

TERRITORIAL CONTEXT



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

Age	Number of children
0	310
1	310
2	315
3	340
4	295
5	315
6	290
7	350
8	375
9	375
10	405
11	420
12	430
Total	4,530

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

Age	Number of children
0-2	935
3-5	950
6-12	2,645
Total	4,530

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

Age	North American Indian	Métis	Inuit	Multiple	Other	Total
0 - 4	515	60	35	10	15	640
5 - 9	565	60	15	10	35	685
10 - 14	615	65	30	10	15	735
Total	1,695	185	80	30	65	2,060

Children 0-14 yrs with disabilities (2006)

Age	Number of children with disabilities	Rate of children with disabilities (%)
0-4	n/a	n/a
5-9	100	5.6
10-14	100	4.7
Total	220	3.9

Note: Sufficient data for all age breakdowns not available.

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

Age	Number of children
0 - 2	500
3 - 5	600
6 - 12	1,600
Total	2,700

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	1,300	400	315	80
5-9	1,320	480	370	115
10-14	1,505	600	430	175
Total	4,125	1,480	1,115	360

Number of children by mother tongue (2006)

Age	English	French	Non-official language
0-4	1,555	50	100
5-9	1,695	40	70
10-14	2,000	55	70
Total	5,250	145	240

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

Information not available.

Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2006)

	Number of mothers in the labour force	Participation rate
Females with children at home	3,985	82.6
With children under 6 yrs only	650	71.0
· With at least one child under 2 years	315	64.9
· Children 2-5 years only	335	77.9
With children under 6 years as well as children 6 years and over	480	82.1
With children 6 years and over only	2,850	85.6
· Youngest child 6-14 years	1,525	90.0

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

FAMILY-RELATED LEAVE

Maternity leave

Seventeen weeks.

Parental leave

Thirty-seven weeks. Parents who share a parental leave cannot normally take their leave at the same time, whether or not they work for the same employer.

Adoption leave

Thirty-seven weeks.

Births and EI maternity and parental claims (2007)

Number of births: 355

Birth rate per 1,000 population: 11.4

Number of initial maternity claims allowed: 250

Average length of maternity claim: 14.4 weeks

Number of parental claims: 240

Average length of parental claim: 31.4 weeks

Number of adoptive parent claims: 0

Average length of adoptive claim: not applicable

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

Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. *Education Act*, 1990, S.Y. c.25.

Yukon funds and delivers denominational education. Both “public” and Catholic school boards are publicly funded.

TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten contact

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KINDERGARTEN SERVICES

KINDERGARTEN

All five year olds have access to kindergarten but it is not compulsory.

Kindergarten is delivered in public schools under the Department of Education. There are a total of 32 kindergarten programs — full day, half day and combined with primary.

There are 22 full-day programs (21 are full-day everyday programs and one uses an alternate day arrangement due to bussing).

Seventeen of the full-day kindergarten programs are in Whitehorse, and three are in rural communities. The francophone school board also runs two full-day kindergarten programs.

Eight rural communities offer half-day combined four and five year old kindergarten programs. Where four year olds are involved, the Child Development Centre may provide assistance for particular students (see SPECIAL FEATURES). Two rural communities with small school populations combine kindergarten students with their primary classes. Kindergarten students attend for half the day.

Full-day programs offer 950 instructional hours. Half-day programs offer 475 instructional hours. Hours of attendance are determined by Yukon Department of Education (there are no school boards).

AGE ELIGIBILITY

Four years and eight months as of September 1 for K5 classes.

Three years and eight months as of September 1 for K4 classes.

CLASS SIZE

Full day classes are capped at eighteen to twenty.

Average/mean class size in 2007/08: 15

Note: There is considerable variation between small rural schools where class size is 5-10 students and large urban schools where it is 16-21 students.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

There is a policy guideline for children with special needs. Children are included in regular kindergarten unless they have severe, multiple special needs. Extra support is available; the Department of Education assigns Educational Assistants. Services such as speech and language, physical and occupational therapies and psychological services for testing are provided.

The number of children with special needs in 2007/08: 57.

ENROLMENT (2007/08)

Number of children enrolled in kindergarten K5s (the year before Grade 1): 371.

Number of children enrolled in kindergarten K4s (two years before Grade 1): 47 (rural communities) and 15 francophone in Whitehorse.

KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

Qualification requirements: 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.

Responsibility for certification: Yukon Teacher Certification Board.

Representation: Yukon Teachers' Association.

Average salary of a kindergarten teacher (2007/08): Full time: \$ 79,937, half-time: \$39,968.50

Number of kindergarten teachers (2007/08): 26 fulltime equivalents (22 fulltime, 8 half-time), and two combined with Primary.

CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

Titles: There are two types of assistants, Educational Assistant and Remedial Tutor

Qualifications: Both types require Grade 12 (post-secondary courses or training are desirable).

There is no territorial policy regarding classroom assistants. Special program staff determine the needs of individual students.

Roles: Educational Assistants assist the classroom teacher in the implementation of the student Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Remedial Tutors provide assistance to students who require more support to master basic skills and content but don't require IEP - in kindergarten this is usually an "extra pair of hands" to assist the teacher.

The Yukon Teachers' Association represents classroom assistants.

Average wage (2007/08): Full time \$36,300; half time - \$18,150.

CURRICULUM

The Yukon uses the British Columbia kindergarten curriculum. The focus is child-centred with a balance between play-oriented centres and group instruction. In some schools, First Nations language time is included. The focus is on pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills as well as language and social development.

MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

The Coordinator of Primary Programs, Department of Education monitors kindergarten programs through visits several times throughout the year.

Since 2004/05 an electronic database has been used at the end of each year to collect information from every class for a Kindergarten Screening Profile, the aim of which is to assist in identifying students at risk. A report is issued to teachers, administrators and superintendents.

SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR KINDERGARTEN

There are no school boards, with the exception of the francophone board. Funding for the Department of Education is part of a block transfer of federal dollars to the territorial government.

The francophone board receives additional federal funds.

There are no parent fees for any part of the kindergarten program.

PUBLIC SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN (2007/08)

Per capita spending

\$14,565 per student K-12, excluding capital. Schools are funded according to size.

Spending on kindergarten programs

Information not available.

SPECIAL FEATURES

Eight rural schools admit four year olds into the regular kindergarten program. These targeted communities are mainly First Nations with many children determined to be at risk. The focus is on language development, social skills, pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills.

The Child Development Centre (see CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS in child care section) works with some students in the kindergartens for four year olds and provides an outreach worker to some schools.

KINDERGARTEN DEVELOPMENTS

2004/05 An electronic database was developed and is used to collect information from every class for a Kindergarten Screening Profile. The aim of this is to assist in identifying students at risk.

2005

May Yukon announced the expansion of full-day kindergarten to all Whitehorse schools, following the success of pilot programs. Full-day kindergarten was also expanded to four rural schools, and one francophone school.

2007/08 All teachers received in-service training and two programs focusing on oral language development were piloted in a number of schools. Programming and instructional support are planned to continue into 2008/09.

REGULATED CHILD CARE

LEGISLATION

Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. *The Child Care Act*, 1990.

Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. *Child Care Centre Program Regulation*, 1995.

Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. *Family Day Home Program Regulation*, 1995.

Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. *School-Age Program Regulation*, 1995.

Yukon Territory. Legislative Assembly. *Child Care Subsidy Regulation*, 1995.

TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

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CHILD CARE SERVICES

UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

Unregulated family child care

Maximum number of children permitted: Three. This does not include the caregiver's own children under age six years.

Preschools

Preschool programs for children aged 3-6 years that operate for less than three consecutive hours.

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.

Family day homes

Care in a private home for mixed-age groups up to a maximum of eight children in groups with: no more than four infants; or no more than six preschool-age children where no more than three are infants; or no more than eight preschool children (including the providers' own children under six). Four school-age children in addition to the number of preschool-age children may be included with additional staff.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Child care regulations state that children with special needs in mainstream child care programs must be integrated to the fullest extent possible. A child is designated special needs on the assessment of a child care professional. An Individual Program Plan must be developed for the child in consultation with staff, parents and professionals in the community, that outlines goals and objectives for the child.

There are no segregated child care programs. The Whitehorse Child Development Centre provides special needs programming and supports across the Yukon. It operates an integrated preschool program licensed for 25 children as well as unlicensed preschool programs. It provides early intervention supports and resources to families of children with special needs. It operates a mobile outreach unit that serves every community in the territory for support and resource provision.

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

Parents who meet the financial eligibility criteria receive a fee subsidy for their child with special needs to attend a child care program whether or not the parent is in the paid labour force. Parents who are not eligible for a subsidy pay for the child care space but not for the additional supports.

ABORIGINAL CHILD CARE

There are no reserves for First Nations people in the Yukon. First Nations receive the same start-up and operating grants from the Yukon government as other licensed child care centres and family day homes. They also receive funding from the federal First Nations and Inuit Child Care Initiative, which is administered by the Council for Yukon First Nations. The Council for Yukon First Nations also provides financial support to one additional child care centre operated by a child care society, and a number of family day homes that serve First Nations children.

In total there are approximately 225 regulated spaces operated or supported by First Nations in seven centres. There are three Aboriginal Head Start programs. Parents who use the regulated centres and family child care homes are eligible for fee subsidies.

SPACE STATISTICS (MARCH 2008)

Number of regulated child care spaces	
Centre-based	1,030
Family child care spaces	232
Total number of regulated spaces	1,262
Number of occupied centre-based spaces	
Infants (to 18 months)	64
Toddlers (18-36 months)	122
Preschool (36 months-school-age)	347
School-age	253
Total number of occupied centre-based spaces	786
<i>Note: The breakdown of centre-based spaces by age group is not available. This represents the number of occupied spaces by age group.</i>	
<i>All spaces are considered to be full-time.</i>	
Children with special needs in regulated child care	
	50 (est.)
Children receiving fee subsidies	
	502
Number of centres and homes	
Number of child care centres	32
Full day	27
Stand-alone after school programs	5
Number of individual family child care providers	30
Sponsorship of regulated centre spaces	
Nonprofit	659
For-profit	371

STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

REGULATED CENTRES

Maximum centre size 64 spaces

Maximum staff:child ratios and group sizes

Age	Staff:child ratios	Max. group sizes
0-18 months	1:4	8
18 months-2 years	1:6	12
3-6 years	1:8	16
6-12 years*	1:12	24

*The current Act and Regulations cover special needs children up to age 16.

Staff qualification requirements

20% of staff must meet or exceed the Child Care Worker III qualifications, an additional 30% must meet or exceed the Child Care Worker II qualifications and the rest must meet or exceed Child Care Worker I qualifications.

Levels:

Child Care Worker III: Two or more years of training in early childhood development (ECD) or equivalent from a recognized college or university.*

Child Care Worker II: One year training in ECD or equivalent from a recognized college or university.

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

* A degree or diploma in the Health and Social Services fields or a BA in Education may be considered for equivalency for a Childcare Worker III (CCW III). Applicants with these credentials must complete a 60-hour early childhood development course before applying for certification. Certification in such instances is given on a yearly basis, with a requirement to complete an early childhood development course annually.

Note: Some recreation courses are accepted as qualifications for staff in school-age programs.

Programs can request a letter of exemption if they do not meet the staffing regulations. The letter requesting an exemption must be accompanied by a training plan for the staff and a timeframe for meeting the regulations.

Parent involvement

The operator of the centre must ensure that open communication is maintained with parents and guardians on all matters affecting their child. Parents and guardians must also have reasonable access to the program, inspection reports, written policies, menus, log of injuries, *The Child Care Act*, and the *Regulation and Guidelines*, and the *Child Care Subsidy Regulation*.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

A government Child Care Inspector is required to conduct an annual inspection and two to four unannounced visits per year to each child care centre. Centres are also required to have an annual fire and environmental health inspection.

Child Care Inspectors are required to have a background in early childhood education.

If a centre is not in compliance with the regulations, it is given an order to comply. If the centre does not come into compliance within the stated time-frame allowed by the order, the licence may be suspended or revoked, or the Direct Operating Grant may be frozen. If a licence is suspended or revoked the centre can appeal to the Yukon Child Care Board, composed of community members appointed by the Minister for a two-year term. Its decision is binding.

REGULATED FAMILY DAY CARE

Regulation

Individually licensed.

Maximum capacity

Up to eight children (including the provider's own pre-school but not school-aged children). There may be no more than three infants if there are also three children who are preschoolers or school-age already enrolled. If there is an additional caregiver, there may be four additional school-age children.

Provider qualification requirements

Caregivers must complete a 60-hour introductory early childhood development course, 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 a first-aid certificate and a criminal records check.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Family day care homes are regulated by the same legislation as child care centres. They receive one annual inspection and two to four unannounced spot checks per year by a government Child Care Inspector to monitor for compliance with the regulations.

FUNDING

CHILD CARE FEE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

Fee subsidies are paid directly to service providers on behalf of eligible parents. Eligibility is determined through an income test which is conducted in person in Whitehorse and by mail-in in other parts of the territory. Subsidies may be used for part-time child care. Parents seeking employment may be eligible for part-time child care for two months.

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

There is no minimum user fee. Group programs and family day care homes may surcharge subsidized parents fees above the maximum subsidy rate. Subsidies may be used in any regulated for-profit or non-profit service.

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

	Turning point	Break-even point
1 parent, 1 child	\$22,262	\$35,211
2 parents, 2 children	32,765	56,270

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 rate/child/month (2007/08)

Infant	\$625
Toddlers	565
Preschool	565
School-age	275
Child with special needs	625

PUBLIC FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2007/08)

One time funding

Start-up funding is 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. Start-up funding is also available to child care centres to a maximum of \$10,000.

Capital development funding is available to child care centres to meet the health and safety requirements of the child care regulations. Centres and family day homes are eligible. The amount of the grants are based on the applications.

Operating grants*

There are three components to operating grants: unit funding, training, and building costs for child care centres only. All regulated child care programs receive 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 is allocated as follows:

- Infant unit	One staff/4 infants = \$720/month
- Toddler unit	One staff/6 toddlers = \$795/month
- Pre school unit	One staff/8 preschoolers = \$820/month
- School-age unit	One staff/12 school-age children = \$1,010/month

Training funds are allocated on hours worked, to a maximum of 40 hours per week per staff. The hourly rates are as follows:

- Level I	\$1.00
- Level IA	1.90
- Level II	2.60
- Level IIA	3.80
- Level III	5.00

Building costs

Each \$50/month spent on rent and utilities is worth one point which is multiplied by \$16.00 per point.

Centres and family day homes that provide a hot lunch and two snacks a day receive additional funding included in the unit funding to assist with the costs. Child care centres receive an extra amount per unit as follows:

- Infant unit	\$40
- Toddler unit	60
- Preschool unit	80
- School-age unit	120

Family day homes receive an extra \$10.00 per month per child.

*See RECENT DEVELOPMENTS section for details of changes from a point system to this new unit funding and hourly training grant.

TERRITORIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2007/08)

Fee subsidies	\$3,354,284
One-time funding*	100,000
Recurring funding	2,915,000
Supported Child Care funding	40,000
Total	\$6,409,284

*includes capital development and start up

Other funding

The Whitehorse Child Development Centre received \$1,484,189 from the government of Yukon to provide a range of services in regulated and unregulated child care.

Note: Some funding from the social assistance budget is spent on child care. This includes covering the cost of parent surcharges above the subsidy rates and up to \$3/hour in unregulated care if regulated care is not available.

SALARIES

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

Level 1	-\$14.00
Level 2	17.40
Level 3	19.60
Director	-20.00

Source: Information provided by territorial officials from centre direct operating grant reporting forms.

Family child care

Information not available.

FEES

Median monthly parent fees for centre-based full-time care

Infants (0-17 months)	\$620
Toddlers (18 months-3 years)	550
Preschoolers (3 years-5.11 years)	520
School-age	275

Source: Information provided by territorial officials.

Average daily fee in family child care

Approximately the same as in centre-based care.

ADMINISTRATION

Under the Department of Health and Social Services, the Child Care Services Unit is responsible for licensing and monitoring child care, and for fee subsidy administration.

MUNICIPAL AND OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROLE

Legislation permits municipalities to hold licenses to directly operate child care programs although none do so.

CHILD CARE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Information not available.

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.

2001

According to territorial officials, the majority of centres did not meet the requirements for trained staff in the regulations and were granted exemptions.

Eligibility for fee subsidy was expanded and family child care providers became eligible for the hot lunch component of the operating grant.

In response to the *You Bet I Care!* study, the Minister of Health and Social Services asked Yukon Child Care Board to explore the Yukon results and to identify ways to improve the cognitive, language and social development of Yukon children. As a first step, the Board distributed a survey to all licensed child care programs in the fall of 2001 to explore program supports and resources needed to help children's development.

Early Childhood Development Initiative allocation for the Yukon was \$300,000. \$90,000 was allocated to the Child Development Centre. The balance was allocated to the Healthy Families Initiative, which provides in-home assistance and education to new parents, universal screening at birth, and intensive follow-up services where necessary.

2002 The capital budget was increased by \$50,000 for improved playground equipment and to address health and safety concerns in child care centres.

2003 The Minister of Health and Social Services appointed a time-limited child care working group in response to issues identified by child care stakeholders. The working group was tasked with developing recommendations for a four-year plan to address these issues. In the fall 2003 a four-year plan was submitted to the Minister for consideration. During the development of this plan an additional \$460,000 was allocated to child care: \$230,000 for wages and \$230,000 for set-up spaces. Set-up space funding helps stabilize centres by offsetting the revenue resulting from fluctuations in enrolment.

2004

In response to the four-year plan, the Government of Yukon increased the base budget for child care by \$675,000 with a 3-5% increase anticipated for subsequent years. This amount was to be split evenly between wages for child care workers and operational costs of facilities.

The government added \$10,000 to the Supported Child Care Fund, with an increase of \$5,000 in each of the next two years announced. This fund is to help operators provide supports for children with special needs.

Additional funding to meet identified needs in the plan include the Capital Development Fund, with monies to be provided in each of the next two years. As well, \$45,000 was made available to host an annual child care stakeholder meeting, undertake a public awareness campaign on the importance of quality child care, and develop and maintain a web page to allow child care educators and parents access to current child care information.

2005

As per the four year plan, the Direct Operating Grant was increased by 3% in the 2005/06 fiscal year, and there was increased funding for supported child care and continued funding to implement the public awareness campaign and annual stakeholders meeting.

The wage subsidy in the Direct Operating Grant Program was increased by 5%.

Yukon received \$0.7 million through the Early Learning and Child Care Agreement in 2005/06 and \$0.6 million in 2006/07.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

2007

\$5 million for child care over the next five years in the form of fee subsidies, wage enhancements and training was announced.

2008

In 2008 there was a:

- 30 % increase to funding for child care wages;
- 8 % increase to the turning points for child care subsidy;
- 25% increase to the maximum amounts paid under the child care subsidy program;
- the tax-back rate where a parent starts to pay changed from 50% to 25%.

Operating grants used to be based on a point system and were provided in three categories: age and enrolment of children, training of staff, and building occupancy. In October 2007 the Direct Operating Grant was changed from a point system to a Unit Funding Model.

The wage component of the grant was increased by 36% and changed to reflect the number of hours worked to a maximum of 40 hours per week.

KEY TERRITORIAL ECEC ORGANIZATIONS

Yukon Child Care Association
P.O. Box 31103
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 6L3
Telephone: (867) 668-5130
Facsimile: (867) 633-3940
Website: www.yukonchildcareassociation.com

Society of Yukon Family Day Homes
12 Tutshi Road
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 3R3
Telephone: (867) 668-6349
Facsimile: (867) 393-3902
Website: www.yukonfamilydayhomes.com

TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

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