



PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

Number of children 0-12 yrs (2005 rounded estimate)

| Age | Number of children |
|-------|--------------------|
| 0 | 8,600 |
| 1 | 7,700 |
| 2 | 8,300 |
| 3 | 8,100 |
| 4 | 8,600 |
| 5 | 9,600 |
| 6 | 9,700 |
| 7 | 10,500 |
| 8 | 9,500 |
| 9 | 10,900 |
| 10 | 11,200 |
| 11 | 10,700 |
| 12 | 12,300 |
| Total | 125,700 |

Number of children 0-12 yrs (2005 rounded estimate)

| Age | Number of children |
|-------|--------------------|
| 0-2 | 24,600 |
| 3-5 | 26,300 |
| 6-12 | 74,800 |
| Total | 125,700 |

Children 0-12 yrs with mothers in the paid labour force (2005 rounded estimate)

| Age | Number of children |
|-------|--------------------|
| 0 | 5,700 |
| 1 | 5,100 |
| 2 | 5,600 |
| 3 | 5,100 |
| 4 | 5,400 |
| 5 | 6,500 |
| 6 | 5,900 |
| 7 | 6,700 |
| 8 | 6,400 |
| 9 | 7,400 |
| 10 | 8,100 |
| 11 | 7,300 |
| 12 | 8,600 |
| Total | 83,900 |

Children 0-12 yrs with mothers in the paid labour force (2005 rounded estimate)

| Age | Number of children |
|-------|--------------------|
| 0-2 | 16,400 |
| 3-5 | 17,000 |
| 6-12 | 50,500 |
| Total | 83,900 |

Children 0-14 yrs identifying with an Aboriginal group (2001)

| Age | North American Indian | Metis | Inuit | Multiple | Other | Total |
|-------|-----------------------|-------|-------|----------|-------|-------|
| 0-4 | 1,470 | 255 | 45 | 0 | 30 | 1,800 |
| 5-9 | 1,530 | 270 | 35 | 0 | 40 | 1,875 |
| 10-14 | 1,440 | 220 | 20 | 0 | 50 | 1,730 |
| Total | 4,440 | 745 | 100 | 0 | 120 | 5,405 |

Children 0-14 yrs with disabilities (2001)

| Age | Number of children with disabilities | Rate of children with disabilities (%) |
|-------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 0-4 | 630 | 1.3 |
| 5-9 | 2,340 | 4.3 |
| 10-14 | 3,250 | 5.3 |
| Total | 6,210 | 3.8 |

Note: Total may not add up due to rounding.

Number of children by marital status of families (2001)

| Age | Children in couple families | Children in lone parent families (with lone mothers) | (with lone fathers) | |
|-------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------|
| 0-4 | 37,600 | 9,615 | 8,640 | 975 |
| 5-9 | 43,090 | 12,480 | 11,135 | 1,350 |
| 10-14 | 47,815 | 13,450 | 11,625 | 1,825 |
| Total | 128,505 | 35,545 | 31,400 | 4,150 |

Number of children by mother tongue (2001)

| Age | English | French | Non-official language |
|-------|---------|--------|-----------------------|
| 0-4 | 44,930 | 900 | 1,090 |
| 5-9 | 53,305 | 1,100 | 1,190 |
| 10-14 | 59,010 | 1,160 | 1,345 |
| Total | 157,245 | 3,160 | 3,625 |

Number and percentage of children living in families below the LICO (2004)

| Age | Number | Percent (%) |
|-------|--------|-------------|
| 0-2 | 6,050 | 22.1 |
| 3-5 | 6,520 | 24.9 |
| 6-17 | 21,230 | 15.9 |
| Total | 33,790 | 18.1 |

Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2005 rounded estimate)

| Age of youngest child | Number of mothers | Participation rate (%) |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 0-2 | 16,300 | 76.2 |
| 3-5 | 12,500 | 76.7 |
| 6-15 | 45,200 | 81.6 |

FAMILY-RELATED LEAVE

Pregnancy leave

Seventeen weeks

Parental leave

Both parents are entitled to 52 weeks which must be taken within 12 months of the child's birth. Thirty-five weeks for birth mothers who have taken pregnancy/maternity leave.

Adoption leave

Fifty-two weeks

Births and EI maternity and parental claims (2005)

| | |
|--------------------------------------------|------------|
| Number of births | 8,617 |
| Birth rate per 1,000 population | 9.2 |
| Number of initial maternity claims allowed | 5,180 |
| Average length of maternity claim | 14.5 weeks |
| Number of parental claims | 5,720 |
| Average length of parental claim | 27.6 weeks |
| Number of adoptive parent claims | 130 |
| Average length of adoptive claim | 22.5 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 \$423/week. See FEDERAL ECEC PROGRAMS for more information.

KINDERGARTEN

LEGISLATION

Nova Scotia. Legislative Assembly. *Education Act and Regulation*. 1995-96. Amended 1998, 2000, 2002.

Nova Scotia. Legislative Assembly. *Pre-primary Education Act*. Chapter 44 of the Acts of 2005. Proclaimed March 24, 2006.

PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten contact
Ann Blackwood
Director of Curriculum Development
English Program Services Division, Department of Education
PO Box 578

Halifax, NS B3J 2S9
Telephone: 902-424-5745
Facsimilie: 902-424-0820
Email: BLACKWAA@gov.ns.ca
Website: <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/>

Note: Updated information was not provided by Nova Scotia. Some current information was available through other sources and has been used where available; sources are at the end of this section. Nova Scotia kindergarten information may therefore be incomplete.

KINDERGARTEN SERVICES

GRADE PRIMARY

Grade Primary is delivered in public and private schools. It is available to all five year olds in Nova Scotia on a full-time basis (a minimum of four hours/day are required for Grade Primary to Grade 2).

Grade Primary is an entitlement and is compulsory in Nova Scotia.

AGE ELIGIBILITY

Five years old before October 1

CLASS SIZE

Class size limit of 25 for Grade Primary to Grade 2.

Average/mean class size (2005/06): 22.4. (for all elementary grades). Information specific to Grade Primary not available.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

There is a policy of including children with special needs in the least restrictive setting. Extra support is available and children have Individual Program Plans (IPPs). Resources such as assistants and technology are provided. A per pupil special education grant is available to school boards.

In 2003/04, 287 students (approximately 3% of all Grade Primary students) had IPPs. (Current data are not available.)

ENROLMENT (2005-06)

There were 540 classes of Grade Primary. This includes multi-grade classes.

Number of children enrolled in Grade Primary (one year before Grade 1)

Public: 9,056 (public)

Private: 269 (private)

Total: 9,325

Number of children enrolled in 4 Plus Program in Halifax (two years before Grade 1) (See SPECIAL FEATURES) 97

Number of children enrolled in Pre-Primary Pilot Program (See RECENT DEVELOPMENTS) 119

KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

Qualification requirements: A valid teaching certificate is required. An Initial Teacher's Certificate is granted upon completion of a minimum of five years of undergraduate education including three years of approved undergraduate studies, two years of an approved program of professional studies including a practicum, and receipt of an approved Bachelor's degree from a recognized university.

Responsibility for certification: Registrar, Teacher Certification, Department of Education.

Representation: Nova Scotia Teachers' Union.

Professional Development: Every teacher who has a probationary or permanent contract with a school board must complete 100 contract hours of professional development every five years and maintain a professional development profile to be submitted to the school board annually.

Average salary (2003/04): Information not available.

In 2003/04 there were 604 full-time kindergarten teachers. (Current data are not available.)

CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

Title: Teacher Assistant

Qualifications: High school diploma or equivalent

Role: Working with students who have IPPs under direction of supervising teacher and as a support for the instructional program.

CURRICULUM

There is a provincial kindergarten curriculum, Foundation for Grade Primary. The focus is on the transition from home to school, on the foundations for lifelong learning and on fostering development in all areas. Specific curriculum outcomes in all areas are included.

MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

Information not available

SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR KINDERGARTEN

Funded by province from general revenues and mandatory property taxes collected by municipalities. Generally, this funding represents approximately 97% of school board revenues, with the remainder being board-generated. The province does not provide funding to private schools. (Current data are not available.)

PUBLIC SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN 2003/04

Average spending per kindergarten student

Information not available.

Total spending on kindergarten

Information not available

SPECIAL FEATURES

The Halifax Regional School Board funds a Pre-Grade Primary initiative – "4 Plus" – targeted to children at risk. Presently there are seven "4 Plus" sites; these programs are taught by certified teachers.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN KINDERGARTEN

In the fall of 2005, a Pre-Primary Pilot Program was launched with new provincial funding for 19 pilot sites. The program is being piloted in all eight school boards and has been developed in partnership with the departments of Community Services and Health, and Nova Scotia Health Promotion. The pilot program will run for two years, providing four-year-olds with an early childhood learning experience that is intended to help them adapt to Grade Primary more easily. The program is voluntary and free of charge. It is expected that about 720 children will attend the program during the pilot phase.

Fourteen of the 19 pilot sites opened in fall 2005 and are operational in schools in Annapolis Valley, Cape Breton-Victoria, Conseil scolaire acadien provincial, Strait, Tri-County and Chignecto-Central regional school board districts. The remaining five pilot programs – four located in the Halifax Regional School Board and the fifth in the South Shore Regional School Board – was launched in early 2006. Care was taken by boards to place the pilots in schools where classroom space is available and access to community-based child care is limited.

Each pilot site offers a full-day, activity-based program for up to 18 children. Emphasis is on developing social skills, familiarizing children with the school structure, and helping them acquire the foundation skills they will need to read, write and learn mathematics. The program also provides experiences in the arts and physical activity. Each classroom is staffed by two qualified early childhood educators.

School boards will have the opportunity to make recommendations to government on the future of the program. The pilot project will be evaluated at the end of the 2006/07 school year. This pre-primary pilot program is part of Learning For Life II, the province's new plan for education.

Note: The following sources were used to gather available data and other information. It was not possible to collect data using a questionnaire in NS.

- Current data on class size and enrolment: Statistics and Data Management, Department of Education.
- Department of Education Accountability Report 2004-2005. <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/businessplan/accountability-report-2004-2005.pdf>

- Department of Education Accountability Report 2005-2006. <http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/businessplan/accountability-report-2005-2006.pdf>
- News release: Nova Scotia Announces Pre-Primary Pilot Program, October 25, 2005 12:33 <http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20051025002>
- News release: Nova Scotia Launches Pre-Primary Pilot Program, December 1, 2005 11:07 <http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20051201003>

REGULATED CHILD CARE

LEGISLATION

Nova Scotia. Legislative Assembly. *Day Care Act*. Chapter 120, of the Revised Statutes, 1989. R.S., c. 120, s. 1. *Day Care Regulations* made under Section 15 of the *Day Care Act*, amended to N.S. Reg. 202/2004

PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

Virginia O'Connell
Director
Early Childhood Development Services
Department of Community Services
P.O. Box 696
Halifax, NS B3J 2T7
Telephone: (902) 424-5489
Facsimile: (902) 424-0708
Email: oonneva@gov.ns.ca
Website: http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/families/early_childhood.html

CHILD CARE SERVICES

UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

Unregulated family child care

Maximum number of children permitted: Six children who may be of mixed-age groups, including the caregiver's own preschool children. If all children including the caregiver's own are school-age, eight children are permitted.

REGULATED CHILD CARE

Child care centres

Care in a group setting for less than 24 hours/day for seven or more children from 0-12 years. This includes full-day child care centres, preschools, nursery schools and programs for school-age children.

Child Development Centres (CDCs)

CDCs were established to provide a part-day preschool experience to enhance opportunities for children's development as they prepare for school entry. These non-profit centres receive a grant which cannot exceed 50% of their operating costs. In order to qualify for a grant, a percentage of the families of children enrolled must qualify for assistance under established income guidelines (the former Canada Assistance Plan guidelines). These income guidelines are higher than those that must be met to qualify for regular child care subsidy. The director of the CDC administers the income test and keeps the information on file as required for licensing inspections.

Centres establish their own fees, which are often on a sliding scale according to family income. The amount of funding is generally based on past allocations and not formula-based on capacity or actual costs. There are 26 programs in 31 locations.

Family child care

Care in a private home for up to six children of mixed ages including the provider's own children, or eight school-age children including the provider's own school-age children.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Licensed child care centres may receive Supported Child Care (SCC) funding to support the inclusion of children with special needs who have developmental delays or behavioural issues that require intervention. The number of centres participating in Supported Child Care has increased, and the average cost per child allocated for SCC has increased in the last two years. The funding is intended to cover the additional costs of including children with special needs in child care programs. Funds may be used towards the salary of an early childhood special educator or to purchase materials, equipment or resources. The level of support required by the child while attending a child care facility is determined in consultation with the centre director and the department's

regional Early Childhood Development Officers. Facilities can assign an employee currently at the centre to facilitate inclusion and use Supported Child Care funding to hire additional staff to enable an enhanced ratio.

Eligibility is based on evidence of the child's disability. Parents of children with special needs are not income tested for additional supports. The funding depends on availability and is not an entitlement.

Supported Child Care funding is not available in family child care but may be available in part-day child care centres.

ABORIGINAL CHILD CARE

Development of on-reserve child care as part of the First Nations/Inuit Child Care Initiative is the responsibility of the Nova Scotia Tri-Partite Social Working Committee: Child Care Facilities and Licensing Agreement Sub-Committee. There are 13 on-reserve child care centres with 248 spaces. Centres follow provincial regulations but are not provincially licensed or funded.

SPACE STATISTICS (2005/06) (MARCH 2006)

Number of regulated child care spaces

| | |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------|
| <i>Centre-based</i> | |
| Full-day | 9,859 |
| Part-day | 2,964 |
| <i>Family child care</i> | 159 |
| Total number of regulated spaces | 12,982 |

Figure 3. Number of regulated spaces in NS, 1992-2006



Children with special needs in regulated child care 516

Note: All children with special needs attending child care programs may not be captured in this number as an application to obtain SCC funding is not necessary for every child with special needs attending.

Number of children receiving subsidies 2,804

Note: There are 2,885 subsidized child care spaces. Of these, 2,276 spaces are allocated to specific non-profit centres and 609 portable spaces may be used in both for-profit or non-profit centres and follow the child.

Number of centres and homes

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Number of child care centres | 383 |
| Full day | 228 |
| Part-day nursery schools/preschools | 144 |
| Stand-alone after school programs | 11 |
| Number of family child care agencies March 2006 | 4 |
| Number of family child care providers | 32 |

Sponsorship of full-time regulated centre spaces (2006)

| | Full-time | Part-time | Total |
|------------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| Non-profit | 5,179 | 1,745 | 6,924 |
| For-profit | 4,680 | 1,219 | 5,899 |
| Total | 9,859 | 2,964 | 12,823 |

Openings and closings (2005/06)

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| New child care centre licenses issued | 26 |
| Number of child care centre closures | 26 |
| Number of new licenses issued to family child care agencies | 0 |
| Number of family child care agencies that ceased providing care | 1 |

STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

REGULATED CENTRES

Maximum staff:child ratios and group sizes

| Age | Staff:child ratios | Max. group sizes |
|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| 0-17 mos | 1:4 | 10 |
| 18 mos-35 mos | 1:6 | 18 |
| 36 mos-5 yrs (full-day) | 1:8 | not specified |
| 30 mos-5 yrs (part-day) | 1:12 | not specified |
| 5-12 yrs | 1:15 | 30 |

Note: Group size is not specified for full-day and part-day pre-school programs; however, the Day Care Regulations state that “no more than 25 children shall be in a room or a specified play area at any one time for rest or play”.

Staff qualification requirements

The centre director and 2/3 of the staff must have completed a training program in early childhood education or its equivalent. To be considered equivalent, staff must have completed grade 12, have a minimum of two years experience in a child care centre and have successful completion of a full credit course of two semesters of post-secondary education in at least one of the following:

- human growth and development with an emphasis on the young child;
- curriculum development and implementation of programs for young children in child care centres.

In addition, the regulation requires: successful completion of a full credit course of two semesters in a post-secondary education program in at least one of the following areas, and successful completion of 25 hours in training programs, seminars or workshops in other area not completed by way of post-secondary education.

- Human growth and development with an emphasis on the young child;
- Curriculum development and implementation of programs for young children in child care facilities.

Note: Workshops that are directly related to planning the child care curriculum are also offered at conferences. These workshops may be considered as meeting the requirements of equivalency (as stated above).

Parent involvement

Parent meetings must be held at least four times in a year for full-day programs and twice a year for part-day programs.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Initial and ongoing inspections are conducted by provincial Early Childhood Development Officers (ECDOs). ECDOs require education, experience and expertise in early childhood education, child development or special needs.

Licenses can be issued for up to 24 months for part-day programs and up to 12 months for full-day programs. If a centre is not in compliance with the Day Care Act and Regulations, written communication of the enforcement requirements and the compliance dates are sent to the program (centre) director and/or to the operator. The non-compliance will be documented and conditions may be attached to a license requiring that the violations be corrected. To assist the centre with compliance, the department's Compliance/Enforcement Policy provides guidelines related to this process.

If the centre fails to meet the legislative requirements in this period, the Day Care Act and Regulation authorizes the Minister to cancel or not renew the license. A license may not be renewed if there is evidence of a threat to the health or safety of children, or if there is a pattern of non-compliance to regulations that impacts on the physical, social, emotional, or intellectual development of children.

Health inspections are conducted by inspectors from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. Fire inspections are conducted by the Department of Environment and Labour.

REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE

Regulation

Family child care providers are supervised by licensed agencies.

Maximum capacity

Up to six children of mixed ages including the provider's own preschool children, or up to eight school-age children including the provider's own school-age children.

Provider qualification requirements

Providers must be at least 18 years, be screened through the Child Abuse Register and have undergone a criminal record check by the RCMP or local police. No early childhood training or experience is required.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Family child care agency staff must have early childhood education qualifications as per the provincial regulations.

The agency is responsible for recruiting, screening and selecting providers, and for approving and monitoring homes. Provincial Early Childhood Development Officers (ECDOs) conduct annual visits and evaluations of agencies to confirm adherence to provincial guidelines for child care homes.

FUNDING

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

Fee subsidies are paid directly to service providers on behalf of families eligible for the Child Care Subsidy Program. Subsidy is available at full-day licensed child care centres or family child care agencies. Eligibility for subsidy is determined by evaluating three primary areas of eligibility: social need, financial assets, and family income.

Prior to 2000, only non-profit centres operated by community-based organizations and family child care agencies could enrol children receiving subsidies. In 2000, the province introduced portable subsidies which are assigned to the child, not to the child care centre, and may be used in any eligible licensed full-day child care centre, non-profit and for-profit. Since 2000, all new subsidized spaces are portable.

Programs may surcharge subsidized parents if costs are above the maximum subsidy rate; they must charge full fee parents at least the same as subsidized parents.

Eligibility for fee subsidy (net income, 2004)

| | Turning point | Break-even point |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1 parent, 1 child | \$16,800 | \$24,912 |
| 2 parents, 2 children | 17,700 | 34,992 |

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 (2005/06)*

| | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Infants to 17 mos. | \$19.75/day for first child in the family; \$22.00/day for additional children |
| Toddlers | \$17.75/day for first child in the family; \$20.00/day for additional children |
| Preschoolers | \$16.75/day for first child in the family; \$19.00/day for additional children |

| | |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| School-age | \$15.45/day for first child in the family; \$18.00/day for additional children |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Note: Nova Scotia includes the minimum parent fee of \$2.25 per family per day in its subsidy rate. In order to be comparable to other provinces and territories, the lower rate, which does not include the minimum parent fee is used in comparative tables in this report.

PUBLIC FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2005/06)

The following recurring funding is available:

- *Salary enhancement grant:* \$3.25/day/approved regular subsidized space multiplied by the number of operating days
- *Equipment grant:* Funds allocated at the rate of \$0.50 per day per regulated subsidized space up to 260 days maximum per year
- *Infrastructure grant:* \$0.25 per day per licensed space up to 260 days maximum per year
- *Infant care grant:* \$4.69/day/infant in a centre; \$1.58/day/infant in a family child care home
- *Child Development Centre grant:* Annual operating grants, which cannot exceed 50% of the centre's approved operating budget
- *Child Care Stabilization Grant:* To improve wages and assist in attracting/retaining quality staff, \$4,000/yr/per trained staff and \$1,000/yr/untrained staff according to staff: child ratios in regulation. At least 80% must be spent on salaries; up to 20% may be spent on benefits and professional development
- *Family child care administration grant:* Available to licensed family day care agencies. The grant is either 10% of the approved per diem fee or \$0.50 per day per licensed space
- *Supported Child Care funding:* Special needs are described as either a developmental delay or behavioural issue presented by the child that requires intervention. Eligibility is based on evidence of the child's disability. This grant depends on availability of funding. The level of support required by the child while attending a child care facility is determined in consultation with the centre director and Early Childhood Development Officer. Facilities can assign an employee currently at the centre to facilitate inclusion and use Supported Child Care funding to hire an additional staff to enable an enhanced ratio.

Eligibility for recurring funding:

Full-day non-profit programs licensed before June 2000

Equipment grant
 Infant care grant
 Infrastructure grant
 Salary enhancement grant
 Supported Child Care funding
 Family child care administration grant
 Child care stabilization grant

Full-day non-profit centres licensed after June 2000

Infant care grant
 Infrastructure grant
 Supported Child Care funding
 Child care stabilization grant

Full-day for-profit centres

Supported Child Care funding
 Child care stabilization grant

Child Development Centres

Child Development Centre grant

PROVINCIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR LICENSED CHILD CARE (2005/06)

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Fee subsidy | \$9,806,581 |
| One time funding | |
| Capital funding for the expansion of licensed child care spaces | \$3,700,000 |
| Recurring funding | |
| Equipment grant | \$292,400 |
| Infrastructure grant | 319,581 |
| Family child care administration grant | 42,470 |
| Infant care grant | 158,707 |
| Child development centre grant | 290,936 |
| Salary enhancement grant* | 2,372,041 |
| Stabilization grant | 4,029,166 |
| Supported Child Care | 2,332,953 |
| Partnerships for Inclusion | 350,000 |
| Total | \$23,694,835 |

**This grant is based on the number of allocated subsidy spaces at non-profit facilities licensed prior to June 2000. When such non-profits close, the subsidized spaces become portable, and the salary enhancement grant is no longer applicable.*

Other funding

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Early childhood education training initiative | \$1,040,691 |
| Building Blocks: Strategies for Inclusion | 4,628 |

Funding to parents through Employment Support

Income Assistance *\$4,871,208
(funding provided to an average of 1,630 families per month)

Payments to clients through Child Welfare
**\$1,647,884.49

*Parents on social assistance who are working, involved in an employability program or are unable to look after their children because of their health may receive money (as part of their social assistance payment) to assist with child care costs. The parent may choose any form of licensed, unlicensed or relative care, except care provided by a spouse, legal guardian or dependent child. Parents using licensed care are encouraged to apply for subsidy; the child care allowance may cover the difference between the subsidy rate and the fee charged by the centre. Parents may receive \$400/family/month.

** Children who are permanent wards, temporary wards or involved in a family support program may be eligible for child care funding. Care may be provided in licensed, unlicensed or relative care, except a spouse, legal guardian or dependent child. Occasionally a home care agency may be used. If the care is unlicensed, the provider must undergo a police check and not be on the Child Abuse Register. If the child is a ward, the full cost of care is covered. If there is a supervision order or family support, the parent is encouraged to apply for subsidy. When using licensed care, the minimum parent fee and surcharge may be covered.

Federal Transfers 2005/06

Multilateral Framework \$6,500,000
Early Learning and Child Care Agreement \$20,400,000

In 2005/06 the Early Learning and Child Care Trust funding was allocated to the development and implementation of Nova Scotia's 10 year ELCC Plan, and is not included in the provincial allocation above. See RECENT DEVELOPMENTS section for description. The Multilateral Framework funding is included in the provincial allocation.

SALARIES (2001)

Mean gross hourly wage for centre-based child care staff (full-time staff)

| | |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Directors | \$13.32 |
| Assistant directors | \$10.31 |
| Teachers | \$ 7.87 |
| Special needs teacher | \$ 9.22 |

Source: Information provided by provincial officials from the Employee and Wage Information Questionnaire. More recent information is not available.

Family child care

Salary information not available

FEES (2005/06)

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

| | |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Infants (Age 0-17 mos) | \$27.02 |
| Toddlers (Age 18-36 mos) | \$24.35 |
| Preschool (Age 3-5 yrs) | \$23.88 |
| School-age (Age 5-12 yrs) | \$16.51 |

Source: For centres that receive the childcare Stabilization Grant: N.S Child Care Stabilization Grant Application (May/July 2006).

Average daily fee in family child care

| | |
|----------|---------|
| Full-day | \$21.96 |
|----------|---------|

Source: Family child care agency annual licensing inspection forms

ADMINISTRATION

The Early Childhood Development Services (ECDS) section of the Department of Community Services is responsible for the licensing and inspection of child care and preschool facilities, monitoring family child care agencies, administration of funding, program consultation for licensed programs, and developing policy. The Early Childhood Development Services section approves all new early childhood education and training programs and approves the training status of child care staff working in licensed child care facilities. ECDS is responsible for the administration of the Child Care Subsidy and Supported Child Care program. As well, ECDS is responsible for the coordination of 17 Early Intervention programs in the province. These programs provide home visitation and guidance/support to families of children with identified special needs.

MUNICIPAL OR OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROLE

There is no legislated municipal or other local government role.

CHILD CARE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Nova Scotia developed *Our Children: Today's Investment, Tomorrow's Promise* (2001), which serves as the foundation for the province's Early Childhood Development/Early Learning and Child Care investments.

The Early Childhood Development Initiative (ECDI) was created as part of Nova Scotia's commitment to support families and improve opportunities for children to have a healthy start in life and is reported in *Nova Scotia's Early Childhood Development Initiative Annual Report April 2003*.

In the fall of 2005, the Department of Community Services consulted Nova Scotians to determine their priorities for child care, including input from representatives of the child care sector.

On May 8, 2006, a ten year Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Plan was announced.

HISTORY OF CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

1966 Advocacy Committee on Day Care Services announced by the Minister of Public Welfare.

1967 Enactment of the *Day Nurseries Act*.

1968 Formation of the Preschool Association of Nova Scotia.

1970 Founding of the Nova Scotia Day Care Advocacy Association and the Nova Scotia Child Care Council.

1972 Appointment of the Provincial Day Care Advisory Committee, which introduced the day care subsidy program.

1977 A Task Force on Day Care Finance was struck with a mandate to review the per diem rate. This resulted in annual increments in the subsidy rate and an annual review of the parent fee formula.

1980 Enactment of the revised *Day Care Act and Regulations*.

1983 Task Force on Day Care was announced. Its recommendations resulted in the introduction of annual equipment grants, additional subsidized child care spaces, special needs funding, and staff training standards along with staff training grants.

1987 Training specifications for staff working in child care came into effect.

1988 Provincial child care plan developed to triple spending for program expansion and enhancements subject to federal-provincial cost-sharing agreement.

1989 Child care spending was postponed.

1990 Child care staff in 40 centres across the province staged a one day walkout to protest poor wages.

The Minister announced the Round Table on Day Care with representation from the child care community to conduct a review of the province's child care system.

A salary enhancement grant was introduced.

1991 The Round Table on Day Care presented recommendations to the Minister, including recommendations to establish the round table as a permanent advisory body. This recommendation was adopted. Other recommendations called for the creation of 500 new subsidized spaces and the adoption of salary scales for child care workers.

1992 Funding increases were announced including 100 new subsidies and increases in subsidy rates.

1993 Per diem and subsidy rates to non-profit infant child care and staff training grants were increased.

1993-96 Fifty additional subsidized spaces were allotted each year.

1998 All licensed child care facilities were required to ensure that staff and volunteers have up-to-date Child Abuse Register checks.

The per diem rate for a subsidized space and the infant differential increased by 2%.

Through the National Child Benefit, \$2.2 million was allocated to a Healthy Child Development Initiative to enhance/support centre-based and family child care, rural child care and early intervention programs.

2000 One hundred portable subsidized child care spaces were introduced, including five for children with special needs. These spaces follow the child and are not attached to a specific centre.

2001 There were amendments to the *Day Care Act and Regulations* including several related to the provision of infant/toddler care.

A funding review was conducted and the *Nova Scotia Child Care Funding Review* was released.

Under the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Agreement on Early Childhood Development, Nova Scotia's strategy for Early Childhood Development was outlined in *Our Children: Today's Investment, Tomorrow's Promise*. The Department of Community Services undertook a number of initiatives designed to improve the quality of and access to child care. Funding was designated to stabilize existing licensed child care programs, support inclusion of additional children with special needs, improve salaries, and provide early childhood education training initiatives and professional development for early childhood educators.

2002/03 Stabilizing and Enhancing Childcare Initiatives were introduced:

- *Partnerships for Inclusion*: Facilitators worked with child care centres to evaluate their program and environment, and to improve the centre's environment and daily program in order to support the inclusion of children with special needs.
- *Building Blocks*: In June 2003, there was province-wide training to facilitate the full inclusion of children with special needs.
- *Capital funding*: Funding to non-profit full and part-day child care centres resulting in 329 new full-day spaces and 74 new part-day spaces. (Approximately \$1.6M in funding in 2002/03)
- *Child Development Centres Materials & Resources Grant* (\$400,000 in funding in 2002/03)

2003/04 A one-time-only *Materials and Resources Grant to Promote Physical Activity* for part-day child care centres was provided.

The development and implementation of the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Information System was completed on March 31, 2004. The system provides cross-functional access to data, a snap-shot of programs and the ability to respond to inquiries in a timely manner.

March 2004 A *Child Care Stabilization Grant Survey* was distributed to child care facilities who had received the Nova Scotia Child Care Stabilization Grant. Preliminary analysis showed an increase in the level of training of early childhood staff from 2001 to 2004 (below) and that

the grant has enhanced the salaries of early childhood educators.

2004-2005 *The Child Care Subsidy Program Review* entailed a review of subsidy rate structures for maximizing the utilization of subsidized child care spaces by eligible families across the province and options for revising grant funding to child care centres.

September 2004 Effective September 8, 2004, the maximum group size for school-age children was changed from 25 to 30.

2005 New subsidy rates were announced in February 2005, effective January 1, 2005.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CHILD CARE AND OTHER EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES

2005/06 Nova Scotia received \$21.7 million through the Early Learning and Child Care Agreement for 2005/06 and \$18.7 million for 2006/07.

Nova Scotia's Early Learning and Child Care Plan (a 10-year plan) was in development in 2005/06. Below are the priority areas of investment, as identified by the Nova Scotia Child Care Consultation:

- Development of family home child care
- Operational funding for child care facilities
- Funding for repair/renovation, energy and accessibility upgrades
- Creation of new licensed spaces
- Additional subsidized spaces; additional funding for the inclusion of children with special needs; the development of an early childhood education workforce strategy to support the recruitment, retention and training/professional development needs of the sector; and the enhancement of the accessibility of information to parents as they seek quality child care options and child development resources and materials

The following initiatives were undertaken in 2005/06 as part of the plan:

- *Partnerships for Inclusion (PFI)*: Human Resources & Social Development Canada funded an evaluation framework for this on-site quality enhancement process that supports the inclusion of children with special needs in their community child care programs. To date 178 centres have volunteered to participate.

- The framework proposed evaluation strategies to assess the effectiveness of the design and delivery of PFI. It is the first ELCC evaluation project undertaken jointly between Nova Scotia and the Government of Canada.
- Supported Child Care (SCC): 132 licensed child care centres received funding to enable the inclusion of more than 500 children with special needs. The majority of funding is used to hire an additional contract employee to provide an enhanced staff ratio.
- The Nova Scotia Child Care Consultation provided parents and members of the early childhood sector the opportunity to comment on priorities for Nova Scotia's Early Learning and Child Care Plan.
- Development of amendments to the regulations and revisions to the *Nova Scotia Day Care Act*, commenced with implementation planned for fall 2007.
- The Capital Funding Initiative is intended to create 293 new profit and non-profit child care spaces.
- The Child Care Subsidy Program Review Working Group established by the Minister in 2004 has evolved into the Early Learning and Child Care Working Group, as Nova Scotia implements its 10-year plan.
- The Minister's Round Table on Early Childhood Development was announced in February 2006. This advisory committee is comprised of members representing early childhood programs inclusive of child care, early intervention, family resource programs, early childhood education training institutions, child care information and support, early language and learning, parents, and a public health home visiting programs for families and newborns.

The Child Care Stabilization Grant Utilization Statement for 2005/06 identified that of the total number of full-time equivalent early childhood staff working in licensed child care facilities, 71% were graduates of degree/diploma programs and 18% had completed their equivalency.

■ KEY PROVINCIAL EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE ORGANIZATIONS

Child Care Connection-NS
Suite 100, 1200 Tower Road
Halifax, NS, B3H 4K6
Telephone: 902-423-8199 / 1-800-565-8199
Facsimile: 902-492-8106
Email: info@cccns.org
Website: www.cccns.org

Certification Council of Early Childhood Educators of Nova Scotia
c/o 100 1200 Tower Road
Halifax, NS, B3H 4K6

Non-Profit Directors Association
Telephone: 902-422-5435
Facsimile: 902-453-2232

Private Licensed Administrators Association
2695 Dutch Village Road
Halifax, NS, B3L 4G5
Telephone: 902-454-6340

Société Provinciale des Intervenant(e)s du Prescolaire (SPIP)
CP 117
Pointe de L'Eglise, NS, B0W 1M0
Email: spip@ustanne.ednet.ns.ca

TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Nova Scotia Teachers' Union
Dr. Tom Parker Building
3106 Joseph Howe Dr.,
Halifax, NS B3L 4L7
Telephone: 902-477-5621 / 1-800-565-6788
Facsimile: 902-477-3517
Email: nstu@nstu.ca
Website: www.nstu.ca