

# Prince Edward Island



## PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

### Number of children 0-12 years (2007 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	1,500
1	1,400
2	1,300
3	1,500
4	1,400
5	1,500
6	1,500
7	1,700
8	1,700
9	1,500
10	1,600
11	1,700
12	1,800
Total	19,900

### Number of children 0-12 years, aggregated (2007 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0-2	4,200
3-5	4,400
6-12	11,500
Total	19,900

### Children 0-14 years identifying with an Aboriginal group (2006)

Age	North American Indian	Métis	Inuit	Multiple	Other	Total
0-4	150	60	15	0	0	235
5-9	165	40	10	0	0	205
10-14	120	30	0	0	0	160
Total	435	130	25	0	0	600

### Children 0-14 yrs with disabilities (2006)

Age	Number of children with disabilities	Rate of children with disabilities (%)
0-4	190	2.9
5-9	320	4.0
10-14	470	5.0
Total	980	4.1

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**Number of children 0-12 years with mothers in the paid labour force (2007 rounded estimate)**

Age	Number of children
0	900
1	1,000
2	900
3	1,100
4	900
5	1,200
6	1,100
7	1,300
8	1,200
9	1,000
10	1,200
11	1,300
12	1,200
Total	14,200

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**Number of children 0-12 years with mothers in the paid labour force, aggregated (2007 rounded estimate)**

Age	Number of children
0-2	2,800
3-5	3,200
6-12	8,300
Total	14,200

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**Number of children by marital status of families (2006)**

Age	Children in couple families	Children in lone parent families	(with lone mothers)	(with lone fathers)
0-4	5,515	1,075	990	90
5-9	6,245	1,725	1,465	260
10-14	7,285	2,015	1,720	295
Total	19,045	4,815	4,175	640

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**Number of children by mother tongue (2006)**

Age	English	French	Non-official language
0-4	6,410	115	60
5-9	7,560	160	70
10-14	8,940	185	95
Total	22,910	460	225

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**Number and percentage of children living in families below the LICO (2006)**

Age	Number	Percent (%)
0-2	n/a	n/a
3-5	n/a	n/a
6-12	2,000	15.9
Total	3,000	13.9

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*Note: Sufficient data for all age breakdowns not available.*

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**Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2007 rounded estimate)**

Age of youngest child	Number of mothers	Participation rate (%)
0-2	2,900	78.4
3-5	2,200	84.6
6-15	6,800	86.1

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## FAMILY-RELATED LEAVE

### Maternity leave

Seventeen weeks.

### Parental leave

Thirty-five weeks. The total parental leave for both parents cannot exceed 35 weeks.

### Adoption leave

Fifty-two weeks. The combined total leave for both parents cannot exceed 52 weeks.

### Births and EI maternity and parental claims (2007)

Number of births: 1,420

Birth rate per 1,000 population: 10.3

Number of initial maternity claims allowed: 1,010

Average length of maternity claim: 14.6 weeks

Number of parental claims: 1,150

Average length of parental claim: 28.4 weeks

Number of adoptive parent claims: 20

Average length of adoptive claim: 10.0 weeks

*Note: Maternity, parental and adoption leaves are determined by provincial and territorial legislation. The federal government pays for up to 15 weeks for maternity leave and 35 weeks for parental and adoptive leave for eligible parents at 55% of earned income to a maximum of \$447/week (2009). See FEDERAL ECEC PROGRAMS for more information.*

## KINDERGARTEN

### LEGISLATION

Kindergarten in PEI is part of the early childhood system. The legislation governing kindergarten is the *Child Care Facilities Act, Regulations, and Guidelines* R.S.P.E.I. 1988.

### PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

The Department is responsible for licensing, teacher/staff certification, supports for children with special needs, policy development, funding, curriculum development, program support and in-service training.

### KINDERGARTEN CONTACT

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### KINDERGARTEN SERVICES

#### KINDERGARTEN

School boards currently have no jurisdiction over kindergartens, although there are programs located in schools; the school simply provides the space.

Kindergarten programs must operate for a minimum of three hours per day, five days per week or the equivalent, and provide 2.5 hours of instructional time. Programs may operate for between 9 and 10 months in a 12-month period. Each kindergarten determines its own hours of operation.

A three-hour day is available at no charge to the parent. Parents whose children attend full-day in a child care service either pay fees for the balance of the day or, if eligible, receive a child care subsidy.

Kindergarten programs are offered in 49 full-day child care centres and in 36 part-day stand-alone programs. Twenty-one of these centres are located in schools. Programs in schools must be not-for-profit and have either a parent or a community board. The schools offer the space when a request has been made and space is available. Kindergartens are also provided in for-profit and nonprofit full-day child care centres and as part-day stand alone programs.

Kindergarten is not compulsory and access is not legislated. Parents are responsible for transportation. School boards will transport kindergarten age children on buses if room is available.

While there are enough licensed spaces for every five year old, parents may not be able to access their program of first choice.

## AGE ELIGIBILITY

As of the 2008/09 academic year children must be 5 years of age by October 31, and in 2009/10 must be 5 years of age by December 31.

## CLASS SIZE

There is no specified class size but child: teacher ratios of 1:12 are legislated under the *Child Care Facilities Act*. In 2007/08 the majority of classes ranged from 12 to 24 students.

## CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

There is a philosophy of inclusion. Child-specific special needs grants are available to centres for additional staffing from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development. A school-aged child with special needs may attend a second year of kindergarten.

The number of kindergarten children with identified special needs in 2007/08: 65.

## ENROLMENT (2007/08)

Number of children enrolled in kindergarten (the year before Grade 1): 1,215.

## KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

Qualification requirements: A two-year ECE diploma.

Minimum requirement for an ECE supervisor in a kindergarten: ECE diploma plus two years of work experience.

Thirty hours of professional development every three years is required for recertification for all kindergarten staff.

Responsibility for certification: The Child Care Facilities Board.

Representation: Several programs are unionized and represented by Union of Public Sector Employees.

Average wage in 2007/08: \$14.23 per hour. The Department requires all educators responsible for kindergarten to be paid a minimum of \$13 per hour (including benefits).

## CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

Title: Special Needs Assistants (SNAs).

Qualifications: 30 hours of training, and 30 hours of professional development every three years.

Role: To lower ratios to allow for a more successful transition and inclusion into the early childhood setting for children with special needs.

Funding for SNAs is provided by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

## CURRICULUM

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has an integrated kindergarten curriculum which includes Social Studies, Science, Health and Physical Development, Creative Development as well as Early Literacy Development and Early Numeracy Development. This curriculum was implemented provincially in September 2008.

## MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

See LICENSING, MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT in child care section.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has assigned two resource people to the Child Care Facilities Board. These individuals and two others are also appointed as inspectors of child care facilities.

## SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR KINDERGARTEN

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development funds kindergartens directly; there is no school board involvement. The Department also provides funding to the Early Childhood Development Association to provide support to kindergarten and early childhood settings.

There are no fees for the kindergarten program; however, programs may charge \$25-\$50/year for consumable supplies.

## PUBLIC SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN (2007/08)

### Average spending per kindergarten child

Per capita spending on kindergarten: \$2,768.

### Total spending for kindergarten

\$3,364,000 — excludes Special Needs Assistants, curriculum resources and program supports.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN KINDERGARTEN

2000

**September** Prince Edward Island introduced publicly funded kindergarten; PEI was the last province to do so. Plans are for kindergarten to move to the public school system in 2010. A Kindergarten Commissioner has been hired to review the kindergarten system and make recommendations to the province.

2005

**Fall** The Task Force on Student Achievement report was released. The report contained the following recommendations specific to kindergarten:

- put in place more rigorous requirements regarding program content, number of hours, and length of the school year to ensure consistency and quality in the kindergarten system;
- integrate francophone kindergartens into the public school system and investigate whether this would be advantageous for all kindergartens;
- develop an intervention program for children identified as being at risk.

The province has acted on these recommendations. The range that kindergarten programs may operate was changed from 5-10 months to 9-10 months.

**2006/07** Children had to be five years old by September 30 to enter kindergarten.

**2007/08** Children had to be five years old by August 31 to enter kindergarten.

**2007/08** Government announced a seven percent increase in kindergarten funding. Wages of ECEs working in kindergartens were raised to at least \$13 per hour. The funding also included a new annual \$500 grant for each program to assist with administrative costs.

**2008** An integrated provincial kindergarten curriculum was developed and implemented.

**2008/09** As of the 2008/09 academic year, children must be 5 years of age by October 31 to enter kindergarten.

## REGULATED CHILD CARE SERVICES

### LEGISLATION

Prince Edward Island. Legislative Assembly. *The Child Care Facilities Act*. 1988.

Prince Edward Island. *Legislative Assembly. Child Care Facilities Regulations*. 1988.

Prince Edward Island. Legislative Assembly. *The Social Assistance Act*. 2003

### PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

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### CHILD CARE SERVICES

#### UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

##### Unregulated family child care

Maximum number of children permitted: Five, including the caregiver's own preschool-age children.

If all children are under two years, three are allowed, or five preschoolers if not more than two of them are younger than two years. Six are allowed in a mixed-age group up to 10 years with no more than two younger than two years.

## REGULATED CHILD CARE

### Early childhood centres

Group care for less than 24 hours/day for children from birth to seven years including part-day kindergartens for children aged five years and part-day nursery schools for children aged 2-5 years.

### School-age child care centres

Care outside school hours for school-age children (usually 6-12 years).

### Family day care homes

Full-day care in a private home for mixed-age groups up to a maximum of seven children, including the provider's own preschool children, with a maximum of three children under two years.

## CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

There are no segregated child care programs for children with disabilities.

Centres may apply for a special needs grant on behalf of a child. A grant of up to \$11.50/hour is available, based on the training and experience of the staff hired. Their role is to lower ratios to allow for a more successful transition and inclusion into the early childhood setting for children with special needs. Some documentation is required in order to receive the additional support, but it is flexible and the social need of the child may be considered. Special needs funding usually provides for additional staff to lower the ratio of the group. The funding is not capped and there is no waiting list for service. Parents of children with special needs are not required to be employed or in training to receive a subsidy.

Staff who work with children with special needs require 30 hours of professional development every three years.

## ABORIGINAL CHILD CARE

Prince Edward Island does not fund or license child care programs on-reserve. There are no First Nations/Inuit Child Care Initiative programs in PEI. There are two unlicensed centres on-reserve, and an unlicensed kindergarten program on Abegweit First Nation Lennox Island Reserve; as well, Abegweit First Nation Scotchfort Reserve operates an Aboriginal Head Start program. It serves 2-6 year olds, operates from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. and is unregulated.

The Mi'kmaq Family Resource Centre operates an Aboriginal Head Start program in Charlottetown. It serves 3-6 year olds and is a regulated centre.

## SPACE STATISTICS (MARCH 2008)

Number of regulated child care spaces		
<i>Centre-based</i>		
Age group	Full-day	Part-day
Infants (0-24 months)	191	0
Preschool (2-4 years)	2,610	n/a
School-age (6-12 years)	-	859
Kindergarten	729	486
Total centre-based spaces	3,530	*1,345
<i>*A total of 1,215 children attend kindergarten, 486 who attend part-time only and 729 who attend both kindergarten and child care for the balance of the day.</i>		
<i>Family child care</i>		35
<b>Total number of regulated spaces</b>		<b>4,910</b>
<b>Children with special needs in regulated child care</b>		219
<b>Children receiving subsidies</b>		**1,786
<i>**Represents the monthly average over the year. The total number of children receiving subsidy was 2,117.</i>		
<i>Note: In ECEC in Canada 2006, the 2005/06 average number of children receiving subsidies was reported as 849. Provincial officials subsequently corrected that number to 1,750, with the total number of children served being 2,235.</i>		

<b>Number of centres and homes</b>	
<i>Number of child care centres</i>	144
Full-day	80
Part-day nursery schools/preschools	2
Stand-alone after-school programs	26
Kindergarten centres	31
<i>Number of individual family child care providers</i>	5
<b>Sponsorship of regulated centre-based spaces</b>	
Nonprofit	2,061
For-profit	2,814
Total	4,875
<i>Note: For the purpose of comparison with other jurisdictions where kindergarten is in the public education system, the part-day kindergarten spaces are excluded from the figures in the BIG PICTURE and LONG VIEW Tables.</i>	

## STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

### REGULATED CENTRES

<b>Maximum centre size</b>	50 spaces	
<b>Maximum staff:child ratios and group sizes</b>		
Age	Staff:child ratios	Max. group sizes
0-2 yrs	1:3	6
2-3 yrs	1:5	not specified
3-5 yrs	1:10	not specified
5-6 yrs	1:12	not specified
7+ yrs	1:15	not specified

#### Staff qualification requirements in Type I centres\*

Centre supervisors and one full-time staff member in each program must have at least a one-year Early Childhood Development diploma or university Child Study degree.

Thirty hours of in-service training every three years is required for all staff.

\* *Type I centres are Early Childhood Centres with the primary objective being to provide an early childhood developmental program emphasizing age-appropriate activities.*

#### Staff qualification requirements in Type II centres\*\*

The supervisor and one staff person of a Type II facility must have successfully completed one unit of continuing education (defined as one semester university/college course), and must provide two personal references from members of the community.\*\*\*

Thirty hours of in-service training every three years is required for all staff.

The Child Care Facilities Board only recognizes public and private post-secondary institutions that have been given the authority to grant academic credentials by their provincial or territorial governments through charters or legislation that ensures or enables mechanisms for institutional and program quality.

\*\* *Type II centres are day care homes and school-age centres.*

\*\*\**Where the board is satisfied that an applicant for licensing of a Type I centre has made every reasonable effort to engage a qualified supervisor/program staff as required and has been unable to do so, the board may authorize the engagement of an unqualified supervisor/program staff, provided that the unqualified supervisor/program staff commences, within six months of the date of employment, to acquire the necessary qualifications and must attain the appropriate qualification within 3 years of the date of employment. In Type II centres the appropriate qualifications must be acquired within one year.*

#### Parent involvement

Not specified.

#### Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Centres are visited for licensing purposes by staff of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, who observe the administration and programming of the centre. Annual inspections are required by the Fire Marshall's office and the Environmental Health Division of the Department of Health.

If a centre is not in compliance with the legislation it may operate under a regular licence but is given a specific time frame in which to comply. A centre may have a provisional licence for a period of six months, or it may have its licence revoked or not renewed. A centre receiving a provisional licence or having its licence revoked or not renewed may appeal directly to the Minister who then must establish an Appeal Board. This Board must conduct an inquiry and render a decision within 30 days.

## REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE

### Regulation

Providers are individually licensed.

### Maximum capacity

Up to seven children including the provider's own children under school-age, with a maximum of three children under two years.

### Provider qualification requirements

Providers must be at least 18 years of age, have completed a 30-hour training program, have two letters of reference and a current first-aid certificate.

Providers are not required to have a criminal records check; however, the Early Childhood Development Association (ECDA) has developed a process for criminal record checks and encourages all owners/operators to make sure their staff have them.

### Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Annual inspections are made by staff of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, who observe the administration and programming of the centre; by an inspector for the Fire Marshall's office; and by an Environmental Health Officer.

## FUNDING

### CHILD CARE FEE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

Fee subsidies are paid directly to service providers on behalf of eligible parents. Eligibility is determined by an income test and by the following social criteria: parent(s) working or studying, parental medical emergency, child in need of protection, children with special needs, children of immigrant families who are registered for English/French second language programs and school readiness. Eligibility assessments are conducted in person at local offices of the Department of Social Services and Seniors.

The provincial fee subsidy budget is not capped and in 2007/08 there was no waiting list for subsidy.

Any regulated nonprofit or private child care program is eligible to enrol children receiving subsidies.

There is no minimum user fee. Centres and family day care homes may surcharge subsidized parents higher than the maximum subsidy. Approximately half the centres charge fees higher than the maximum subsidy but not all require subsidized parents to pay this difference.

Parents in receipt of social assistance have access to the Child Care Subsidy Program.

### Eligibility for fee subsidy (net income 2007/08)

	Turning point	Break-even point
1 parent, 1 child	\$15,400	\$27,400
2 parents, 2 children	21,200	53,040

*The turning point is the income level up to which full subsidy is available. Partial subsidy is available up to the break-even point, at which income subsidy ceases.*

### Maximum subsidy by age of child (2007/08)

0-2 yrs	\$30/day
2-3 yrs	23/day
3+ yrs	22/day
School-age	18/day

## PUBLIC FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2007/08)

All licensed child care centres are eligible for all funding programs.

### One-time funding

None

In 2007/08 a one-time resource grant from the operating fund was provided to early childhood centres in the following amounts:

For centres with a capacity of 25-50	\$2,600
For centres with a capacity of 34 and fewer	1,300
For school age and nursery schools	650
For family child care programs	500

### Recurring funding

#### Operating grants

Full-day centre-based programs	\$1.10/day/space
Part-time centre-based programs	
12 children or fewer	750/year
24 children or fewer	1,201/year
50 children or fewer	2,002/year

*\* Funding is calculated according to months of operation and is less than stated above if the program operates less than 12 months a year.*

*Note: Since February 2007, all licensed child care facilities that are open for a minimum of six consecutive months receive operating grants.*



#### Infant incentive funding

\$500/space/year. An annual grant is provided to centres and family day care programs enrolling at least one child younger than two years on a regular basis for at least six months.

#### Special needs funding

Available to centre-based and family day care programs to pay staff to provide individualized programming for children with special needs. The funding will cover wages and benefits up to \$11.50/hour based on training and experience.

**Family day care homes** \$495/year  
See RECENT DEVELOPMENTS for increases in operating grants effective April 1, 2008.

### PROVINCIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2007/08)

<b>Child care fee subsidies</b>	\$3,500,000
<b>One-time funding</b>	None
<b>Recurring funding</b>	
Special needs funding	\$1,315,000
Operating grants	1,210,000
Total*	\$6,226,767

Note: \$201,767 of the 2007/08 operating funding was allocated to a one-time resource grant to centres and homes.

#### Other funding

Funding to the Early Childhood Development Association for the Bridges Project	\$80,000
Partnerships for Children	110,000
Research and Evaluation (including EDI)	50,000

#### Funding from other departments

Kindergarten funding to early childhood centres	\$3,364,000
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\* For the purpose of comparison with other jurisdictions where kindergarten is in the public education system, kindergarten funding has been separated from spending on regulated child care. The allocation for kindergarten is \$3.2 million; the amount above is actual spending.

The provincial social assistance budget has \$50,000 for unregulated care for infants, or for extended-hour care when regulated care is unavailable, or for occasional "babysitting" costs.

### SALARIES

#### Mean gross hourly wage for centre-based child care staff (full-and part-time staff combined - 2007/08)

	Median hourly	Median range (within which 80% fall)
Uncertified	\$9.50	\$7.50 - \$15.00
Certified ECEs	11.85	8.50 - 21.00
Certified ECEs in kindergarten	14.00	n/a
Special needs staff	9.00	n/a

Source: Early Childhood Services, Direct Funding Program April 2008. Based on wage information on 118 certified ECE's and 153 uncertified staff.

#### Median full-time, full-year employment income for centre-based Early Childhood Educators and Assistants (2005)

All	\$19,616
Those with an ECE credential	21,970

Source: Custom tabulations, 2006 census data on National Occupational Classification for Statistics E-217, Early Childhood Educators and Assistants.

#### Family child care

Information not available.

### FEES

#### Median monthly parent fees for centre-based full-time care (2007/08)

Infants	\$685 (\$32/day)
Toddlers	599 (\$28/day)
Preschool	556 (\$26/day)
School-age	Information not available

Source: Information provided by provincial officials from centre subsidy forms.

#### Average daily fee in family child care

Information not available.

### ADMINISTRATION

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is responsible for the regulation of child care services and management of government funds allocated to child care.

The Child Care Facilities Board is responsible for standards and regulations, monitoring, qualifications and certification of child care staff. The Board includes six members who represent the Health and Community Services agencies, Education Agency, the Early Childhood Development Association and the public at large, and a Chair who is a public official.

The local offices of the Department of Social Services and Seniors are responsible for assessing eligibility for subsidy.

## MUNICIPAL ROLE

There is no legislated municipal role for the development or delivery of child care.

## CHILD CARE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Five principles guide the planning of child care: quality, affordability, accessibility, providing for children with special needs, and parent involvement.

Application to the Child Care Facilities Board for a licence must include a needs assessment that documents the need for child care in a particular area.

## RECENT HISTORY OF CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

FOR HISTORY BEFORE 2000, SEE THE RELEVANT PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL SECTION OF *ECEC IN CANADA 2006*, available online at: <http://www.childcarecanada.org/ECEC2006/> or in print.

**2000** Publicly funded, community delivered kindergarten was introduced.

**November** The government released *For our children: A strategy for healthy child development* and announced the establishment of the Premier's Council on Healthy Child Development to advise the premier on issues affecting young children in PEI. The Departments of Health and Social Services, Education, Development and Technology, the Office of the Attorney General, and Community and Cultural Affairs as well as community groups worked in partnership to implement the strategy. The Council mon-

itored the implementation of the province's Healthy Child Development Strategy with a focus on child outcomes in the four goal areas identified by the Strategy: good health, safety and security, success at learning, and social engagement and responsibility. The Healthy Child Development Strategy is the responsibility of the five deputy ministers of the departments listed above.

**2001** The *Review and analysis of the Prince Edward Island ECE industry* was undertaken, based on *You Bet I Care!* and funded through a Labour Market Development Agreement with Human Resources Development Canada.

The \$1.3 million Early Childhood Development Initiative funding was allocated as follows:

- early intervention for children with autism: \$700,000;
- kindergarten: \$500,000;
- support to the Premier's Council for the Healthy Child Development Strategy: \$100,000.

A new Aboriginal two year ECE diploma program began development at Holland College.

**2001/02** Funding was provided to the Early Childhood Development Association for a pilot project aimed at improving quality. The focus was children with special needs, based on the Keeping the Door Open model. Funds were provided for two staff to work with 200 child care staff in 29 centres. The goal was to expand the program to include all centres.

**2003/04** An accelerated ECEC program was introduced at Holland College under a Labour Market Development Agreement (LMDA) with Human Resources Development Canada. To be eligible for the training, students must have at least three years experience in a child care centre, meet the Holland College entrance requirements and be a member of the Early Childhood Development Association. The program is a mix of classroom time and on the job training, which takes place in the centres in which the students are employed.

*Partnerships for Children* funding initiative was implemented to help develop and strengthen Children's Working Group networks. Activities included ECDA-developed salary scales and job descriptions, a public education campaign for parents on the work done by staff without qualifications, and a number of fact sheets.

## 2004

**June** The first students graduated from the Holland College Aboriginal ECE diploma program.

**July** The Measuring and Improving Kids' Environments (MIKE) program was introduced in an effort to improve quality; this was a partnership between PEI Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS), Early Childhood Development Association (ECDA) of PEI and licensed full-day early childhood centres across PEI. The on-site consultation model from *Keeping the Door Open* was used to inform and guide the work in the first 10-month cycle of the pilot (see 2001/02). The model uses external program consultants with training in early childhood education, experience in licensed centres and in the (ECERS-R), the Canadian Supplementary Scale (CSS), SpecialLink Child Care Inclusion Principles Scale (SCCIPS) and the Practices Profile. The program was funded by the DHSS as a component of the PEI Healthy Child Development Strategy.

**September** An Early Childhood Education and Care Committee was struck to make recommendations to the Healthy Child Development Deputy Ministers on future directions for ECEC programs and services. Recommendations were framed within the principles of the Multilateral Framework Agreement on Early Learning and Child Care.

**Fall** Forty-nine early childhood centres (more than 50% of the full-day centres) received certification from the Union of Public Service Employees (UPSE). Contract discussions began.

## 2005

**Summer** An Accelerated Francophone Early Childhood Education Diploma was offered to educators working within licensed francophone child care centres by La Société éducative de l'Île-du-Prince-Édouard, in collaboration with Cégep de St-Félicien. Eleven students began the program in the summer of 2005 and graduated in the summer of 2007.

**November** The Early Childhood Education and Care Committee developed a Criminal Record Check Manual to be used by PEI early childhood centres. The Early Childhood Development Association provided the centres with training in its use.

**November/December** Prince Edward Island received \$3 million through the Early Learning and Child Care Agreement in 2005/06 and \$2.8 million in 2006/07.

In 2005/06 the fund was used to provide a one-time wage enhancement of \$3,000 per certified staff working in licensed early childhood centres; a \$10,000 resource and administration grant per preschool centre, and a "parent share holiday" that provided parents receiving partial subsidy with three months relief from their parental portion of the fees beyond any minimum required.

Child care subsidy rates were raised to \$30/day for infants, \$23/day for 2-year olds and \$22/day for 3-5 year olds.

The annual infant grant was increased from \$250 per centre that has infant spaces to \$500 per infant space.

## 2006

**Summer** The Bridges Project was announced. The Departments of Education, Social Services and Seniors and the Early Childhood Development Association collaborated to offer seamless support in the areas of curriculum development, program delivery and parental engagement. The Bridges Project combined the work of the kindergarten mentors and the MIKE consultants under a new Early Childhood Resource Team. Other professionals, such as speech and language pathologists and occupational therapists, were included on this team as required.

Collectively the team:

- supports early learning and child care program supervisors/administrators/owners with learning environments, training and mentoring;
- encourages quality of early learning programs;
- helps enhance the level of integration of children with special needs;
- encourages a community of learning within the early childhood sector.

**November** Contract negotiations were underway with UPSE and the majority of full-day licensed early childhood centres.

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

**2007: February** Government announced a multi-year strategic investment in early learning in four key areas:

- Access and Affordability for child care programs — increase in subsidy eligibility levels
- Quality Licensed Child Care and Early Learning Environments — intended to improve stability, by providing predictable, on-going funding.
- Early Years Information Campaign — on the importance of the early years
- Research and Evaluation — to collect and report data to measure how well our children are doing in areas of development and learning.

The province allocated \$4.2 million in funding held in trust as part of the Early Learning and Child Care Agreements of 2005 to support these investments.

**2007**

**April** The subsidy eligibility levels were increased as follows:

	Previous annual net income thresholds	Annual net income thresholds effective April 1, 2007
1 parent, 1 child	\$13,400 - \$25,440	\$15,400 - \$27,440
2 parents, 2 children	19,200 - 51,040	21,200 - 53,040

**April** Early Childhood Services, the unit responsible for licensing and monitoring of child care centres, was moved from the Department of Social Services and Seniors to the newly named Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (formerly Department of Education).

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development announced that the kindergarten program would be moving to the school system from the child care system. A kindergarten commissioner was appointed to assess the kindergarten situation, develop recommendations as to how the Department can best facilitate this change, and assess the educational requirements for kindergarten teachers. The report to the premier is due in June 2009.

The TAKE 30 for the Family social marketing program was launched by the Government of PEI. This program is designed to provide parents with information, activity ideas and tools to promote positive parenting and healthy brain development during a child's critical early years. The TAKE 30 for the Family is also working with the business community to encourage businesses to develop or continue to maintain a flexible workplace that supports employees to balance work and life/family commitments.

The operating grants were increased as follows:

### Operating grants

Full-day centre-based programs	\$1.20/day/space
Part-time centre-based programs	
12 children or fewer	825.83/year
24 children or fewer	1,321.32/year
50 children or fewer	2,200.20/year
Family child care	\$544.50/year

**June** The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development announced that the age of entry for kindergarten and Grade 1 will be gradually changed to December 31 by the fall of 2010. 2008: age 5 by October 31; 2009: age 5 by November 31; 2010: age 5 by December 31.

Le Collège Acadie Î-P-É was recognized as a publicly-funded post-secondary institution, giving the college status to grant diplomas.

## KEY PROVINCIAL ECEC ORGANIZATIONS

Early Childhood Development Association of Prince Edward Island

40 Enman Crescent, Suite 147

PO Box 23055

Charlottetown, PE C1E 1Z6

Telephone (902) 368-1866 or Toll-Free 1-866-368-1866

Facsimile (902) 569-7900

Website: [www.ecda.pe.ca](http://www.ecda.pe.ca)

Early Learning Operators of Prince Edward Island

c/o Campus Kids Child Care Centre

550 University Avenue

Charlottetown, PE C1A 4P3

Telephone: (902) 566-0344