students 4 years of age (2019, c. 24)

### KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT (2018-2019)

Program	Age	Enrolment
Full day kindergarten	5 year olds	84,956
Half day kindergarten	4 year olds	2,680
Full day kindergarten	4 year olds	4,634
Passe-Partout program	4 year olds	10,626

### KINDERGARTEN SERVICES

#### Five Year Old Kindergarten (Maternelle)

Kindergarten for five year olds is delivered on a full school day basis in English and French public and publicly funded private schools.

Kindergarten is provided for 23.5 hours/week for 36 weeks or 846 hours a year.

#### Four Year Old Kindergarten (Maternelle Quatre Ans Demi-Temps Or Pré-Maternelle)

This program may be part day or full school day. Four year old kindergarten was originally developed for low income children but will now serve additional populations.

In 2019 the government announced its intention to expand full day pre maternelle for all four year olds and amended the legislation to enable this. From 2020 on, gradual expansion will occur and access will be extended to four year olds. It is optional for parents to enrol their children; they may choose to enrol children in a child care program instead.

#### Passe-Partout

Passe-Partout is a program for low income four year olds and their parents (mostly living in rural Quebec) to support the transition from home to school. As four year old kindergarten is expanding, Passe-Partout is diminishing.

Passe-Partout consists of a minimum of 16 sessions a year with the children, and eight with children and parents.

### AGE ELIGIBILITY

*Five year old kindergarten:* Five years old by September 30th of the relevant school year.

*Four year old kindergarten:* Four years old by September 30th of the relevant school year.

## COMPULSORY

Neither kindergarten year is compulsory. Entitlement is legislated.

## HOURS

*Five year old kindergarten (maternelle 5 ans):*

23.5 hours/ week for 36 weeks or 846 hours/year.

*Four year old kindergarten (maternelle 4 ans):* ranges from 9.15 hours/week for 36 weeks or 329 hours/year to 23.5 hours/week for 36 weeks or 846 hours/year.

## CLASS SIZE

Kindergarten class size limits are defined in the collective agreements.

*Five year olds:* Maximum 19, average 17

*Four year olds:* Maximum 17, average 14

*Multi-age groups:* Maximum 14 children per group

## TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

Four year degree: Baccalauréat in Éducation préscolaire et enseignement au primaire.

## CURRICULUM

A single curriculum for four and five year olds called Programme-cycle d'éducation préscolaire was approved in October 2020.

[Pre-maternelle curriculum FR](#)

[Four year old kindergarten curriculum EN](#)

[Kindergarten curriculum EN](#)

[Programme de formation de l'école québécoise FR](#)

## SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN (2018-2019)

Program	Age	Allocation
Full day every day kindergarten	5 year olds	\$498,484,138
Half day kindergarten	4 year olds	\$ 7,382,722
Full day kindergarten	4 year olds	\$48,866,829
Passe-Partout program	4 year olds	\$ 13,372,905
<b>K-12 per pupil spending (2018-2019)</b>		<b>\$6,017</b>

## REGULATED CHILD CARE

### PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

Ministère de la Famille

Direction des normes de qualité et d'accessibilité des services

600, rue Fullum 6<sup>e</sup> étage

Montréal (Quebec) H2K 4S7

Tél: 1 855 336-8568

Government website: <http://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca>

### LEGISLATION

Ministère de la Famille

[Educational Childcare Act](#) (R.S.Q., chapter S-4.1.1).

[Educational Childcare Regulation](#) chapter S-4.1.1, r. 2

[Reduced contribution Regulation](#) (R.S.Q., c. [S-4.1.1., r.1])

Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement Supérieur

[Règlement sur les services de garde en milieu scolaire.](#)

L.R.Q., c.I-13.3., a. 454.1; 1997, c.58, a.51; 1997, c.96, a.132.

### CHILD CARE SERVICES

UNRECOGNIZED (UNREGULATED) CHILD CARE

#### Home child care service that is not recognized by a Coordinating Office (CO)

May care for no more than six children. This number includes: the children of the home child care provider if they are under the age of nine and are present when the child care services are provided and no more than two children under the age of 18 months. In addition, unrecognized home child care services set their own daily rate to be paid by parents and cannot offer reduced fee (subsidized) spaces.

As of May 1, 2018, persons who are not recognized by a CO or who do not hold a permit issued by the Ministère who provide or wish to provide child care services in a family setting must meet certain conditions other than the number of children such as to obtain an attestation stipulating the absence of any impediment for the person providing child care services and for each person living in the home where child care services are provided.

*Note: Although unrecognized, these still fall under the scope of the Act.*

### **Jardins d'enfants (nursery schools)**

Nursery schools are programs for a minimum of seven children aged two to five years old, on a regular basis for up to four hours/day. These may be unregulated only if they were operating before October 25, 2005 and continue to operate to the present day. Thus, a day care permit (license) is compulsory to operate a nursery school opened after October 25, 2005.

### **Haltes-garderies (stop over centres)**

What are commonly referred to as “stop over” centres can be roughly linked to two specific sets of activities excluded from the scope of the *Act* :

- (1) Occasional organized child care services in a health or social institution, in a commercial establishment, at a fair or social exhibition or during a special event for children whose parents are on site and can be reached if needed.
- (2) Temporary child care offered by public bodies or community organizations as part of their mandate to support and assist families, or as part of a specific activity involving parents or children.

*Note: The Act does not refer to these businesses using any specific term or expression. Rather, it excludes them from its scope based on the nature of their activities.*

## REGULATED CHILD CARE

### **Centre de la petite enfance (CPE) (Child care centre)**

A CPE provides educational child care primarily for children 0-5 years old. Children may be cared for in a child care centre for periods not exceeding 48 consecutive hours.

A CPE may have up to five facilities (centres), each of which may have up to 80 children, and no more than two may be housed in one building.

CPEs must be non-profit or a cooperative whose board of directors corresponds to Section 7 of the *Educational Child Care Act*. CPE boards must have at least seven members of whom at least two-thirds must be parents of children who are clients or future clients of the CPE.

### **Garderie (day care centre)**

An organization that provides child care in a facility of no more than 80 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 for-profit operations or operated by a non-profit group that does not have an obligation to have a majority of parents on the board of directors (e.g. church-run centres). Most garderies are for-profit.

There are two types of garderies:

- a) those operationally funded to provide a reduced fee for parents (reduced contribution or subsidized) child care, and;
- b) those not receiving government operating funds, in which case parents pay full fees and may claim a tax credit for between 25% and 75% of eligible costs. The second are sometimes called “non reduced contribution”.

### **Service de garde en milieu familial reconnu (home or family child care services)**

Recognized home child care providers are overseen by 161 family Child Care Coordinating Offices (CCCO) (Bureaux coordonnateurs de la garde en milieu familial). These are authorized by the Ministère de la Famille for a renewable period of three years. Child Care Coordinating Offices are responsible for monitoring application of the regulations and give assistance to providers. Most CCCOs are part of CPEs, although they may be free-standing non-profit organizations.

Home child care services are provided in a private residence by an individual for up to six children, who may be up to nine years old, including the provider's own children. No more than two children may be under 18 months.

If another adult assists the provider, nine children up to the age of nine are permitted, with no more than four children less than 18 months, including the provider's own children.

### **Services de garde en milieu scolaire (school-age child care)**

School boards or private schools provide these programs for children attending pre maternelle (four year old kindergarten), maternelle (kindergarten) and elementary grades.

Pupils may attend the child care service before class in the morning, during the lunch period, after school, on days when school is closed, and in the summer.

School-age child care in schools is under the jurisdiction of MEES. School boards are obliged to provide school-age child care when there is a demonstrated need.

### Jardins d'enfants (nursery schools)

Nursery schools are programs for a minimum of seven children aged two – five years old on a regular basis for up to four hours/day. These may be unregulated only if they were operating before October 25, 2005 and are still continuing to operate as of today. Thus, a day care permit (licence) is compulsory to operate a nursery school opened after October 25, 2005.

### CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

Quebec uses a non compulsory curriculum framework [Accueillir la petite enfance](#). It was introduced in 1997 and updated in 2007 and 2019.

All CPEs, garderies and recognized home child care providers must apply an educational program with activities aimed, among other things, at fostering children's overall development and helping children gradually adapt to life in society and integrate into a group.

### CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Quebec's objectives regarding children with special needs in child care programs strongly favor inclusion. However, admission for a child with special needs to a regular child care program is at the discretion of the CPE, subsidized garderie or the home child care provider.

For a child who meets the ministry definition of a "disabled" child, a one time grant of \$2,200 and \$43.19/day/child in addition to the regular operating grant is available. In addition to the supplementary allowance allocated to child care establishments receiving children with a disability, an assistance measure (one to one assistance accompanying a child during activities for a maximum of three hours a day) has been put in place for the integration of children with significant special needs into child care services.

Non publicly funded garderies do not receive funds to support children with disabilities (non reduced contribution).

### INDIGENOUS CHILD CARE

Quebec regulates child care in Indigenous communities on reserve. In 2019, there were 71 facilities (centres) and three family child care Coordinating Offices in Indigenous communities on reserve. All are non-profit organizations and receive funding from Ministère de la Famille.

There are also five urban Indigenous child care centres (seven facilities) and an urban Indigenous family child care Coordinating Office. The centres are located in Montreal, Chicoutimi, Val d'Or, Chibougamau, Trois-Rivières and La Tuque.

Quebec has federally funded Aboriginal Head Start programs both on reserve (AHSOR) and off reserve (AHSUNC).

The Quebec government has reached agreements with four Indigenous organizations to delegate some legal authority for child care under the law, for example, permit renewal, inspection, complaints processing.

### SPACE STATISTICS

*Note: As the tables below in SPACE STATISTICS may come from different sources and reflect different dates, they may not be entirely consistent.*

#### Number of centre based spaces for 0 – 5 year olds (CPEs) and garderies (2019)

Centre based programs	Number of spaces
Centres de la petite enfance (CPEs)	96,084
Garderies	117,035
<b>Total centre based spaces for 0 – 5 year-olds</b>	<b>213,119</b>

#### Number of school-age spaces (Under the aegis of Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement Supérieur [MEES]) (2019)

363,049

#### Number of children in regulated family child care (2018 - 2019)

Less than 12 months	13,502
1 – 2 year olds	20,438
2 – 4 years olds	52,744
5 years older and up	749

**Total children enrolled in family child care (2019)**  
87,433

*Note: This is the most recent year for which data broken down by age group is available.*

#### Total number of spaces regulated by the Ministère de la Famille and under the aegis of MEES

663,601  
*Note: the centre spaces represent 2019 and family child care numbers refer to 2016 due to inconsistent availability of data.*



<b>Number of spaces in reduced contribution and non-reduced contribution child care (2019)</b>	
Subsidized (reduced contribution or publicly funded) spaces in CPEs, garderies and family child care	234,909
Non subsidized (without reduced parent contribution or publicly funded) spaces in garderies	69,814
<b>Total number of spaces in reduced contribution and non-reduced contribution child care</b>	<b>304,723</b>

<b>Number of centre-based spaces for 0 – 5 year olds by age: CPEs and garderies (2015-2016)</b>				
	<1yr	1-2 yrs	2-5yrs	>5yrs
CPEs				
(child care centres)	5,712	15,894	70,670	1,797
Publicly funded				
garderies	2,106	7,888	35,244	1,081
Non publicly				
funded garderies	3,007	10,452	30,485	2,455
<i>Total centre based</i>	<i>10,825</i>	<i>34,234</i>	<i>136,399</i>	<i>5,333</i>

*Note: This is the most recent year for which data broken down by age group is available. For more up to date data, please use the previous tables.*

<b>Children with special needs in regulated child care (2017-2018)</b>	9,988
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<b>Number of centres (2019)</b>	
Number of CPEs	953
Number of centres (facilities) that are part of CPEs	1,573
Number of garderies (day care centres)	1,990
<i>With reduced contribution spaces</i>	714
<i>Without reduced contribution spaces</i>	1,276
Number of school-age centres	N/A
<b>Total number of centres (2019)</b>	<b>6,506</b>
Number of Child Care Coordinating Offices	161
Number of family child care providers	12,661

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

<i>Centre based spaces</i>	
Non profits (CPEs)	96,084
<i>Garderies (for-profit)</i>	
<i>Garderies – reduced contribution/publically funded (subsidized) spaces</i>	47,221
<i>Garderies – non reduced contribution spaces/without publically funded (subsidized) spaces</i>	69,814
School-age spaces (school board operated, i.e. public or not for profit)	363,049
<b>Total number of non-profit spaces (CPEs)</b>	<b>96,084</b>
<b>Total number of for-profit spaces (garderies) (reduced and non-reduced)</b>	<b>117,035</b>
<b>Total number of school-age spaces (school board operated, public/non-profit)</b>	<b>363,049</b>

### PARENT FEES

Quebec sets province wide parent fees for all reduced contribution (subsidized/funded) child care services. In 2015, Quebec moved from a flat fee of \$7/day for each child in all publicly funded (reduced contribution) child care centres (CPEs, funded garderies, regulated family child care and school-aged child care in schools) to a partial, geared-to-income, sliding fee scale by which wealthier parents at the upper end of the salary scale paid higher fees above the “basic fee”.

In 2019, the government announced the abolition of the additional contribution, contingent on legislative amendments, moving back to a flat fee.

Unfunded for-profit centres (non reduced contribution garderies) are not required to charge a provincially set parent fee. Parents using these centres may apply for a rebate in the form of a tax credit from the Quebec government.

**In 2019, a national survey of child care fees in Canada's large cities included the following cities in Quebec:**

*Median monthly fees in Quebec set fee and non-set fee (market) centres, Quebec cities (2019)*

	Gatineau	Laval	Montreal	Longueuil	Quebec City
<i>Infant - provincially set fee (subsidized centres)</i>	\$179	\$179	\$179	\$179	\$179
<i>Infant - market fee (non subsidized centres)</i>	\$998	\$911	\$911	\$977	\$1,085
<i>Toddler - provincially set fee (subsidized centres)</i>	\$179	\$179	\$179	\$179	\$179
<i>Toddler - market fee (non subsidized centres)</i>	\$933	\$825	\$825	\$846	\$982
<i>Preschooler - provincially set fee (subsidized centres)</i>	\$179	\$179	\$179	\$179	\$179
<i>Preschooler - market fee (non subsidized centres)</i>	\$933	\$825	\$825	\$846	\$982

*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 (CPES AND GARDERIES)

**Maximum facility size:** 80 spaces

#### Maximum staff:child ratios

Age	Staff:child ratios
0-17 months	1:5
18 months – four years	1:8
four years – five years	1:10
Five years and older	1:20

*Note: For a multi-age group, the ratio is based on the ratio for the youngest child in the group.*

#### Maximum group size

Age	Minimum net area (Square meters)	Maximum group size/room
<18 months of age	4 m <sup>2</sup> per child	*15
>18 months of age	2.75 m <sup>2</sup> per child	*30

\* except for special activities

## STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

### Requirements for qualification status

“Qualified” is defined as a child care staff member holding a college diploma in early childhood education or any other equivalent training recognized by the Minister (such as a one year Attestation d’études collégiales in any subject combined with three years experience).

### Staff qualification requirements per centre

Centre (facility) staff qualifications: At least two child care staff members out of three (2/3) in the centre must be qualified and present each day with the children while child care is being provided.

There is no specific qualification requirement for centre directors.

New and expanded CPEs and garderies have five years to conform to the required 2/3 ratios of qualified staff. Until that time they must conform to a 1/3 ratio (one in three staff is required to be qualified).

### School-age child care requirements

There are no province-wide educational requirements for staff working in school-age child care programs. However, a school board may require the lead staff to have an early childhood education diploma.

### Parent involvement

A CPE’s board of directors must be made up of at least seven members, 2/3 of whom (a minimum of five) are parent-users or future clients of the centre. At least one board member must come from the business, institutional, social, education or community sectors and no more than two shall be staff at the centre.

A garderie’s licence holder must set up an advisory committee composed of five parents and consult with the parent committee on all aspects of the care children in the centre receive, particularly with respect to implementation of the educational program, services provided and how complaints are processed.

### Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

The Ministère de la Famille issues licences (permis) for up to a five year period. Ministère de la Famille inspectors may visit any licensed operation to monitor its compliance with regulations.

License holders of CPEs and garderies should receive at least one inspection visit during the period that their license is valid, generally once every five years. Otherwise there is no specified inspection schedule.

In the six months after the issuance of a new permit, an inspection is conducted for the purpose of information and prevention. The aim of this inspection is to evaluate the safety and security for the children, and to request corrective measures if there are irregularities.

Inspectors are not required to have a degree, diploma, or training in early childhood education.

Quebec does not issue conditional or provisional licenses. If a centre is found to be in non compliance with legislated requirements but there is no immediate danger to the health or well being of the children, Ministère de la Famille informs the centre’s board of directors or owner in writing that the program is in non compliance with a specific regulation(s) and requests rectification. A follow up check is done by an inspector when sufficient time is deemed to have passed. Repeated instances of non compliance that do not pose an immediate threat may result in administrative penalties, administrative sanctions or penal sanctions.

The operator may appeal the loss of a license (or the refusal by the Ministère de la Famille to renew a license) or may contest a decision to the Tribunal administratif du Québec. Its decision is binding.

Since 2018, child care providers must, at the Minister’s request and in the manner determined by the Minister, participate in the process to assess and improve the educational quality of child care.

The Minister determines the measurement tools to be used in this process and may require child care providers and their participating staff to provide the Minister with the information and documents required and to complete a questionnaire assessing child care quality.

The Minister follows up on the results of the child care educational quality assessment and improvement process with the child care providers concerned.

#### 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.**

<i>Median annual employment income</i>	\$35,022
<i>Median hourly employment income</i>	\$16.83 - 19.24/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.*

#### RECOGNIZED FAMILY/HOME CHILD CARE

##### **Model of organization**

Family home child care in Quebec follows an agency model. Family child care providers are supervised according to provincial regulations by des bureaux coordonnateurs de la garde en milieu familial agréés (Family Child Care Coordinating Offices) (CCCO).

##### **Maximum capacity**

Up to six children are permitted including the provider’s own children under the age of nine years old, while no more than two children may be under 18 months. If the provider is assisted by another adult, they may care for nine children, including both providers’ own children, with not more than four children being under 18 months.

##### **Licensing, monitoring and enforcement**

Family Child Care Coordinating Offices are required to do three on site home visits per year. The CCCO is responsible for ensuring that providers meet the regulations.

##### **Family child care provider requirements**

Family child care providers must hold an early childhood first aid certificate and complete a training program of at least 45 hours pertaining to child development, health, safety and diet issues, organization and leadership in a “life environment”.

Many Family Child Care Coordinating Offices provide training for providers.

Providers are also required to take a six hour proficiency course once a year (cours de perfectionnement)

## Governance

The composition of boards of directors of organizations accredited as Family Child Care Coordinating Offices is determined by the type of organization.

To be accredited as a Family Child Care Coordinating Office, there must be a board of directors that meets the following requirements:

1. it has at least five members;
2. the majority of members are parents who are clients of a home child care provider operating in the office's assigned territory;
3. one member is from the business sector or the institutional, social, education or community sector;
4. no more than one member is a home child care provider operating in the office's assigned territory;
5. no member is related to another member, to a staff member of the legal person or to a home child care provider operating in the office's assigned territory.

But, if a child care centre permit holder is accredited as a Family Child Care Coordinating Office, the permit holder must, within six months of being accredited, change the composition of the board of directors so that

1. it has at least nine members;
2. at least 2/3 of the members are divided equally between parents who use the child care provided by the child care centre and parents who use the home child care coordinated by the child care centre; and
3. no more than one member is a home child care provider recognized by the child care centre.

## FUNDING

Quebec provides public funding to all CPEs, to funded garderies and to home child care (via Family Child Care Coordinating Offices) through a formula approach.

Non-profit and subsidized (publicly funded) for-profit facilities are generally treated the same way vis-à-vis operational funding. However, the formula for non-profits is higher than for for-profits. As well, only non-profits are eligible for capital funding.

In addition, Quebec provides a refundable tax credit to parents using non-subsidized child care; this applies to some for-profit centres and some unregulated child care.

*Note: See Funding to non reduced contribution funding under Other funding, next page.*

## TYPES OF FUNDING

### Fee subsidies

Quebec does not use a system of individual parent fee subsidies.

### Operational (previously Recurring) funding

Quebec's child care services, with the exception of unfunded garderies, unfunded recognized family child care and non recognized persons providing child care services in a family setting, are operationally funded. The formula for funding is based on both licensed capacity and occupancy rates to determine the amount of funding a CPE or funded garderie will receive.

Unfunded non-profit child care centres are not permitted and many garderies are also publicly funded to provide reduced contribution child care for 0 – 5 year olds.

### Additional operational funding for children with disabilities

For a child who meets the ministry definition of a "disabled" child, a one time grant of \$2,200 and \$43.19/ day/ child in addition to the regular operating grant is available. In addition to the supplementary allowance allocated to child care establishments receiving children with a disability, an assistance measure (one to one assistance accompanying a child during activities for a maximum of three hours a day) has been put in place for the integration of children with significant special needs into child care services.

### Additions to the regular operating funding to support children with disabilities (2019-2020)

Type of program	Additional funding per child per day
CPE	\$43.19
Garderie (publicly funded)	\$41.67
Family child care provider (publicly funded)	\$36.46

*Note: Non publicly funded garderies do not receive funds to support children with disabilities*

### One time funding

Capital funding is available to develop new CPEs. The [Infrastructure Funding Program](#) (IFP) may provide CPEs with the resources they need to carry out capital projects requiring a significant financial contribution, while facilitating access to funding on advantageous terms.

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### Other funding

There are also a number of other categories of public funding available that CPEs can access such as: minor capital, professional development, staff benefits, etc.

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### Funding of non reduced contribution garderies

Quebec reimburses parents, based on their income, through a [refundable tax credit](#) paid quarterly to cover 26% to 75% of their fees in unfunded non reduced contribution for-profit garderies and in some unregulated child care as described in previous sections. The fees in these centres are determined by the centre owner, not by the provincial government. The tax credit reimburses parents between 26% and 75% of eligible child care expenses paid depending on their income.

Total tax credits reimbursing families using non-reduced contribution centres increased from \$172 million in 2007 to \$ 734.7 million in 2019 with children 0 – 15 years. For children from 0 – 5 years old, the last amount available was \$420 million (2017).

An online tool is available for parents/families in Quebec to [calculate their child care costs](#).

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## PROVINCIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2018-2019)

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**Fee subsidies** NA

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### Operational (previously Recurring) funding

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Funding to CPEs, funded garderies and recognized family child care	\$2,189,559,567
Pension plan for employees in child care and group insurance plan	\$135,322,956
Expenditure on school-age child care by MEES	\$282,541,695

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**Total Operational funding** **\$2,607,424,218**

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### One time funding

Capital expenditures	\$6,405,737
CPEs infrastructure financing	\$39,958,008

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**Total One time funding** **\$46,363,745**

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*Note: With regard to ELCC funds to Quebec transferred by the Government of Canada, a [footnote](#) to the Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care notes that: “While the Government of Québec 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 Québec expects to receive its share of the federal funding and will continue to invest significantly toward programs and services for families and children”. Quebec’s funds under these agreements for 2018-2019 are identified as \$87,373,383.*

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**TOTAL ALLOCATION** **\$2,653,787,963**

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*Total provincial allocation for regulated child care (excluding the [refundable tax credit](#))*

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*Note: The funds supporting the refundable tax credit for child care expenses in unsubsidized regulated and unregulated child care are not included in these calculations.*

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