



GOVERNMENT CONTEXT

Number of children 0-12 years (2003 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	305
1	335
2	350
3	335
4	365
5	380
6	400
7	375
8	420
9	460
10	470
11	455
12	455
Total	4,685

Number of children 0-12 years (2003 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0-2	900
3-5	1,080
6-12	2,615
Total	4,685

Number of children 0-12 years with mothers in the paid labour force (2003 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0 - 2	500
3 - 5	400
6 - 12	1,800
Total	2,700

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

Age	North American Indian	Metis	Inuit	Multiple	Other	Total
0 - 4	575	35	10	10	10	640
5 - 9	600	30	10	15	10	665
10 - 14	565	40	30	15	20	670
Total	1,740	105	50	40	40	1,975

Note: These 2001 data are the most recent available.

Children 0-14 yrs with disabilities residing at home (1991)

Use of technical aid	78
Speech difficulty	91
Developmental handicap	35

Note: These 1991 estimates are the most recent available. This information was supplied by the 1991 HALS survey which included the Yukon. That survey has been discontinued and replaced with PALS (Participation and Activity Limitation Survey). This does not include Yukon.

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	1,370	320	285	30
5 - 9	1,445	545	460	85
10 - 14	1,565	615	485	135
Total	4,380	1,480	1,230	250

Number of children by mother tongue (2001)

Age	English	French	Non-official language	Total
0 - 4	1,560	20	100	
5 - 9	1,910	45	75	
10 - 14	2,175	10	60	
Total	5,645	75	235	5,955

Number of children living in families below the LICO (2002)

Information not available

Workforce participation of women by age of youngest child (2001)

	Number of mothers in the labour force	Participation Rate
Females with children at home	4,030	85.1
With children under 6 yrs only	670	77.9
With at least one child under 2 yrs	310	73.8
With children 2-5 only	360	80.9
With Children under 6 years as well as children 6 years and over	525	82.0
With children 6 yrs and over only	2,835	87.8
Youngest child 6-14 yrs	1,680	91.8

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census

FAMILY-RELATED LEAVE

Maternity leave

Seventeen weeks

Parental leave

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

Adoption leave

Thirty-seven weeks

Births and EI maternity and parental claims (2003)

Number of births	355
Birth rate per 1,000 population	11.2
Number of initial maternity claims allowed	220
Average length of maternity claims	14.5 weeks
Number of parental claims	230
Average length of parental claim	25.2 weeks
Number of adoptive parent claims	0
Average length of adoptive claim	not applicable

Note: Maternity, parental and adoption leaves are determined by provincial and territorial legislation. The federal government pays for up to 15 weeks for maternity leave and 35 weeks for parental and adoptive leave for eligible parents at 55% of earned income to a maximum of \$413/week. See federal ECEC programs for more information.

KINDERGARTEN

LEGISLATION

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

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

There are no private schools in Yukon.

TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten contact

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Government of Yukon

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KINDERGARTEN SERVICES

KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten is delivered in public schools under the Department of Education. There are 28 kindergarten programs, six of which are full-day.

There are 475 instructional hours. All five year olds have access to kindergarten but it is not compulsory.

Hours of attendance are determined by Yukon Department of Education (there are no school boards).

There are three full-day kindergartens in Whitehorse, and two in rural communities (one opened in September 2004). The francophone school board also runs a full-day kindergarten program.

In nine communities (eight rural, one urban), combined four and five year old kindergarten programs are offered. Where there are four year olds involved, the Child Development Centre may provide assistance for particular students (see Special Features).

AGE ELIGIBILITY

Four years and eight months as of September 1st.

CLASS SIZE

There is a territorial class size limit of 22.

Average/mean class size in 2003/04: 14. There is considerable variation between small rural schools where class size is 5-10 students and large urban schools where it is 16-21 students.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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

The number of children with special needs in 2003/04: 48

ENROLMENT (2003/04)

Number of children enrolled in kindergarten (the year before Grade 1): 334

Number of children enrolled in kindergarten (two years before Grade 1): 44

KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

Qualification requirements: Teacher certification which requires a B.Ed. or a bachelor's degree plus an approved program of teacher preparation of not less than one academic year.

Teachers must complete one full course of Yukon studies, of which at least 1/2 course must be in Yukon or Northern Canadian Studies and any balance must be in multicultural education or the sociological and philosophical foundations of education within the culture of the Yukon First Nations. There are no special requirements for kindergarten but applications with Early Childhood training are given preference.

Responsibility for certification: Yukon Teacher Certification Board

Representation: Yukon Teachers' Association

Average salary of a kindergarten teacher (2003/04): Full time: \$67,200, half-time: \$33,510

Number of kindergarten teachers (2003/04): 24; 17 half-time; seven full-time

CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

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

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

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

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

The Yukon Teachers' Association represents classroom assistants

Average wage (2003/04): Full time \$33,976.00; half time - \$16,988.00

CURRICULUM

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

MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

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

SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR KINDERGARTEN

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

The francophone board receives additional federal funds.

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

PUBLIC SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN (2003/04)

Per capita spending: Approx \$5,500 per student K-12 excluding capital. Schools are funded according to size.

Spending on kindergarten programs: Information not available

SPECIAL FEATURES

Eight rural schools admit 4 year olds into the regular kindergarten program. These targeted communities are mainly First Nations with many children determined to be at risk. The focus is on language development, social skills, pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills.

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

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN KINDERGARTEN 2002/04

In March 2002 position descriptions for Educational Assistants and Remedial Tutors were approved.

REGULATED CHILD CARE

LEGISLATION

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

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

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

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

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

TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

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CHILD CARE SERVICES

UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

Unregulated family child care

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

Preschools

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

REGULATED CHILD CARE

Child care centres

Group care for less than 24 hours a day for four or more children up to and including 12 years of age in a place other than a preschool, a school-age program, or a family day home

School-age child care

Care outside school hours for school-aged children up to and including 12 years

Family day homes

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

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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

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

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

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

ABORIGINAL CHILD CARE

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

In total there are approximately 225 regulated spaces operated or supported by First Nations in seven centres. There are three Aboriginal Head Start programs, two as part of regulated First Nations child care centres, and one stand-alone unlicensed preschool. Parents who use the regulated centres and family child care homes are eligible for fee subsidies.

SPACE STATISTICS (2003/04)

Number of regulated child care spaces	
<i>Centre-based</i>	
Infants/toddlers	345
Preschool	398
School-age	243
Family child care	383
Total regulated spaces	1,369
<i>Note: All spaces are considered to be full-time.</i>	
Children with special needs in regulated child care	
	(approximately) 45
Children receiving subsidies	786
Number of facilities and homes	
Number of child care centres	37
- Full day	31
- Stand-alone after school programs	6
Number of individual family child care providers	43
Sponsorship of regulated centre spaces	
Non-profit	729
For-profit	257
Openings and closings	
New child care centre licenses issued	6
Number of child care centre closures	2
Number of new licenses issued to individual family child care providers	6
Number of family child care providers who ceased providing care	2

STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

REGULATED CENTRES

Maximum centre size	54 spaces	
Maximum staff:child ratios and group sizes		
Age	Staff: child ratios	Max. Group sizes
0-18 mos	1:4	8
18 mos-2 yrs	1:6	12
3-6 yrs	1:8	16
6-12 yrs*	1:12	24
<i>*Note: The current Act and Regulations cover special needs children up to age 16.</i>		

Staff qualification requirements

As of 2000, 20% of staff must meet or exceed the Child Care Worker III qualifications, 30% must meet or exceed the Child Care Worker II qualifications and the rest must meet or exceed Child Care Worker I qualifications.

Levels:

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

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

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

Parent involvement

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

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

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

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

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

REGULATED FAMILY DAY CARE

Regulation

Individually licensed

Maximum capacity

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

Provider qualification requirements

Caregivers must complete a 60 hour introductory early childhood development course, a specific family day home course, or equivalent within the first year they provide care for children. Caregivers must be 18 years of age and have a first-aid certificate.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

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

FUNDING

CHILD CARE FEE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

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

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

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

Eligibility for fee subsidy (net income, 2003/04)

	Turning point	Break-even point
1 parent, 1 child	\$20,424	\$32,304
2 parents, 2 children	30,060	51,624

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

Maximum subsidy rate/child/month (2003/04)

Infant	\$500
Preschool	450
School-age	225
Child with special needs	500

PUBLIC FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2003/04)

Recurring funding

One-time funding

Start-up funding is available to family child care homes of up to \$1,000/home in Whitehorse and up to \$2,000/home in the rest of the territory. Start-up funding is available to child care centres.

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

Operating grants

All regulated child care programs receive an operating grant.

Operating grants are based on a point system and are provided in three categories: age and enrolment of children, training of staff, and building occupancy. Family child care homes are eligible for the enrolment and training components of the grant but not the occupancy components.

Enrolment component:

- Infants	11 points
- Toddlers	7 points
- Preschoolers	5 points
- School age	4 points
- Children with special needs	11 points

Training component:

- Child Care Worker III	21 points
- Child Care Worker II A	16 points
- Child Care Worker II	11 points
- Child Care Worker I A	8 points
- Child Care Worker I	4 points

Occupancy component

- For each \$50/month spent on rent and utilities 1 point.
- Enrolment points are calculated \$16/month, training calculated at \$25/month. Payment is made to the centre or home on a quarterly basis.

Centres and family day homes that provide a hot lunch and two snacks a day receive an additional \$25/child/month in their operating grant.

Set-up spaces are calculated at \$97.45 per space

Start-up and operating funding is available to all regulated centres and family child care homes. There are no waiting lists for funding.

TERRITORIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2003/04)

Fee subsidies	\$2,854,284
Capital Development funding	80,000
<i>Recurring funding</i>	2,228,000
<i>Supported Child Care funding</i>	35,000
Total	\$5,197,284

Other funding

The Whitehorse Child Development Centre receives \$1,405,989 from the government of Yukon to provide a range of services in regulated and unregulated child care.

Note: Some funding from the social assistance budget is spent on child care. This includes covering the cost of parent surcharges above the subsidy rates and up to three dollars an hour in unregulated care if regulated care is not available. The amount spent on child care from this budget in 2003/04 is not available.

SALARIES

Mean gross hourly wage for centre-based child care staff (full- and part-time staff combined- 2003/04)

Level 1 - \$12.10

Level 2 - 12.71

Level 3 - 15.89

Director - 20.95

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

Family child care

Information not available

FEES

Median monthly parent fees for centre-based full-time care (2000)

Infants (0-17 mos) \$630

Toddlers (18 mos-3 yrs) 550

Preschoolers (3 yrs-5.11 yrs) 514

School-age 250

Source: Information provided by territorial officials. More recent information is not available.

Average daily fee in family child care

Approximately the same as in centre-based care

ADMINISTRATION

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

MUNICIPAL AND OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROLE

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

CHILD CARE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

In 2003 the Minister of Health and Social Services appointed a time-limited child care working group tasked with developing recommendations for a four-year plan to address issues identified by child care stakeholders. In the fall 2003 a four-year plan was submitted to the Minister for consideration. In response to the plan additional funding was allocated to child care, with increases for subsequent years, to be split between wages and centre operating funds. (See RECENT DEVELOPMENTS for further detail).

HISTORY OF CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

1961 A preschool playgroup was included in the activities at the Skookum Jim Memorial Hall in Whitehorse.

1968 A kindergarten program and after-school tutorial session for school-age children was established in Whitehorse.

1974 The Yukon Child Care Association was formed.

1979 *The Day Care Ordinance*, providing for licensing child care, was passed.

1986 Regulations were revised and operating grants introduced.

1987 A capital grant program was established.

1988 Working Together: A Child Care Strategy for the Yukon, a four year plan for expanding child care in the Yukon was presented by the government.

1989 The government released its strategy for the implementation of the Working Together document and the expansion of child care.

1990 Enactment of *The Child Care Act*. The First Year Review reported on the first year of the four-year plan.

1992 Federal grant to Yukon College for the provision of distance early childhood education courses.

1993 The consultation process on revised regulations and proposed new guidelines (which, for the first time, will cover school-aged child care) is completed.

1995 New child care, family child care, subsidy and school-age regulations were implemented. Guidelines and policies for child care centres and family child care were published and circulated by the Department of Health and Social Services.

In addition to new spaces in non-profit centres and family day care homes, the child care fee subsidy program recognized cost of living differences between remote and less remote communities.

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 – the Yukon scored 4.9 on the ECERS-R (preschool rooms), 5.2 on the ITERS (infant rooms), and 4.6 on the FDCRS (family child care).

1999 The moratorium placed on funding in September 1995 was lifted and all licensed child care programs in the Yukon received a direct operating grant.

The territorial government gave the Yukon Child Care Association funding (\$150,000) in 1999 to apply to training and conference costs for people in the early childhood development field.

2001 According to territorial officials, the majority of centres do not meet the requirements for trained staff in the regulations and have been granted exemptions.

2001 Eligibility for fee subsidy was expanded and family child care providers became eligible for the hot lunch component of the operating grant.

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

2001 Early Childhood Development Initiative allocation for the Yukon was \$300,000. \$90,000 was allocated to the Child Development Centre. The balance was allocated to the Healthy Families Initiative which provides in-home assistance and education to new parents, universal screening at birth, and intensive follow-up services where necessary.

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

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

2003 The Minister of Health and Social Services appointed a time-limited child care working group in response to issues identified by child care stakeholders. The working group was tasked with developing recommendations for a four year plan to address these issues. In fall 2003 a four year plan was submitted to the Minister for consideration. During the development of this plan an additional \$460,000 was allocated to child care: \$230,00 for wages and \$230,00 for set-up spaces. Set-up space funding helps stabilize centres by offsetting the revenue resulting from fluctuations in enrolment.

2004 In response to the four year plan the Government of Yukon increased the base budget for child care by \$675,000 with a 3-5% increase anticipated for subsequent years. This amount is to be split evenly between wages for child care workers and operational costs of facilities.

Also in response to the plan, the Department announced a change in how it delivers the direct operating grant. Operators will receive the operating funding by individual contribution agreements instead of a grant. This change will be fully operational by the 2005/06 fiscal year.

The government added \$10,000 to the Supported Child Care Fund in 2003, with an increase of \$5,000 in each of the next two years. This fund is used to help operators provide supports for children with special needs.

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

KEY TERRITORIAL ECEC ORGANIZATIONS

Yukon Child Care Association
P.O. Box 31710, Main Street
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 6L3
Telephone: 867-668-2485 or 867-667-4013
Facsimile: 867-668-3831

Society of Yukon Family Day Homes
12 Tutshi Road
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 3R3
Telephone: 867-668-6349
Facsimile: 867-393-3902

TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Yukon Teachers' Association
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