



PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

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

Age	Number of children
0	72,500
1	70,800
2	67,000
3	73,900
4	73,500
5	77,100
6	76,000
7	77,800
8	85,000
9	87,600
10	87,000
11	86,500
12	103,900
Total	1,038,300

Note: Total may not add up due to rounding.

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

Age group	Number of children
0-2	210,300
3-5	224,500
6-12	603,500
Total	1,038,300

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

Age	Number of children
0	49,900
1	45,300
2	44,800
3	48,100
4	48,800
5	54,400
6	51,200
7	51,700
8	54,900
9	59,100
10	60,600
11	59,200
12	72,300
Total	700,400

Note: Total may not add up due to rounding.

Number of children 0-12 years with mothers in the paid labour force (2005 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0-2	140,000
3-5	151,300
6-12	409,100
Total	700,400

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

Age	North American Indian	Metis	Inuit	Multiple	Other
0 to 4	4,940	1,195	1,305	35	105
5 to 9	53,606	1,255	1,370	20	80
10 to 14	5,090	1,375	1,260	25	90
Total	63,636	3,825	3,935	80	275

Children 0-14 yrs with disabilities (2001)

Age	Number of children with disabilities	Rate of children with disabilities (%)
0-4	4,630	1.3
5-9	11,300	2.5
10-14	10,960	2.4
Total 0-14 yrs	26,890	2.1

Note: Total may not add up due to rounding.

Number of children by marital status of families (2001)

Age of child	Children in couple families	Children in lone parent families	(with lone mothers)	(with lone fathers)
0-4	320,225	54,885	48,190	6,695
5-9	366,125	89,205	74,265	14,935
10-14	355,390	99,750	80,370	19,375

Number of children by mother tongue (2001)

Age of child	English	French	Non-official language
0-4	32,545	297,435	36,450
5-9	40,215	371,870	37,230
10-14	39,980	375,740	35,775
Total	112,740	1,045,045	109,455

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

Age of child	Number	Percent (%)
0-2	25,290	12.5
3-5	43,230	17.8
6-17	168,310	15.7
Total	236,830	15.6

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

Age of youngest child	Number of mothers	Participation rate (%)
0-2	141,600	74.1
3-5	114,700	78.5
6-15	360,000	82.7

FAMILY-RELATED LEAVE

Beginning January 1, 2006, the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan replaced the benefits previously available to Quebec parents under the federal employment insurance plan. The Quebec Parental Insurance Plan stipulates that financial benefits be paid to all eligible workers – salaried or self-employed – who take maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave, or adoption leave.

Parents must choose between two options: the Basic Plan or the Special Plan. In so doing, they decide the duration of their leave as well as their income replacement rate. The choice of plan is determined by the first parent to receive benefits and cannot be modified.

Maternity leave

Natural mother only and cannot be shared between the two parents.

Basic Plan: 18 weeks of benefits at the rate of 70%

Special Plan: 15 weeks of benefits at the rate of 75%

Paternity leave

Father only and cannot be shared between the two parents.

Basic Plan: 5 weeks of benefits at the rate of 70%

Special Plan: 3 weeks of benefits at the rate of 75%

Parental benefits

The total number of weeks of parental benefits can be taken by either parent or shared by both, based on an agreement between the two. In addition, parents may take these weeks simultaneously or consecutively.

Basic Plan: 32 weeks of benefits, with the first 7 weeks at the rate of 70%, and the following 25 weeks at the rate of 55%

Special Plan: 25 weeks of benefits at the rate of 75%

Adoption leave

Basic Plan: 37 weeks of benefits, with the first 12 weeks at the rate of 70%, and the following 25 weeks at the rate of 55%

Special Plan: 28 weeks of benefits at the rate of 75%

Family-related leave

Ten days per year

Births and EI maternity and parental claims (2005)

Number of births	78,450
Birth rate per 1,000 population	10.3
Number of initial maternity claims allowed	47,460
Average length of maternity claim	14.5 weeks

Number of parental claims	58,750
Average length of parental claim	25.0 weeks
Number of adoptive parent claims	960
Average length of adoptive claim	28.5 weeks

KINDERGARTEN

LEGISLATION

Quebec. National Assembly. *Education Act*. R.S.Q., c.I-13.3

Quebec. National Assembly. An Act to amend the Education Act concerning the Conseil scolaire de l'île de Montreal, Bill 41 (2001, c. 30).

Quebec. National Assembly. An Act to amend the Education Act, Bill 35. (2001, c. 46).

Quebec. National Assembly. Education Act for Cree, Inuit and Naskapi Native Persons. R.S.Q., c. I-14.

PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten contact

Christiane Bourdages-Simpson

Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport

17e étage

1035, rue De La Chevrotière

Québec, QC, G1R 5A5

Telephone: 418 644-2386

Email: christiane.bourdages-simpson@mels.gouv.qc.ca

KINDERGARTEN SERVICES

FIVE YEAR OLD KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten for five year olds is delivered on a full time basis in public and private schools (both English and French). There are 23.5 hours/week for 36 weeks or 846 hours a year.

Kindergarten is not compulsory in Quebec. Entitlement is legislated.

Programs for four year olds:

Four year old Kindergarten

This program varies from 9.15 hours/week for 36 weeks (or 332 hours) to 11.45 hours/week for 36 weeks (or 412 hours). It may be four part-days or five part-days. Some programs include parent participation.

Initially, four year old kindergarten was developed for inner-city children (although this is no longer their sole clientele). Most four year old kindergartens are in Montreal and were developed prior to the new family policy and child care expansion. There is no new development of four year old kindergarten; those existing will be maintained.

Passe-partout

A family-oriented approach for four year old children and their parents, Passe-Partout is a program developed for low-income families living mostly in rural Quebec. Passe-Partout is designed to provide targeted parents with the tools they need to help their child adopt attitudes and practices that will enable the child to develop, grow and succeed at school.

Passe-Partout consists of a minimum of 16 sessions a year with the children and eight with the parents. As this is a suggested minimum, there may be more sessions offered.

With the new family policy and child care expansion, Passe-Partout, like the four year old kindergarten program, is no longer being developed but only maintained.

AGE ELIGIBILITY

Five year old kindergarten:

Five years old by September 30

Four year old kindergarten:

Four years old by September 30

CLASS SIZE

Provincial class size limits are defined in the collective agreement:

- Five year olds: Maximum 20, average 18
- Four year olds: Maximum 18, average 15
- Multi-age groups: Maximum 15 children per group.

Note: According to the collective agreement, a teacher cannot have more than 20 children under her/his responsibility.

Average/mean class sizes

Five year olds: 18

Four year olds: 15

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

A Quebec policy – *Politique d'adaptation scolaire* – addresses inclusion, specialized services and corresponding budgets. School boards can adopt additional policies that expand on it but cannot restrict it.

About 50% of children with special needs are included in regular classes. Others either attend special classes in schools or attend specialized schools (for instance, schools for the deaf).

For four year olds with special needs (handicaps as defined in Quebec), the school board has the obligation to deliver a kindergarten program if the parents so request.

In 2006/07, 778 children out of 1,552 identified with special needs were included in regular kindergarten classes.

There are additional budgets tied to inclusion of children with special needs.

ENROLMENT (2005/06)

Number of children enrolled in four year old kindergarten and Passe-Partout (two years before Grade 1):

4 year old kindergarten 6,103

Passe-Partout 8,500

Number of children enrolled in five year old kindergarten (the year before Grade 1):

73,735 (69,000 public school, 4,735 private school)

KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

Qualification requirements: Four year degree-Baccalauréat en Éducation Préscolaire et enseignement au primaire. There are mandatory practica in kindergarten and elementary.

Average salary: Information not available

Number of kindergarten teachers: Information not available

CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

Information not available

There are no provincial policies regarding teaching assistants. No assistants are provided, although there are professional services under the component “services complémentaires” such as psychologists and speech therapists.

CURRICULUM

A provincial kindergarten curriculum was implemented in 1997. The curriculum for four and five year olds is the same.

MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

Information not available

SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR KINDERGARTEN

Eighty-two percent from provincial grants and 11% local property tax levies.

PUBLIC SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN (2006-07)

Passe-partout

\$ 9,187,241

Four year old kindergarten

\$13,086,692

Five year old kindergarten

\$290,999,324

Average spending per family (parent-student) in Passe-partout

Not available

Average spending per four year old kindergarten student

Not available

Average spending per five year old kindergarten student

Not available

Five year old children with special needs attending programs paid for by the MELS but delivered in specialised establishments

\$5,990

SPECIAL FEATURES

Allophone (non-French, English or Aboriginal mother tongue) children have access to Services Particuliers under the regulation. The policy and formula for this is established at the Quebec level. Schools boards receive and distribute budgets for these services to schools.

REGULATED CHILD CARE

LEGISLATION

On December 16, 2005, the National Assembly adopted Bill 124, *Educational Childcare Act*.

Since June 1, 2006, *Educational Childcare Act* (R.S.Q., chapter S-4.1.1) replaces *An Act Respecting Childcare centres and childcare services* (R.S.Q. cC-8.2).

Règlement sur les services de garde en milieu scolaire. L.R.Q., c.I-13.3., a. 454.1; 1997, c.58,a.51; 1997, c.96, a.132

Since August 31, 2006, regulation respecting reduced contributions (R.S.Q., c.[S-4.1.1., r.1]) and Regulation respecting educational childcare services (R.S.Q., c.[C-8.2, r.2], and Regulation respecting day care centres (R.R.Q., 1981, c. [C-8.2, r.5.1]).

PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

Sylvie Barcelo

Sous-ministre

Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine (MCFACF)

425, rue Saint-Amable

Quebec, QC, G1R 4Z1

Telephone: (418) 643-4721

Website: www.mfacf.gouv.qc.ca

CHILD CARE SERVICES

UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

Unregulated family child care

Maximum number of children permitted: Six, including the caregiver's own children.

Jardins d'enfants (nursery schools)

Programs for a minimum of seven children aged 2-5 years on a regular basis for up to four hours/day.

Haltes-garderies (stop-over centres)

Programs for a minimum of seven children on a casual, drop-in basis for up to 24 consecutive hours.

REGULATED CHILD CARE

Centre de la petite enfance (CPE)

A CPE provides educational child care primarily for children 0-4 years. Seven or more children may be cared for in centre-based programs for periods not exceeding 48 consecutive hours.

A centre/facility may have up to 80 children and no more than two facilities may be housed in a building.

CPEs must be non-profit with a board of directors having a minimum of seven persons, at least 2/3 of whom (who are neither staff nor family child care providers) must be parent-users of the program.

Service de garde en milieu familial (family child care)

Family child care is provided in a private residence by an individual for up to six children including the provider's own children for periods which may exceed 24 consecutive hours; no more than two children may be under 18 months. If the provider is assisted by another adult, nine children are permitted with no more than four children under 18 months, including their own children.

Until June 2006, family child care providers were part of CPEs. As of June 1, 2006, home child care coordinating offices (bureaux coordonnateurs de la garde en milieu familial) accredited by MFACF coordinate family child care in a given area. The coordinating offices provide assistance to providers and monitor the application of the standards. Most home child care coordinating offices are CPEs; some are new free-standing non-profit organizations. These are located in every region. There are 165 offices.

Garderie (day care centre)

An establishment that provides child care in a facility of not more than 80 children where seven or more children receive care on a regular basis for periods not exceeding 24 consecutive hours that is not operated by a CPE. No more than two facilities may be housed in a building. Garderies are generally for-profit operations and those operated by a non-profit group that does not have a majority of parents on the board of directors (e.g. church-run centres).

Milieu scolaire (school-age child care)

Programs provided by a school board for children attending kindergarten or elementary grades; these are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sport. School boards are obliged to provide school-age child care when there is a demonstrated need.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Quebec has a policy encouraging inclusion of children with special needs in regular programs. For a child who has a diagnosed disability or who meets the ministry definition of a "disabled" child, a one-time grant of \$2,200 and an additional \$25/day/child on top of the regular operating grants is available. Admission is at the discretion of the CPE, garderie or other program.

In addition to the supplementary allowance allocated to child care establishments receiving children with a disability, an exceptional assistance measure for the integration of children with significant special needs into child care services has been put in place.

ABORIGINAL CHILD CARE

Quebec regulates child care on-reserve. In 2006, there were 43 child care centres, three family child care services and no garderies on-reserve. Other centres were under construction. On-reserve child care is funded through agreements between First Nations communities and federal and provincial governments. Aboriginal child care services receive funding from MFACF. The Quebec government reached agreements with Inuit, Cree and Mohawk communities thereby delegating some legal authority for child care under the law.

SPACE STATISTICS (2005/06)

Number of regulated child care spaces

Centre-based

Infant	11,697 (CPE and garderie)
Preschooler (18 mos-4 yrs)	99,397 (CPE and garderie)

Note: In the 2004 version of this publication, some number of children in centres may have been attributed to the infant category (under 18 months) rather than the 18 month-4 year category.

	Child care centres (CPE)	Day care centres (garderie)
Total centre-based spaces (0-4)	74,573	36,521
Family child care	89,011	
Total spaces regulated by MFAF	200,105	
Total school-age child care spaces	*161,428	
Total spaces regulated by MFAF and under the aegis of MELS	*361,533	
<i>*A figure for school-age spaces was not available. We have calculated an estimate based on the ECEC in Canada 2004 figure of 141,977 school-age spaces, expanded using the same percentage increase as the increase in total centre-based spaces for children aged 0-4 from 2004-2006 – 13.7%.</i>		
<i>Note: School-age child care for children aged 4-12 is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Leisure and Sport</i>		
Children with special needs in regulated child care:		
		3,499
Number of child care programs		
<i>Number of CPEs</i>		1,004
Number of centres that are part of CPEs		1,306
<i>Number of garderies</i>		612
Number of garderies - subsidized		534
Number of garderies - unsubsidized		78
Number of school-age services		1,561
Number of family child care components		891
Number of family child care providers		13,776
Openings and closings (2005/2006)		
New child care centre licenses issued		82
Number of child care centre closures		5
Sponsorship of centred-based spaces		
Non-profit (CPE)		74, 573
For-profit and other non-CPE centres (garderies)		36,521
School-board operated school-age spaces		*161,428
Total non-profit spaces (CPE and school-age)		236,001
<i>*This figure was not available. We have calculated an estimate based on the ECEC in Canada 2004 figure of 141,977 school-age spaces, expanded by the same percentage increase as the increase in total centre-based spaces for children aged 0-4 – 13.7%.</i>		
<i>Note: The majority of garderies are for-profit.</i>		

STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

REGULATED CENTRES (CENTRES UNDER CPES AND GARDERIES)

Maximum facility size 80 spaces

Maximum staff:child ratios

Age	Staff:child ratios
0-17 mos	1:5
18 mos-3 yrs	1:8
Less than 5 yrs	1:10
5 years and older	1:20

Staff qualification requirements

As of August 31, 2006, two-thirds of staff in centre-based CPEs and garderies must have a college diploma or university degree in ECE. Previously one-third of staff in garderies were required to meet the training requirement; existing garderies have five years to comply with the new requirement.

Parent involvement

A child care centre's (non-profit) board of directors must be made up of at least seven members, 23 of whom (minimum of five) are parent-users or future users of the centre. At least one board member must come from the business sector or the institutional, social, education or community sector, and no more than two shall be staff at the centre.

A garderie's license (permit) holder must set up an advisory committee made up of five parents and consult with the parent committee on all aspects of the care the children receive in the centre, particularly with respect to implementation of the educational program, services provided and how complaints are processed.

The composition of the boards of directors of organizations accredited as coordinating offices are determined by the type of organization.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

The Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine (MFAF) issues permits (licenses) for up to a three year period. MCACF inspectors may visit any licensed operation to monitor its compliance with regulations.

Permit holders of child care centres and garderies should receive at least one inspection visit during the period that their license is valid – generally five years.

In the six months after the issuance of a new permit, a first visit is conducted for the purpose of information and prevention. The aim of this visit is to evaluate quality, identify problems, establish an action plan and provide support.

Inspectors are not required to have a degree, diploma, or training in early childhood education.

Quebec does not issue conditional or provisional licenses. If a centre is found to be in noncompliance with legislative requirements but there is no immediate danger to the health or well-being of the children, MFACF informs the centre's board (in writing) that the program is in noncompliance with a specific regulation(s) and requests rectification. A follow-up check is done by an inspector when sufficient time is deemed to have passed. Repeated instances of noncompliance which do not pose an immediate threat may result in a court hearing.

The operator may appeal the loss of license (or the refusal by MFACF to renew a license) or may contest a decision to the Tribunal administratif de Québec. Its decision is binding.

REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE

Family child care providers are supervised by a home child care coordinating office, most of which are CPEs.

Maximum capacity

Up to six children including the provider's children under nine years; no more than two children may be under 18 months. If the provider is assisted by another adult, they may care for nine children, including both providers' own children, with not more than four children being under 18 months.

Provider qualification requirements

Family child care worker

Staff duties include approving/recognizing people responsible for family child care, providing technical and professional support to such persons, and exercising control and supervision for such persons.

Family child care provider

Family child care providers must hold a first-aid certificate and complete a training program lasting at least 45 hours pertaining to child development, health, safety and diet issues, and organization and leadership in a "life environment". Many CPEs provide training for providers.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Family child care workers are required to do on-site home visits. The CPE is responsible for ensuring that providers meet the regulations. MFACF monitors records of home visits and activity reports.

FUNDING

PUBLIC FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2003/04)*

One-time funding

Development grants

- Grant for professional services incurred by the project manager in setting up a facility: \$8,000
- Start-up grant for establishing a family child care component of a CPE: \$8,000.

Major and minor capital grants

- See Programme de financement global des immobilisations (Online at <http://www.mfacf.gouv.qc.ca/thematiques/famille/administration-service-de-garde/ressources-financieres/regles-budgetaires.asp>)

Recurring funding

MFACF provides funding to CPEs through several basic and supplementary mechanisms that are calculated according to three financing parameters:

- annualized spaces on the license
- annual occupancy, and
- the annual occupancy rate.

These funds are paid to the CPEs on a monthly basis.

Child care centres basic allowance

- Expenses related to the premises
 - the lesser of the actual expenses established by MFACF or an amount equal to \$36,000 for the first 30 annualized spaces, and \$1,000 for each annualized space beyond 30.
- Overhead costs
 - \$1,833 for each of the first 60 annualized spaces, plus \$1,192 for each additional space beyond 60.
- Performance
 - with the exception of new or expanded facilities, a deduction is made from the grant if the annual occupancy rate falls below 85% .
- Child care and educational expenses
 - \$49.95/day for children 17 months and younger;
 - \$32.50/day for children 18-59 months

* Information for 2005/2006 was not available.

Family child care basic allowance

- Expenses related to the premises (private home)
 - the lesser of the actual expenses established by MFACF or an amount equal to \$250 for each of the first 50 annualized spaces, and \$140 for each additional space.
- Overhead costs
 - \$1,188 for each of the first 50 spaces, plus \$704 for each of the next 100 spaces and \$646 for each additional space beyond 150.
- Performance
 - with the exception of new or expanded family child care services, a deduction is made from the grant if the annual occupancy rate falls below 80%.
- Child care and educational expenses
 - a maximum of \$24.50/day for children aged 59 months and younger, and an infant supplement of \$9.35/day for children 17 months and younger.

Supplementary allowances

- Allowance for exemption from payment of the contribution (EPC).
 - an allowance to make up for the parental contribution exemption of parents who receive income security and are entitled to 23.5 hours/week of child care at no fee (or more on the recommendation of an authorized organization).
- Allowance for a facility in a disadvantaged area. To help the facility meet the additional costs of enrolling children from a disadvantaged area equal to:
 - 2.3% of the basic operating allowance when the proportion of EPC days is between 5% and 10%;
 - 4.6% of the basic operating allowance when the proportion of EPC days is between 10% and 20%;
 - 6.9% of the basic operating allowance when the proportion of EPC days is greater than 20%.
- Allowance for places at the reduced contribution offered to school-age children (PRCS)

To support child care institutions who serve kindergarten or elementary school children who cannot receive any other child care service at their school:

 - \$2.15/day for each school day;
 - \$15.35/day for each pedagogical day, for a maximum of 20 days per child.

- Allowance for the integration of a child with a disability

To facilitate the integration of a child with a disability aged 59 months or younger, for a maximum of nine children in a facility, providing that number does not exceed 20% of licensed spaces or one child per home child care provider:

 - a lump sum of \$2,200 per child, of which \$1,800 is for equipment or improving the set-up to meet the child's needs;
 - \$25/day of occupancy.

Specific allowances

- Allowance for group insurance plans and maternity leaves. This program is maintained at 3% of the insurable aggregate employable earnings of participating CPEs and garderies. The allowance is 2.1%.
- Subsidy for personal pension plan for CPEs and garderies. Finances a portion of personal pension plans' amount is not specified.
- Other specific allocations. MFACF may grant these to CPEs under special circumstances or for special projects.

PROVINCIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2005/2006)

Fee subsidies	Not applicable
One time funding	
Capital expenditures	\$6,596,500
Recurring funding	
Funding to CPEs and garderies	\$1,445,818,400
Other transfer payments	4,573,000
Total child care expenditure for children 0-4 yrs	\$1,559,879,000
Estimated expenditure on school-age child care (by MELS)	\$119,000,000
Total expenditure on regulated child care (2005/2006)	\$1,678,879,000

Federal transfers 2005/2006

Multi-lateral Framework	\$53,000,000
Early Learning and Child Care Agreement	\$165,000,000

SALARIES

Estimated mean hourly wage by job category (April 2006)

Administrators (Level 3)	\$20.21 – 27.41
Pedagogical staff	15.71 – 19.67
Educator	14.14 – 18.73
Assistant educator	13.82
Untrained	12.48 – 18.73

Note: Figures provided by provincial officials.

Family child care

Information not available.

ADMINISTRATION

MFACF is responsible for setting standards and regulations, administration of the legislation, administration of funding, and coordination of the child care system across the province.

Le Ministère de l'Éducation, Loisirs et Sport is responsible for school-age child care services. However, when a school cannot provide child care services, MELS pays for children to attend a CPE.

School-age children are not eligible for a \$7/day place during the summer.

MUNICIPAL AND OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROLE

Municipalities may no longer hold licenses to operate child care facilities.

School boards provide school-age child care for children attending kindergarten and elementary school.

CHILD CARE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

To ensure an equitable distribution of reduced contribution child care throughout the province, Quebec uses a province-wide planning process. A plan based on population and labour force statistics, funding and relative regional equity has been developed.

At the regional level, planning of development with the goal of developing 200,000 reduced-contribution spaces was achieved.

HISTORY OF CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

1887 Montreal Day Nursery, an Anglophone child care centre, was established by charitable organizations.

1942 Quebec signed the Dominion-Provincial War Time Agreement with the federal government. This enabled cost-sharing for child care centres attended by children whose mothers were employed in industries essential to the war effort. Six centres were established in Montreal.

1945 Government financing for child care centres ended and the wartime centres closed.

1950s Growth of for-profit child care centres.

1969 The provincial government began to license existing child care centres and financed selected child care centres located in low-income districts of Montreal.

1972 A system of tax credits for mothers using child care was established.

1974 The provincial government adopted the Bacon Plan, a policy paper on child care issues which recognized the existing network of child care centres and recommended financial aid to low income parents.

1979 An *Act Respecting Child Day Care* created l'Office des services de garde à l'enfance to coordinate and promote development of child care services. Operating grants were introduced.

1980 L'Office took on full responsibility for regulated child care services.

1983 Regulations for the Act were adopted.

1988 L'Office issued a policy statement on child care services which announced a five year expansion plan to double the number of licensed child care spaces by 1994. The paper also identified target programs, such as infant child care and workplace child care, and extended some grants to for-profit centres.

1989 The child care community organized a one day walkout in protest against some aspects of the 1988 policy statement.

In response, the government announced enhanced parent fee subsidies, the provision of assistance for child care training and staff development, and increased assistance to facilitate the integration of children with handicaps.

1992 A regulation was adopted which fixed the number of spaces eligible for funding on an annual basis.

Unionized child care staff took part in a one day walkout protesting poor wages.

1993 New regulations were adopted relating to parent fee subsidies.

Summer child care programs which were not regulated became eligible to receive funding from l'Office.

Concertation inter-régionale des garderies du Québec organized a province-wide demonstration. The demands were for a freeze on parent fees and \$1.5 million for wage enhancement for the non-profit sector in the short term.

1994 A new regulation concerning agencies and family child care was issued. This regulation addressed: permits, staff qualifications of the agency, qualification for the person responsible for family care, security, hygiene, heating and minimal standards.

Public consultation was held to consider solutions for financing child care. A new formula was adopted taking account of program size, expenses and occupancy rates; and grants are paid on a monthly basis.

1995 The governing Parti Québécois held an extensive public consultation process on the education system and included proposals to change the jurisdiction, delivery and funding of early childhood education. It considered introduction of full-day kindergarten for four and five year olds through an integrated early childhood system.

1996 A moratorium on new permits for child care services was in force for a year from April 1995. In May, the government announced that for-profit centres would no longer receive any funding in Québec. (This was later modified somewhat when the new family policy was introduced in 1997.)

The Québec government announced its intention to implement a new family policy and to develop a comprehensive early childhood policy for children from 0 to 12 years old. It contained three main components:

- an integrated child allowance for young children and newborns designed to gradually replace the existing family allowance;
- enhanced maternity and parental leave provisions through a new parental insurance plan;
- the development of early childhood education and child care services to provide universally accessible programs to foster child development, and to gradually introduce skills that children need to succeed at school.

1997 Implementation of the new early childhood care and education program was phased in over a four year period. In the first year of the program, kindergarten for all five year olds was extended to the full school day; existing half-day kindergarten programs for four year olds continued and were supplemented by a half-day out-of-school child care program at no cost to the parent. At the same time, space for four year olds in either regulated centre-based programs or family day care became available at a fee of \$5/day. This was extended to three year olds in September 1998 and continued to be extended incrementally until the year 2000, when all age groups were covered.

The Ministère de la Famille et de l'Enfance (MFE) was established and became responsible for early childhood care and education services for children aged 0-4. Child care centres and family child care agencies were replaced by centres de la petite enfance (CPEs). Over the next five years, each CPE was to develop at least two services — typically a centre component and a family child care component. Centres could also develop part-time spaces if there was a need for parents who were not in the paid labour force and who did not wish to access a full-time space. Nursery schools were not included in this new program, in part because they are not licensed in Québec, and because they are usually for-profit or run by community centres, thus not satisfying the requirements for board structure.

1998 A national study of wages, working conditions and quality, *You Bet I Care!*, found that based on a sample of full-time centres for children 0-6 years and regulated family child care – Québec scored 4.7 on the ECERS-R (preschool rooms), 3.6 on the ITERS (infant rooms), and 4.5 on the FDCRS (family child care).

2000 Child care at \$5/day became available to all children aged 0-4 whether or not the parent is in the paid labour force. Individual centres could implement policies which give priority to employed parents, single parents, or some other target group. Families on social assistance and not in the workforce could access up to 23 hours/week of care at no cost. Low income working families could also qualify for an additional fee reduction by accessing the APPORT program (Ministère de l'Emploi et de la Solidarité sociale). If eligible, they could receive an additional \$3 a day to reduce their \$5/day fee to \$2.

The required number of staff trained in early childhood education in centre-based programs was increased from

one-third of staff in a non-profit centre to two-thirds. In addition, a programme éducatif would be required in all centres.

The child:staff ratios for four year olds was increased from 8:1 to 10:1 but remained at 8:1 for three year olds.

Since 1997, the Ministry began to “rent” space from existing for-profit operations with funding at a lesser rate than CPE centres. It was intended that agreements with for-profit centres would be renegotiated annually until such time as they are no longer needed.

2000 Following two days of strikes by child care workers over wages, child care staff in non-profit centres and family child care were to be paid according to a province-wide scale based on education and experience. It was anticipated that an average wage increase of 35-40% would be implemented over four years, with an additional \$44 million allocated in 1999-2000.

A provincial task force recommended that child care staff be included in the *Pay Equity Act*.

In the five years from the implementation of the new early childhood policy in 1997 to 2001, Quebec increased the number of child care spaces (for children aged 0-4) from 82,302 spaces to 139,683 and introduced full school-day kindergarten for all five year olds. Quebec expected to expand the number of child care spaces to 200,000 by 2005/06.

According to the Institut de la statistique du Québec, approximately 85,000 children under the age of five were on a waiting list for a child care space. Of these, 8,700 were already enrolled in a \$5/day space but wished to change. (These children may be on more than one waiting list). Parents who did not have a \$5/day space may still claim the federal Child Care Expense Deduction and the provincial tax credit.

The government undertook a public education campaign to attract staff and promote training. To assist those already in the field to access additional training, the government began to provide financial support for college-level courses and funding for any necessary substitutes in the CPEs.

March 2000 Twenty for-profit centres had converted to non-profit with several more in the process.

2000 MFE began funding several pilot projects to meet non-traditional needs for child care such as evening, overnight and weekend care. Projects received funding in

addition to the CPE funding formulas and were in certain situations operating outside the regulations.

A \$152 million investment over four years was committed from 1999/03 to raise wages: \$91.5 million was committed for the centre-based component of CPEs, \$32.4 million for family child care, and \$27.6 million for day care centres (garderies).

2002 The Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ) and the Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN) filed for union certification on behalf of 1,500 family child care providers from 116 CPEs. The Quebec Labour Board decided in favour of the unionization.

2003

April A new Liberal government was elected. In the election campaign, the new government had said that they would make changes to the child care program.

May The government announced its intent to slow expansion of the \$5-a-day child care program, to increase parent fees and to open development of new spaces to the for-profit sector. New child care projects approved by the previous government were frozen unless they had bought land or already begun construction. In June, a large protest took place and a petition of over 100,000 signatures calling for the protection of the system was presented to the government.

August The new government released a consultation paper with proposals for altering the child care system. The paper proposed two policy scenarios for increasing parent fees and encouraging future development in for-profit child care. The government held three days of hearings on these proposals; the Coalition pour le maintien de l'universalité des services de garde held a parallel consultation.

November The budget for publicly funded child care was cut by \$25 million/year. Parent fees were raised to \$7 a day and a policy favouring non-profit child care was reversed. Financing for for-profit centres was improved.

The government introduced Bill 8, which decertified existing unions of family child care providers and enshrined in law their self-employed status. The unions appealed the decision based on the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and international covenants ensuring the rights of workers to unionize. There were several demonstrations involving family child care providers throughout the fall.

2004

Operating grants were cut two years in a row and capital funding eliminated. There were changes to funding the regional associations.

January Unionized child care workers went on strike over lack of progress on pay equity and on changes to the child care policy including increased parent fees and plans to increase for-profit child care.

A court case at the Quebec Court of Appeal in which the federal government's jurisdiction vis-à-vis maternity and parental leave was challenged and won by Quebec, with Quebec intending to introduce a more enriched paid leave program than paid under Employment Insurance.

The target of 200,000 regulated spaces (excluding school age spaces) established at the beginning of the family policy had almost been reached with about 17,000 spaces yet to be developed.

June *Grandir en qualité*, a baseline report on quality in Quebec child care was published by l'Institut de la Statistique du Québec. It identifies that the quality of child care in Quebec is generally quite poor, and the quality of for-profit centres is generally poorer than those that are part of CPEs.

2005 Responsibility for child care moved from the Ministère de l'Emploi, de la Solidarité sociale et de la Famille to the Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine .

January A universal family allowance became available for all parents in Quebec.

March The federal government and Quebec reached an agreement regarding Quebec's parental insurance plan. Beginning January 1, 2006, Quebec parents were able to choose between two different plans (see Family Related Leave for details). The two week waiting period will be eliminated and self employed parents will be included.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN ECEC SERVICES

2005

June Unionized child care workers staged a three day strike, demanding improved working conditions and movement on the issue of pay equity. The educators were without a contract since April 2004 and had had no

raise since April 2003. In September, child care workers – in a legal strike position – decided instead to negotiate with the provincial government, focusing on securing pay equity.

October The Quebec government and the federal government came to an agreement about transfer of funds within the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care scheme. Unlike the other provinces, Quebec had not signed an Agreement-in-Principle with the federal government nor developed an action plan specific to these funds. The October agreement said:

Quebec having the objective of increasing to 200,000 the number of child care spaces at reduced parental contribution by 31 March, 2006, it may invest federal funds provided through this agreement in related objectives for the well-being of families.

Quebec agrees to incorporate into its current public reporting cycles information concerning its priorities and financing provided by Canada according to the terms of this agreement:

Quebec will provide Canada with the information and reports it prepares on its educational child care system and supplies to non-governmental organizations and the public. Quebec agrees to allow Canada to distribute them and make them available to other provincial/territorial governments.

December Bill 124, the *Educational Childcare Act* was adopted by the National Assembly. Bill 124 had been introduced amidst charges that it would “destroy the \$7-a-day child care system”, protests from parents and community-based CPEs and support for the Bill and the Minister from for-profit centre operators. At issue was the proposal to remove the family child care component from non-profit CPEs and to instead set up government-organized coordinating offices that could be either non-profit or profit-based to play a supervisory role. (Non-profit child care centres and family child care agencies had been amalgamated into CPEs after the child care reform in 1997).

November After numerous protests at public hearings on the Bill, the Minister agreed to amend it. But the amendments did not go far enough for Quebec's child care advocates, who continued to oppose its adoption until it was adopted by the National Assembly on December 15.

2006

Enquête sur les besoins et les préférences des familles en matière de services de garde, a survey of 15,000 families on their needs and preferences regarding child care was published by the Institut de la statistique du Québec for the Ministère de la Famille, des Aînés et de la Condition féminine (online at http://www.stat.gouv.qc.ca/publications/conditions/service_garde2004_an.htm).

January The enhanced Quebec Parental Insurance Plan, negotiated with the federal government and run by the Quebec government, replaced the federal benefit.

August A new regulation came into effect limiting the use of surcharges above Quebec's province-wide \$7-a-day parent fee. This aroused the ire of the Association of Private Daycares who took the Quebec government to court.

As of August 31, 2006, two-thirds of staff in both centre-based CPEs and garderies must have a college diploma or university degree in ECE. Previously only one-third of staff in garderies were required to meet the training requirement; existing garderies have five years to comply with the new requirement.

September The Association Québécoise CPE (AQCPE) concluded an agreement with the Quebec government and the CSN regarding the financing framework for adjustments connected with the *Pay Equity Act* for child care centres, coordinating offices and garderies. An average pay increase of 8.79% for CPE staff and 8.95% for CPE teachers is anticipated. The financing framework is based on a model of pay equity proposed to employers concerned with the Act to enable them to conduct their pay equity exercise with the full knowledge of the level of pay adjustment the government would be ready to finance.

AQCPE intends to recommend a uniform application of the steps to pay equity to their member Boards of Directors. The agreement begins to apply on April 1, 2007 with full payment of increases by April 2011.

KEY PROVINCIAL ECEC ORGANIZATIONS

Association québécoise des CPEs
6611 rue Jarry est, bur.200
Montreal, QC H1P 1W5
Telephone: 514-326-8008
Facsimilie: 514-326-3322
Website: www.aqcpe.com

Association des services de garde en milieu scolaire du Québec
13, rue Saint-Laurent est
Longueuil, PQ J4H 4B7
Telephone: 450-646-2753
Facsimilie: 450-646-1807
Website: www.familis.org

Syndicats des travailleuses et travailleurs en garderie, FSSS-CSN
1601 avenue De Lorimier, #105
Montreal, PQ H2K 4M5
Telephone: 514-598-2210
Facsimilie: 514-598-2223
Website: www.fsss.qc.ca

TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Association québécoise des enseignantes et enseignants du primaire
C.P. 65 002
Place Longueuil
Longueuil, Québec
J4K 5J4
Telephone: 514-334-6313
Facsimilie: 514-334-6313
Email: aqep@aqep.org
Website: www.aqep.org

Fédération nationale des enseignantes et des enseignants du Québec
1601, avenue De Lorimier
Montreal, PQ H2K 4M5
Telephone: 514-598-2241
Facsimilie: 514-598-2190
Email: fneeq.reception@csn.qc.ca
Website: www.fneeq.qc.ca

