



OVERVIEW

Regulated child care is under the aegis of Health and Social Services, whereas kindergarten is the responsibility of the Department of Education and part of the public school system.

Kindergarten part day or full day is offered to children who are five years old as of December 31st of the school year. Yukon Education supports early learning and early intervention by offering kindergarten programs but attendance is not mandatory.

Four year old kindergarten is called Early Kindergarten. There is a full day Early Kindergarten program at the Whitehorse Francophone School. In some rural communities there are part day Early Kindergarten programs for four year olds (3.8 years old as of September 1st) that are combined with the regular kindergarten program.

Kindergarten is full days in urban area and can be a half day or full day program in the rural areas, depending on the school. Some schools include kindergarten in blended grade classrooms.

The Department of Education also supports the Learning Together program. It provides a school based drop in early learning program for children aged birth to five years with their caregivers at no cost.

Regulated child care for 0 – 12 year olds is for-profit and non-profit with for-profit services predominating. There are no publicly operated programs.

Regulated family child care homes are termed “family day homes” and are individually licensed.

The Yukon has an appointed community advisory [board](#).

In February 2018, the [Canada-Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Agreement](#) was signed by the territorial and federal government. The agreement provides \$7.2 million over three years to Yukon to contribute to quality improvement, training, professional development, accessibility and affordability, among other initiatives.

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	455	65	0	30	10
5 – 9	555	85	30	20	0
10 – 14	540	70	25	20	10
Total	1,550	215	55	75	15

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	1,735	355	290	70
5 – 9	1,500	515	385	130
10 – 14	1,350	565	430	130

Languages spoken most often at home (2016)

Age	English	French	Non-official	Multiple
0 – 4	1,915	80	70	60
5 – 9	1,905	80	70	55
10 – 14	1,810	55	75	55
Total	5,635	215	220	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
\$101,376	\$37,683	\$44,032	\$36,779

PARENTAL LEAVE AND BENEFITS

Maternity leave

17 weeks. This entitlement applies to pregnant employees who have worked continuously for an employer for at least 12 months.

Parental leave

63 weeks of parental leave for birth or adoption. If a second parent is sharing either the standard or the extended parental leave, they have the option of taking an additional five or eight weeks, depending on the type of parental leave selected. Employees who have completed 12 months of continuous employment with an employer are entitled to parental leave.

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 LEAVES AND BENEFITS section of this publication.

KINDERGARTEN

TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

Government of Yukon
Department of Education
P.O. Box 2703
Whitehorse, YT, Y1A 2C6
Telephone: (867) 667-5141
Website : <http://www.education.gov.yk.ca>

LEGISLATION

Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. [Education Act](#), 1990.S.Y. c.25. Last updated December 31, 2016. (Current to October 11, 2019).

AGE ELIGIBILITY

Children can start Early Kindergarten (K4) if they are four years of age as of December 31st of the school year or kindergarten (K5) if they're five years old on or before December 31st of that year.

KINDERGARTEN ENROLMENT

<i>Rural:</i> 85	
<i>Urban:</i> 357 (this includes seven kindergarten students using the Aurora Virtual School distance education model)	Total: 442
Early Kindergarten (part time/half days)	
<i>Rural:</i> 43	
<i>Urban:</i> 22 (this includes one EK student using the Aurora Virtual School distance education model)	Total: 65
Learning Together Program	
<i>Rural:</i> 22	
<i>Urban:</i> 10	Total: 32

COMPULSORY

Kindergarten is not compulsory.

HOURS

Kindergarten programming is up to approximately five hours a day.

CLASS SIZE

Mean class size in 2018-2019: 13.5 students (this includes some split classes KG/Grade 1).

Full day classes are capped at 18 students as per the collective agreement between the Yukon Government and Yukon Teacher's Association.

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

A kindergarten teacher must have teacher certification, which requires a B.Ed. or a bachelor's degree plus an approved program of teacher preparation of not less than one academic year.

There are no ECE requirements for kindergarten teachers.

CURRICULUM

In September 2017, the Yukon Department of Education adopted the British Columbia kindergarten curriculum, which is geared towards skill development and experiential learning with the student at the centre. British Columbia implemented a new curriculum and in the 2018-2019 school year the Yukon adopted their changes. The curriculum also draws on Yukon First Nations' ways of knowing, doing, and being, which allows schools to tailor the curriculum for the local community, area, and culture. See link for more information about the changes to [Yukon curriculum](#).

SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN

Not available

Spending per student K – 12 (actual). (2016-2017)
\$19,303
Spending per student K – 12 (estimate). (2018-2019)
\$20,081

Source: [Government of Yukon Annual Report](#) (2018)

REGULATED CHILD CARE

TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

Child Care Services Unit
Yukon Health and Social Services
Government of the Yukon
P.O. Box 2703
Whitehorse, YT, Y1A 2C6 Telephone: (867) 667-3492
Website: <http://www.hss.gov.yk.ca/childcareunit.php>

LEGISLATION

Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. [Child Care Act](#), 1990.

Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. [Child Care Act Regulations](#), 1995.

Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. [Family Day Home Program Regulation](#), 1995.

Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. [School-Age Program Regulation](#), 1995.

Note: Sections of the child care regulations have been repealed, amended or replaced. See Child Care Act, Tab 121.

CHILD CARE SERVICES

UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

Unlicensed family child care

A maximum of three children not including the provider's own children is permitted.

Preschools

Programs for children aged three to six years old operating for less than three consecutive hours are not required to be licensed.

Other

A program for children that has a primary purpose other than providing child care and operates for a period of 12 consecutive weeks or less is exempt from the *Child Care Act*.

REGULATED CHILD CARE

Child care centres

Group care for less than 24 hours a day for four or more children, up to and including 12 years of age, in a place other than a preschool, a school-age program or a family day home.

School-age child care

Care outside school hours for school-aged children up to and including 12 years old.

Family day homes

Care in a private home for mixed age groups with no more than four infants; or six children with no more than three under 18 months; or eight children all over 18 months. Four additional school-age children may attend with an additional staff member with the above numbers. The provider's preschool children are included in the above numbers; their own school-age children are exempt from the maximum number of children permitted.

Indoor space requirements must also be met with no less than four square meters of usable space provided per child in attendance.

CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The Yukon Early Learning Curriculum was expected to be available to Early Childhood Educators in 2020. It is currently under territorial review and when approved, will move into an implementation stage.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Child care regulations state that children with disabilities in regular child care programs must be integrated to the fullest extent possible. There are no segregated regulated child care programs for children with disabilities.

Funding is available for centres and family day homes through the Supported Child Care Fund and is based on the individual needs of the child. Funding may be provided for adaptive equipment, transportation, programming support and additional staff.

An individual program plan must be developed for the child in consultation with staff, parents and professionals in the community, outlining goals and objectives for the child. A child is designated as living with a disability upon assessment by a professional.

Fee subsidies for families are allocated on the basis of an income test, family size, and community. An eligible family, including parents not in the workforce, will receive a fee subsidy for their child with disabilities to attend a child care program. Parents who are not eligible for a subsidy pay for the child care space but not for the additional supports.

The Child Development Centre provides special needs programming and supports across the Yukon. It operates a licensed integrated preschool program. The CDC also provides early intervention supports and resources to families of children with disabilities. They also operate a mobile outreach unit serving every community in the territory with support and resource provision.

INDIGENOUS CHILD CARE

There are no reserves for First Nations people in the Yukon.

First Nations communities receive the same start up and operating grants from the Yukon government as others operating licensed child care centres and family day homes. Parents who use regulated centres and family child care homes are eligible for fee subsidies.

In total, there are 293 regulated spaces operated by First Nations in nine child care centres. These are included in the territory's Space Statistics.

There are also three Aboriginal Head Start programs, not licensed but attached to licensed programs.

SPACE STATISTICS (MARCH 2019)

Number of regulated child care spaces	
<i>Centre based programs</i>	
<i>Age group</i>	
Infants (up to 18 months)	92
Toddlers (18 – 36 months)	323
Preschool-age (36 months – Kindergarten)	520
School-age (Grade 1 and up)	165
<i>Total number of occupied centre based spaces</i>	1,100
Total regulated centre based spaces	1,398
<i>Family child care spaces</i>	197
Total number of regulated child care spaces	1,595
<i>Note: The total number of regulated centre spaces and total regulated spaces represent total centre licensed capacity, not occupied centre spaces, to be consistent with other jurisdictions.</i>	
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Children with special needs in regulated care (2018-2019)	
Estimated	47
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Number of child care programs	
<i>Centre based programs</i>	
Full day centres	39
Stand alone after school programs	1
Total centre based programs	40
<i>School based programs</i>	
Centres for preschool-aged children (included in total centres)	1
<i>Family child care homes</i>	
Individually licensed family child care providers	23
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Sponsorship of part and full time regulated centre based spaces	
Non-profit	419
For-profit	979
<i>Note: A breakdown into full and part time spaces by sponsorship is not available but part day programs for children younger than school-age are not required to be regulated, so are not included here.</i>	
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Children receiving fee subsidy	396

PARENT FEES (2019)

Average monthly parent fees for centre based full time care

Age group

Infant (0 – 17 months)	\$802
Toddler (18 months – 3 years)	\$749
Preschool-age (3 – 5 years)	\$723
School-age (before school/lunch/after school)	\$371

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

Median monthly fees

Infant	Toddler	Preschooler
\$900	\$850	\$835

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: 64 spaces

Maximum staff:child ratios and group sizes

Age	Staff:child ratios	Max. group sizes
Up to 18 months	1:4	8
18 months – 3 years	1:6	12
3 years – kindergarten-age	1:8	16
Grade 1 – 12 years	1:12	24

STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

Qualification requirements for centre staff

There are three levels of designation for child care workers in the Yukon, corresponding to five levels on training completed. The classification criteria for each designation are described below.

Child Care Worker I: 60 hour introduction to early childhood development course (ECD) or equivalent;

Child Care Worker IA (in policy): Child Care Worker I + additional coursework, not yet completed two full years of training;

Child Care Worker II: One year of training in ELCC or Early Childhood Development or equivalent from a recognized college or university;

Child Care Worker IIA (in policy): Child Care Worker II + additional coursework, not yet completed two full years of training;

Child Care Worker III: Two or more years of training in ELCC or Early Childhood Development or equivalent from a recognized college or university.

Requirements for staff in child care centres

Legislation requires that 20% of staff must meet or exceed Child Care Worker III qualifications and an additional 30% must meet Child Care Worker II qualifications. The rest (50%) must meet Child Care Worker I qualifications.

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 \$37,168

Median hourly employment income \$17.87 - 20.42/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

The Yukon Department of Health and Social Services licenses individual family child care operations.

Maximum capacity

No more than four infants or six children with no more than three under 18 months; or eight children all over 18 months. Four additional school-age children may be attendance with an additional staff member with the above numbers.

Indoor space requirements must also be met with no less than four square meters of useable space provided per child in attendance. The provider's preschool-age children are included in the above numbers; their own school-age children are not.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Family child care homes are regulated by the *Child Care Act* and family day home regulations. They receive a minimum of one annual inspection and three unannounced spot checks per year to monitor for compliance with the regulations.

Family child care provider requirements

Caregivers must complete a 60 hour introductory early childhood development course or a specific family day home course or equivalent within the first year they provide care for children.

Caregivers must be 18 years of age, have valid first aid certification, a medical note, a TB test, a record of immunization status and a criminal records check.

FUNDING

All regulated child care programs are eligible for all funding. Both non-profit and for-profit programs may receive funding.

TYPES OF FUNDING

Fee subsidies

Eligibility for families

Social criteria

To be eligible, parents must be:

- employed;
- actively seeking employment;
- attending/preparing to attend an educational institution;
- undertaking medical treatment or;
- have a special need (themselves or their child), as assessed by a professional.

Subsidy is also available when child care is recommended by a child protection service, approved on the basis of an individual assessment of special needs of the family or child by a qualified professional, or when emergency child care services are required to meet a short term family crisis.

Financial eligibility (2019) (net income)

Eligibility is determined through an income test that takes into consideration family size and the community where the applicant resides; each application is different.

Examples of family subsidy eligibility by community, family size (2020)

Whitehorse – two parent family, one infant child

Up to \$2,524 net income – full subsidy (based on \$688)
\$5,638 net income/month and above - no longer qualify for subsidy (based on \$688).

Rural Yukon (other than Old Crow) – two parent family, one infant child

Up to \$2,642 net income – full subsidy (based on \$688)
\$5,756 net income/month and above - no longer qualify for subsidy (based on \$688).

Old Crow – two parent family, one infant child

Up to \$3,256 net income – full subsidy (based on \$688)
\$6,370 net income/month and above - no longer qualify for subsidy (based on \$688).

Note: The above examples of family eligibility for fee subsidies were provided by territorial officials.

Which service providers are eligible to deliver subsidized child care?

Subsidies may be used in any licensed for-profit or non-profit licensed program, both full and part time programs are eligible.

Surcharges above the fee subsidy

Programs may surcharge subsidized parent fees above the maximum subsidy rate, in which case the parent must pay the difference. Fees are not capped.

Subsidy rates

The subsidy rate is the maximum amount paid by the territorial government to the service to cover all or part of the parent fee. (See explanation of unit funding under Operational funding, below).

Category	Age	Monthly hours in care	Max monthly subsidy
Infant	0 to 18 months	100+ hours	\$688
Toddler	19 to 36 months	100+ hours	\$622
Preschool-age (including half time kindergarten-age)	37 to 59 months (or 71 months if half day k)	100+ hours	\$578

Category	Age	Monthly hours in care	Max monthly subsidy
Special needs (infant, toddler and preschool-age)	0 to 59 months (or 71 months if half day k)	100+ hours	\$688
Kindergarten-age (full day)	60+ months	< 80 hours	\$330
Kindergarten-age (summer months)	60+ months	100+ hours	\$578
School-age	72+ months	< 80 hours	\$303
School-age (summer months)	72+ months	100+ hours	\$550

Are all eligible families entitled to a fee subsidy?

Subsidy is an entitlement for all eligible families; there is no cap on the number of subsidized spaces.

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

None

Operational (previously Recurring) funding

Operating grants

Operating grants are allocated quarterly, according to a “unit funding” formula that assesses a given centre according to four factors: the age and number of children enrolled, the level of training among staff, whether a hot meal is provided, and the building costs.

All licensed non-profit and for-profit child care programs are eligible for an operating grant.

Family child care homes are eligible for the unit and training components of the grant but not the building cost.

Unit funding

Whitehorse Area Programs

Age unit	Max. funding (per month)
Infant	1 staff/four infants = \$824.40
	With hot meal program = \$952.64
Toddler	1 staff/six toddlers = \$910.27
	With hot meal program = \$1,102.65
Preschooler	1 staff/6 toddlers = \$916
	With hot meal program = \$1,172.48
Kindergarten-age	1 staff/8 kindergarten children = \$732.80
	With hot meal program = \$989.28
School-age	1 staff/12 school-age children = \$1,156.45
	With hot meal program = \$1,541.17

Regional Community Programs

Age unit	Max. funding (per month)
Infant	1 staff/4 infants = \$968.40
	With hot meal program = 1,119.04
Toddler	1 staff/6 toddlers = \$1,069.28
	With hot meal program = \$1,295.24
Preschooler	1 staff/6 toddlers = \$1,076
	With hot meal program = \$1,377.28
Kindergarten-age	1 staff/8 kindergarten children = \$860.80
	With hot meal program = \$1,162.08
School-age	1 staff/12 school-age children = \$1,358.45
	With hot meal program = \$1,810.37

Staff wage funding

Wage enhancement funding is provided to assist with the cost of staff wages based on the level of training held by child care staff. Funding is provided up to a maximum of 40 hours per week, per staff, for actual hours worked.

<i>Level of qualification</i>	<i>Whitehorse hourly rate</i>	<i>Regional community programs hourly rate</i>
Level 0	0	\$1.85
Level I	\$2.12	\$2.49
Level IA	\$4.01	\$4.71
Level II	\$5.44	\$6.39
Level IIA	\$7.96	\$9.35
Level III	\$10.31	\$12.11

Note: The above levels of training correspond to the qualifications designations on the previous page.

Other eligible expenses

Eligible occupancy expenses are subsidized at \$0.37 per dollar spent. Eligible expenses include: rent or mortgage, insurance, janitorial wage and supply costs, water/sewer taxes, garbage, snow removal, minor repairs, carpet cleaning, internet, electricity, heating fuel, recurring phone/cell phone costs, security system monitoring, equipment rentals.

One time funding

Start up funding

Available to family child care homes of up to \$1,000/home in Whitehorse and up to \$2,000/home in the rest of the territory.

Available to child care centres to a maximum of \$10,000.

Enhancement funding

Available yearly to child care programs up to \$5,000 to meet regulatory requirements related to health and safety or playground development and maintenance.

Available yearly to family day home programs up to \$500 for the replacement of a major appliance (up to 50% of the cost), for health and safety requirements and for outdoor play space development and maintenance.

Radon funding

Available to licenced programs. Child care centres may apply for up to \$15,000 to assist with the costs of completing radon mitigation. A family day home may apply for up to \$3,000 to assist with the costs of completing radon mitigation. A Radon Measurement Professional must complete the radon testing and a Radon Mitigation Professional must complete follow up work.

A review of additional funding needs for larger child care centres are considered on a case by case basis.

Other funding

In 2018-2019 the Whitehorse Child Development Centre received a total of \$2,404,000 in transfer payments from the Government of Yukon's Department of Health and Social Services. This number reflects several funding agreements that are not limited to supporting children in licensed child care.

TERRITORIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2018-2019)

Fee subsidies	\$2,551,000
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Operational (previously Recurring) funding

Direct Operating Grant	\$3,984,000
Supports to children with special needs	\$470,000

Total Operational funding	\$4,454,000
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One time funding

Enhancement funding	\$75,000
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Total territorial allocation on regulated child care	\$7,080,000
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Note: Federal funding of \$2,391,156 through the Canada – Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Agreement for 2018-2019 is not included in the territorial allocations.

TOTAL ALLOCATION	\$9,471,156
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Total territorial allocation for regulated child care + \$2,391,156 federal funding through the Canada - Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (2018-2019)

Other Funding

Whitehorse Child Development Centre	\$2,404,000
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Federal Funding Under the Canada-Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (2018-2019)

Two day professional development training	\$30,000
Support students in recognized ECE courses	\$30,000
Support education for early childhood educators in the communities through Yukon College	\$78,000
Developing a culturally appropriate curriculum framework	\$83,000
Ensure regulatory requirements for health and safety are met (including radon testing and remediation)	\$108,000
One time funding to licensed child care programs to purchase culturally and developmentally appropriate toys and equipment	\$549,000
Conduction of a feasibility study to review Yukon's capacity to serve its French language communities' child care needs	\$10,000
Assistance to grandparents who are primary care givers for their grandchildren for child care costs	\$16,000
Assistance to young parents with child care costs while completing their Grade 12 diploma	\$9,000
Funding for Yukon First Nation's to review current child care needs within their communities	\$210,000
Creation of child care spaces for children whose parents are accessing addiction treatment programs	\$46,000
Support expanded training for early childhood educators and parents in the Handle with Care program	\$105,000
Funding to Child Development Centre to provide supportive programming to licensed child care programs	\$98,000
Increase to existing Direct Operating Grant funding to stabilize parent fees and support wage increases for early childhood educators	\$1,500,000
Provide additional supports to children with special needs in licensed child care settings	\$245,000
