

Northwest Territories

TERRITORIAL CONTEXT

Number of children 0-12 yrs

Information not available.

Children 0-12 yrs with mothers in the paid labour force

Information not available.

Children 0-14 identifying with an Aboriginal group (1996)

Age	North American Indian	Métis	Inuit
0-4	1,650	405	3,795
5-9	1,665	390	3,760
10-14	1,400	330	3,030

Note: These 1996 data are the most recent currently available.

Children 0-9 with disabilities residing at home (1991 estimate)

	0-9 yrs
Use of technical aid	123
Speech difficulty	176
Developmental handicap	40

Note: These 1991 estimates are the most recent currently available. These 1991 data include Nunavut.

Workforce participation of women by age of youngest child

Information not available

FAMILY-RELATED LEAVE

Maternity leave

17 weeks.

Parental leave

37 weeks may be shared between the parents. 52 weeks is the maximum allowed for combined maternity and parental leave.

Adoption leave

37 weeks.

Births and EI maternity claims

Number of births (2000): 673

Number of initial maternity claims allowed (2000-2001): 350

Note: Territorial leaves are unpaid. The federal government pays for some portions under Employment Insurance. See federal ecec programs for more information.

KINDERGARTEN

LEGISLATION

Northwest Territories. Legislative Assembly. *Education Act*, R.S.N.W.T. 1995, c. 28.

TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

The territories and three provinces continue to fund and deliver denominational education. Both “public” and Catholic school boards are publicly funded.

KINDERGARTEN SERVICES

Kindergarten is delivered in public and private schools.

It is available to all five year olds in the Northwest Territories on a part-time basis. There is a maximum of 570 hours and a minimum of 485 hours of instructional hours a year; within this, decisions about hours are made by school boards.

Kindergarten is not compulsory in the Northwest Territories. Access is legislated.

AGE ELIGIBILITY

Five years old by December 31.

CLASS SIZE

There is no provincial class size limit.

There is no provincial policy regarding teaching assistants. However, student support funding is provided to school boards based on the number of students and the school board makes the decisions regarding assistants.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

There is a policy of inclusion of children with special needs. Children have access to the education program in a regular instructional classroom setting. Boards are required to provide support to make this possible through School Support funding. There is an exemption for children with extreme needs (e.g. medical); the child may be in treatment centre instead of classroom.

The number of kindergarten children with identified special needs is not available.

KINDERGARTEN ENROLLMENT

Five year olds (2001): 792

TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

B.Ed. is required, or a two or three year certificate or diploma in teacher education (in this case, the teacher must continue course work to obtain B.Ed).

There is a kindergarten specialist certificate (two year ECE plus one year teacher training, though no one has this as there is no one year teacher training).

CURRICULUM

There is a territorial curriculum, A Start in Something New (circa 1978). The program focuses on integration and is multidisciplinary and theme-based.

SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN (2001)

Average spending per kindergarten student

\$4,570

Total territorial spending on kindergarten

\$3.6 million

SPECIAL FEATURES

There is block funding to school boards for Aboriginal Language and Culture. In some places Aboriginal Head-Start is becoming the other half-day of kindergarten.

REGULATED CHILD CARE

LEGISLATION

Northwest Territories. Legislative Assembly. The North-west Territories Child Day Care Act and the Child Day Care Standards and Regulations 1988.

TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

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CHILD CARE SERVICES

UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

Unregulated family child care

Maximum number of children permitted: 4

Figure includes the caregiver's own children up to 12 years.

REGULATED CHILD CARE

Day care centres

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

Nursery schools

Programs for children less than six years of age for four consecutive hours or less a day.

After-school care

Care outside school hours for school-aged children up to and including 11 years of age, not exceeding five hours outside the required school program.

Note: There are no licensed after-school care programs that operate during the summer months.

Family day homes

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

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

There are no segregated child care programs for children with special needs.

Care providers are funded to provide extra support and parents are eligible for fee assistance for their children with special needs even if they are not employed or at school. This subsidy eligibility requires a financial needs assessment and a medical referral from a recognized health care official for the child to be in developmental care.

ABORIGINAL CHILD CARE

All of the Northwest Territories is comprised of Inuit and Dene communities. There are five licensed child care centres/day homes in five Inuit communities; 35 licensed child care centres/day homes in 19 Dene communities; and 36 licensed child care centres/day homes operating in Yellowknife. This represents the total supply of child care in the Northwest Territories.

SPACE STATISTICS

Number of regulated child care spaces (2001)

Spaces are in 49 centres and 27 day homes.

Centres

Infant spaces (0-2 years)	59
Preschool spaces (2-5 years)	807
After-school spaces (6-12 years)	152
Total	1018

Note: All centres are licensed for full time spaces, even though many operate as part-day nursery schools/playschools.

Family child care

Infants (0-2 years)	54
Preschool spaces (2-5 years)	108
After-school spaces (6-12 years)	54
Total	216
Total regulated spaces	1234

Note: Since the last version of this publication that used 1998 data, the Northwest Territories was divided, creating the new territory, Nunavut (1999). Some of the Northwest Territories' child care spaces (1998) are now in Nunavut.

Number of children with special needs in regulated child care (2001)

Information not available.

Number of children receiving subsidies (2001)

Information not available.

Subsidized children as a proportion of total spaces (2001)

Information not available.

Sponsorship of regulated centre spaces (2001)

Non-profit 1,018

STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

REGULATED CENTRES

Maximum centre size

Not specified

Maximum staff:child ratios and group sizes

Age	Staff:child ratios	Max. group sizes
0-12 mos	1:3	6
13-24 mos	1:4	8
25-35 mos	1:6	12
3 yrs	1:8	16
4 yrs	1:9	18
5-11 yrs	1:10	20

Staff qualification requirements

Must be at least 19 years of age and have a first-aid certificate and a clear criminal record with regard to offences respecting a child.

There are no early childhood training requirements.

Parent involvement

The legislation requires non-profit programs to have boards of directors with at least 51% parent members. For-profit programs are required to establish and confirm in writing with the Director of Early Childhood and School Services a plan for involving the parents or guardians of children attending the centre in the operation of the program.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Licenses may be granted for 3-5 years, often issued in conjunction with annual inspections, which are conducted of all licensed child care centres by an Early Childhood Officer or Consultant from the Early Childhood Program, the Public Health Department, and Fire Marshall's office.

The Early Childhood Officer is required to have a background in early childhood education.

REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE

Regulation

Individually licensed.

Maximum capacity

Maximum of eight children under 12 years (including the provider's own children). No more than six of the eight children may be five years or under, no more than three children may be under three years, and no more than two children may be under two years.

Provider qualification requirements

A provider must be a minimum of 19 years of age and have a first-aid certificate and a clear criminal record with regard to offences respecting a child.

There are no early childhood training requirements.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

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

FUNDING**CHILD CARE FEE SUBSIDY PROGRAM**

Fee subsidy is paid directly to service providers on behalf of eligible parents if child care is a regulated service. In the case of unregulated care, the subsidy is paid to the parent based on an attendance report signed by the child care provider.

The intention of the subsidy program is to provide assistance for the parent to work or take part in a training program. Eligibility is determined by a needs assessment that takes into consideration parent costs and family size as well as income.

Subsidies are payable to any regulated for-profit or non-profit service or for an unregulated arrangement. Payments for unregulated care are made directly to the parents.

Eligibility for fee subsidy

Eligibility varies according to the number of family members, actual shelter costs, community of residence, and eligibility for enhanced benefits such as disability allowance, educational expenses. These needs are based on Income Assistance Program schedules.

A needs assessment is applied so there is no set break-even point. There is no territory-wide maximum subsidy. Maxi-mums are set for the type of care. There is no minimum user fee.

PUBLIC FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2001)**One-time funding***Start-up funding*

Available to non-profit licensed centres and family day homes, including part-time, infant, after-school and special needs spaces. Funding ranges from \$188-\$3,420/space. The rates are set by the Income Support Division of the Department of Health and Social Services. There are ten different rates based on the cost of living in different parts of the territory.

Operating funding

Available to non-profit, licensed centres and family day homes from \$1.25-\$14.25/occupied space/day, depending on the age of the child and the location of the program. For example, in Yellowknife an infant space receives \$7.50/day and a preschool space \$5.00; in Aktavik the rates are \$10.50 and \$7.00 respectively; and in Paulatuk they are \$14.25 and \$9.50. Family child care homes and centres receive the same amounts in operating grants.

Operating funding is available on a first-come first-served basis and there may be waiting lists.

TERRITORIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2001)

Fee subsidies	\$822,000*	
Start-up and operating grants		780,000**
Total	\$1,602,000	

*The fee subsidy budget includes spending on both regulated and unregulated child care.

**Breakdown between one-time start-up and ongoing operating grants is not available.

SALARIES

Mean gross hourly wage for centre-based child care staff (full- and part-time staff combined) (1998)

Assistant teachers	\$12.07
Teachers	13.40
Teacher-directors	19.32
Administrative directors	n/a

Source: *You Bet I Care!* Current information is not available.

Family child care

Information not available.

FEES

Median monthly parent fees for centre-based full-time care (2001)

Infants and preschool average	\$600/month
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Source: *Reported by territorial officials.*

Average daily fee in family child care

Information not available.

ADMINISTRATION

The Early Childhood Program of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment is responsible for the development of standards, the regulation of child care services, fee subsidy administration, contributions to child care programs and the development of a territorial child care system.

MUNICIPAL OR OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROLE

There is no local government role.

CHILD CARE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

There is no territorial plan for the development of child care. New centres must complete a needs assessment before they are eligible to apply for start-up funding.

OTHER RELATED SERVICES

With funding from Early Childhood and School Services, the Catholic School Board in Yellowknife offers a 4+ program. The program is licensed as a 35 space nursery school and operates for 2 1/2 hours per day. It

is available to children with developmental delays to prepare them for the formal school system. Children do not have to attend schools within the Catholic School Board to participate. There are no user fees.

The Dogrib Community Services Board, which delivers services to four Dogrib communities, pools all the early childhood funding from all levels of government. Funding from Community Action Program for Children (CAPC), Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP), Aboriginal Head Start, child care, and any other sources that may be available is then allocated to develop locally responsive early childhood programs.

HISTORY OF CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

1971 First child care centre to receive territorial government funding was opened in Iqaluit (then known as Frobisher Bay). It taught children in both English and Inuktitut syllabics and had four Inuit child care workers.

1970s Child care centres set up at the instigation of parents and community members. Funding was generally through federal government Local Initiative Project (LIP) grants with some user subsidy for parents in need from the territorial government.

1974 *The Policy Respecting Day Care Services* noted that while numerous child care services were in operation, only two were receiving operational financial support from the territory (the original centre in Iqaluit and a second centre in Yellowknife).

1976 The territory finalized a policy on fee subsidies for child care centres, family child care and after-school programs.

1980 The territory adopted the *Policy Respecting Subsidized Day Care* in the Northwest Territories, which considered costs and income to determine eligibility for subsidization of children in unregulated child care.

1983 Establishment of the Northwest Territories Child Care Association which circulated voluntary standards for child care centres.

1985 The territorial government hired a Day Care Consultant to review child care issues and make recommendations.

1988 The government enacted its first child care legislation, *The Northwest Territories Child Day Care Act*. The Advisory Council on the Status of Women released a policy paper, *Position Paper on Child Care*, which outlined a comprehensive program to develop a system of child care services. The first early childhood education training program in the Northwest Territories was opened in Arctic College in Iqaluit and was delivered in both English and Inuktitut.

1989 A consultant was hired by the Native Council of Canada to research the specific child care needs of native peoples in the Northwest Territories. The Interim Day Care program came into force in April.

1993 Child care responsibilities were moved from the Department of Social Services to the Department of Education, Culture and Employment.

1996 The major initiative was early intervention.

1997 The Healthy Children Initiative was launched to provide funding to communities to enhance existing early childhood programs and services for children aged 0-6. As well, the licensing and monitoring function was decentralized to five regions. With decentralization and additional staffing, the function of licensing staff moved away from a strictly monitoring role to more of a program development focus.

April 1, 1999 The territory of Nunavut was created and responsibility for all programs in the Eastern Arctic moved to the new territory. Initially, Nunavut adopted the child care legislation and regulations of the Northwest Territories.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

2001 The Early Childhood Development Framework for Action and Action Plan were launched. The Framework identifies key priorities for the enhancement of existing early childhood programs, including licensed child care. The Northwest Territories allocated \$2 million to the Framework for Action, which was supplemented by the Early Childhood Development Initiative allocation of \$400,000.

April 1, 2002 Operating contributions were increased. Operational funding is available to non-profit, licensed centres and family day homes from \$2.00-\$22.80/occupied space/day, depending on the age of the child and the location of the program.

KEY TERRITORIAL ECEC ORGANIZATIONS

Not available at this time.

TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Northwest Territories Teachers' Association
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