

Ontario's Early Years and Child Care Annual Report 2024

Ontario's Early Years and Child Care Annual Report 2024 describes the early years and child care system, key data and measures for child care and indicators under Ontario's bilateral federal-provincial early learning and child care agreements with the federal government.

Introduction

Ontario recognizes the vital role that a strong and accessible child care and early years system plays in supporting families across the province. High-quality early years and child care is fundamental in children's learning, development and well-being. We are committed to investing in this system to shape the future of our children and enhance the prosperity of our communities.

This report provides an annual snapshot and detailed year-over-year trends of Ontario's child care sector that will help inform future plans and policy. In addition, the report supports Ontario's commitments to informing the public on progress made under the federal-provincial early learning and child care agreements. Most of the data presented in this report were collected between March 2023 and March 2024.

In 2022, Ontario and Canada signed the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) Agreement that will support Ontario to achieve average fees of \$10 per day for children under the age of six in participating child care programs by the end of fiscal year 2025-26. The agreement prioritizes five key areas: lowering fees, increasing access, enhancing quality, supporting inclusion and strengthening data and reporting.

In 2023-24, Ontario continued collaborating with partners throughout the province, achieving significant milestones of implementing the CWELCC system:

- Winter 2023: The province released a Funding Formula Discussion Paper, launched the Child Care Funding Formula mini-survey and conducted 19 virtual consultations with over 60 key stakeholder groups on workforce, access and inclusion priorities and quality initiatives.
- May 2023: The province provided final space creation targets to service system managers under Ontario's Directed Growth Plan in order to create child care spaces in communities that need them most.
- June 2023: The province updated CWELCC funding guidelines for 2023-24, including guidelines for the new Start-up Grant program. Additionally, an updated Access and Inclusion Framework was released to support service system managers in developing and implementing local service plans with an increased focus on access as it relates to inclusion.
- June 2023: 92% of licensed child care spaces for children aged 0 to 5 were enrolled in the CWELCC system.
- November 2023: The province announced a workforce strategy to support the recruitment and retention of qualified professionals working in licensed child care, including increasing the wage floor and wage eligibility ceiling for eligible Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs).
- November 2023: The province released the 2024 funding guidelines to service system managers, including additional funding for cost escalation and emerging issues.
- March 2024: The province released updates to the Workforce Strategy and CWELCC system, including 2024 CWELCC funding allocations and guidelines, professional learning guidelines and an Addendum to the Ontario Child Care and EarlyON Child and Family Centres Service Management and Funding Guideline 2024.
- March/April 2024: The province released amended 2024 transfer payment agreements with the additional workforce compensation, professional learning, emerging issues and Start-up Grant funding included.
- April 2024: The province held virtual consultations with sector partners, including child care providers, experts, Indigenous partners, official language minority communities and other interested parties, as an important step in finalizing its fiscal year 2024-2025 Action Plan. This phase of Ontario's sector stakeholder consultations focused on the feedback shared in Winter 2023, CWELCC progress made to date and remaining gaps in CWELCC implementation.
- June 2024: The province conducted a survey to gather feedback directly from parents and guardians across the province, receiving nearly 11,000 responses. Alongside consultations, these engagements were crucial for shaping the direction of Ontario's early years and child care system and represent a significant step towards finalizing the 2024-2025 Action Plan.
- June 2024: The province completed the CWELCC Program Review with the federal government, which was an opportunity for Ontario and Canada to communicate progress and share information on the committed objectives under the CWELCC agreement, including a review of the targets, indicators and cost drivers.

- August 2024: The province announced a new, cost-based funding approach for CWELCC and released a Cost-Based Funding Guideline, effective January 1, 2025. Cost-based funding provides support for operating costs for licensees participating in CWELCC for the delivery of child care to children aged 0-5 years. Design of the new approach was heavily guided by extensive stakeholder engagement.

As of March 31, 2024, 5,420 (92%) licensed child care sites were enrolled in the CWELCC system, representing a total of 317,104 (92%) licensed child care spaces in centres and homes for children aged 0 to 5 years.

Across Ontario's entire licensed child care system for children aged 0 to 12 years, growth continued in 2023–24, supporting more children and families. From March 31, 2023 to March 31, 2024:

- The number of centres increased by 1.0% from 5,776 to 5,836.
- The number of spaces grew by 11,400 from 505,055 to 516,455, with an increase in all age groups, including 2.7% for infants, 4.5% for toddlers, 3.3% for preschool, 1.7% for kindergarten and 1.2% for school age. There was no change for the family age group.^[1]
- The number of home child care agencies increased by 2.0% from 148 to 151. These agencies oversee child care in 5,312 homes across the province ^[2].

To continue delivering high-quality, affordable child care and early years programs to families across the province, Ontario and Canada are investing \$5.24 billion in early years and child care in 2024-25. This includes:

- Provincial investments of \$1.67 billion to support the ongoing delivery of early years and child care services and EarlyON supports. This includes a general allocation for core service delivery of early years and child care programs.
- Investments of \$3.57 billion from the federal government to support Ontario's commitments under the CWELCC and ELCC agreements.

Over the same time period as the term of the CWELCC agreement, federal funding compliments and builds on the estimated \$21.6 billion the province is investing in full-day kindergarten and the estimated \$11.8 billion the province is investing in early years and child care (estimated total provincial investment of \$33.4 billion). Ontario's investment in early years and child care includes funding for fee subsidies and the Ontario Childcare Access and Relief from Expenses tax credit which also directly support lower child care costs for eligible families.

In summary, Ontario's early years and child care sector has showed strong growth and demonstrated significant achievements over the past year. These achievements could not be reached without the collaboration and leadership of our hardworking partners: our early years and child care workers, program operators, indigenous partners, service system managers and the federal government.

Part 1: Overview of the early years and child care system

The province sets overall policy, legislation and regulations for the child care and early years sector, under the authority of the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/14c11>), and licenses child care programs across the province. The province also conducts inspections and investigates complaints about licensed and unlicensed child care.

The province oversees and licenses two types of child care:

- child care centres
- home child care agencies that contract with home child care providers

The provincial government provides funding to 47 local service system managers, known as Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), to support licensed child care and child and family programs in the province (see Figure 1). These service system managers have the authority to determine funding priorities within their local systems, provided they comply with provincial legislation, policies and guidelines.

As of March 31, 2024, the province is funding 95 First Nations to support child care or child and family programs on reserve, of which:

- 30 receive funding for child care only
- 21 receive funding for child and family programs only
- 44 receive funding for child care and child and family programs.

Figure 1: Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services Administration Boards in Ontario

Data sources: Ontario Ministry of Education and Statistics Canada.

Map of Ontario showing the locations of Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services Administration Boards (CMSMs/DSSABs), which are as follows:

Map of Ontario showing the locations of Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services Administration Boards (CMSMs/DSSABs), which are as follows:

Location name

Algoma District Services Administration Board

City of Brantford

City of Cornwall

City of Greater Sudbury

City of Hamilton

City of Kawartha Lakes

City of Kingston

City of London

City of Ottawa

City of Peterborough

City of St. Thomas

City of Stratford

City of Toronto

City of Windsor

County of Bruce

County of Dufferin

County of Grey

County of Hastings

County of Huron

Location name
County of Lambton
County of Lanark
County of Lennox and Addington
County of Northumberland
County of Oxford
County of Renfrew
County of Simcoe
County of Wellington
District Municipality of Muskoka
District of Cochrane Social Services Administration Board
District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board
District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board
District of Sault Ste Marie Social Services Administration Board
District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board
District of Timiskaming Social Services Administrations Board
Kenora District Services Board
Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board
Municipality of Chatham-Kent
Norfolk County
Rainy River District Social Services Administration Board
Regional Municipality of Durham
Regional Municipality of Halton
Regional Municipality of Niagara

Location name
Regional Municipality of Peel
Regional Municipality of Waterloo
Regional Municipality of York
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
United Counties of Prescott and Russell

In Ontario, various partners work together to deliver early years and child care, each taking important roles and responsibilities.

Table 1: Roles and responsibilities of early years and child care partners	
Partner	Roles and Responsibilities
Province of Ontario	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Regulator (legislation/policy and licensing/compliance/enforcement)Funder
Service System Managers (CMSMs & DSSABs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Allocate funding to child care licensees and before and after school programsResponsible for managing and administering CWELCC, fee subsidies, wage enhancement, Special Needs Resourcing (to support inclusion of children with special needs in licensed child care) and before and after school programsWork with school boards and other partners to implement service plansDirectly operate child care and EarlyON programsEnsure the provision of French language child care and child and family programs and services where there is an identified need
Federal Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Funding partner: the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, Canada-Ontario Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care AgreementFunding partner: Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care
Licensed Home Child Care Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Licensed by the ministry and contract with individual providers who use their own homes to provide care to childrenOversee the provision of home child care in a provider's home
Licensed Child Care Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Licensed by the ministry to operate with varying capacity

Partner	Roles and Responsibilities
Unlicensed Child Care Operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child care provided by persons caring for up to five children (including their own children), with no more than three children under two years of age
First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Directly operate child care and child and family programs
School Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure the provision of before and after school programming for children aged 4-12 years, where there is sufficient demand and viability• Consult with local service system managers to identify sites and space for early years capital investments in schools• Responsible for facility management of their properties, including oversight of school-based capital construction projects
College of Early Childhood Educators (CECE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regulate the early childhood education profession in the public interest as set out under the <i>Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007</i>• Set education and training requirements for registration, standards of conduct for professionals, and oversee a complaints and discipline process

Part 2: Early years and child care key data and measures

High-quality early learning and child care is foundational to supporting early childhood development and student success. It is also a key enabler of workforce participation, particularly for women, both as parents and providers. Over the years, Ontario has advanced many initiatives to strengthen its early years and child care system. This includes:

- Providing **child care fee subsidies** to support lower-income families to access child care.
- Investing in **operator subsidies** to help offset costs that would otherwise result in higher child care fees. Support is provided for general operating costs, as well as wage enhancements for qualified staff.
- Establishing the **College of Early Childhood Educators** in 2008 as the self-regulatory body for the early childhood education profession in the province and the only regulatory college for early childhood educators in Canada.
- Rolling out universal **full-day kindergarten** starting in 2010 to provide a full day of free high-quality programming for all children aged 4 to 5 years in the publicly funded school system across the province.
- Conducting an **annual data collection** of child care program operations from licensed child care centres and home child care agencies since 2012 and reporting on the Early Development Instrument (EDI) indicators since 2003.
- Establishing a modern **legislative framework and quality standards**, the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA), that governs child care in Ontario. The legislation requires that programming in licensed spaces is aligned with the provincial pedagogy, *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014* (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-does-learning-happen-ontarios-pedagogy-early-years>), which sets out a vision, values, foundations and approaches to guide practice for high-quality experiences in licensed child care and early years settings.
- Supporting the recruitment and retention of early childhood educators in child care since 2015 through the Ontario **Wage Enhancement Grants**.
- Introducing the **Ontario Childcare Access and Relief from Expenses (CARE) tax credit** in 2019. The tax credit helps an estimated 300,000 families each year with up to 75% of their eligible child care expenses.
- Funding **EarlyON Child and Family Centres** to provide a variety of supports to caregivers and children up to six years old across Ontario.
- Implementing the CWELCC system in the province to reduce the average parent fees for children under six in participating child care programs to \$10 per by the end of fiscal year 2025-26. This includes:

- a Start-up Grant program to support the creation of new child care spaces in targeted regions and for underserved communities and populations.
- an Access and Inclusion Framework to support local service plans as related to inclusion.
- a workforce strategy to support the recruitment and retention of qualified professionals working in licensed child care.
- a cost-based funding approach providing support for operating costs for licensees participating in CWELCC for the delivery of child care to children aged 0-5 years.

These initiatives continue to shape Ontario's early years and child care system and benefit children and families in the province. A stable and accessible child care system is crucial in supporting the province moving forward with the implementation of the CWELCC system.

Licensed child care

In Ontario, licensed child care is provided in centres and homes, and is delivered by a mix of not-for-profit and for-profit organizations, municipalities, school boards and First Nations. As of March 31, 2024, there were 5,836 licensed child care centres in Ontario.

The total number of spaces in licensed centres for children aged 0 to12 was 516,455, which included:

- 38,402 spaces that provide services in French
- 8,291 spaces that provide bilingual services
- 3,399 spaces in First Nations communities

As of March 31, 2024, a total of 151 licensed home child care agencies were in operation in the province. These agencies were permitted to contract with a maximum of 5,312 approved homes^[3]. This includes two home child care agencies operated by First Nations, with a maximum of 31 approved homes.

Overall trends in licensed child care

Overall, Ontario's licensed child care sector continued to grow over the past year.

Since 2014–15:

- The number of licensed child care centres has increased by 13.5%, from 5,144 to 5,836. Licensed spaces in child care centres have increased by 47.2%, from 350,801 to 516,455.
- The number of spaces in centres for children aged 0 to 12 years has grown across all age groups, including kindergarten (94.5%), toddler (48.8%), infant (46.4%), school age (40.5%) and preschool (24.9%).
- The number of licensed home child care agencies has increased by 21.8%, from 124 to 151.

For more detailed data and changes over time, see Table 2 and Table 3.

Table 2a: Number of licensed child care centres and spaces 2014–15 to 2023–24										
Y e a r	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
N u m b e r o	5,144	5,276	5,351	5,437	5,523	5,565	5,506	5,545	5,776	5,836

Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
f C e n t r e s										
N u m b e r o f S p a c e s 0- 5	215,578	242,786	253,121	264,131	276,259	285,962	288,211	296,165	317,366	326,446
N u m b e r o f S p a c e s 0- 1 2	350,801	389,286	406,395	427,032	446,596	462,802	464,538	472,997	505,055	516,455

Table 2b: Number of spaces in centres by age group, 2014-15 to 2023-24

Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
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Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
I n f a n t	11,025	11,759	12,231	12,755	13,626	14,151	14,602	15,260	15,715	16,142
T o d d l e r	37,833	41,211	42,900	44,529	46,865	48,858	49,883	51,888	53,894	56,314
P r e s c h o o l	102,380	104,802	105,955	108,375	112,042	115,001	115,431	119,846	123,731	127,860
K i n d e r g a r t e n	64,340	85,014	92,035	98,310	103,308	107,260	107,453	108,247	123,014	125,118
S c h o o l a g e	135,223	146,500	153,274	162,901	170,337	176,840	176,327	176,832	187,689	190,009
F a m i l y a g e	N/A *****	N/A *****	N/A *****	162	418	692	842	924	1,012	1,012

Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
e [4]										

Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education (as of March 31 each year).

Table 3: Number of licensed home child care agencies and approved homes, 2014-15 to 2023-24										
Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
N u m b e r o f a g e n c i e s	124	122	124	122	124	131	139	145	148	151
N u m b e r o f a p p r o v e d h o m e	6,962	7,504	7,579	7,783	7,923	8,296	8,561	8,731	9,863	5,312

Y e a r	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
e s										

Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education (as of March 31 each year). The number of approved homes in 2023-24 are not comparable to previous years. In October 2023, the ministry revised the licensing process for approved homes to align with “active homes”^[5] operated by home child care agencies, resulting in a change in the number of approved homes.

Child care by type of auspice^[6]

As of March 31, 2024, 74.4% of licensed child care centres were not-for-profit (operated by not-for-profit organizations, municipalities and First Nations) and 25.6% were for-profit. For children aged 0 to 12 years, 78.4% of spaces were in not-for-profit centres and 21.6% in for-profit centres. For children aged 0 to 5 years, about 70% of spaces were in not-for-profit centres and 30% in for-profit centres.

Since 2014–15, the number of not-for-profit centres increased by 10.1% and for-profit increased by 24.4%. The number of spaces for children aged 0 to 12 years in not-for-profit centres increased by 48.4% and those in for-profit increased by 43.2%. The number of spaces for children aged 0 to 5 years in not-for-profit centres increased by 51.3% and those in for-profit centre increased by 51.8%.

For more detailed data and a look at changes over time, see Table 4.

Table 4a: Number of licensed child care centres by auspice, 2014–15 to 2023–24										
Y e a r	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
N o t- f o r- p r o f i t	3,942	4,007	4,053	4,128	4,186	4,187	4,138	4,133	4,328	4,341
F o r- p r o f i t	1,202	1,269	1,298	1,309	1,337	1,378	1,368	1,412	1,448	1,495

Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
N u m b e r o f c e n t r e s	5,144	5,276	5,351	5,437	5,523	5,565	5,506	5,545	5,776	5,836

Table 4b: Number of licensed child care spaces 0-12 by auspice, 2014-15 to 2023-24										
Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
N o t- f o r- p r o f i t	272,899	305,317	319,608	337,318	352,949	365,653	366,609	370,222	398,314	404,903
F o r- p r o f i t	77,902	83,969	86,787	89,714	93,647	97,149	97,929	102,775	106,741	111,552

Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
N u m b e r o f s p a c e s 0- 1 2	350,801	389,286	406,395	427,032	446,596	462,802	464,538	472,997	505,055	516,455

Table 4c: Number of licensed child care spaces 0-5 by auspice, 2014-15 to 2023-24

Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
N o t- f o r- p r o f i t	150,208	171,371	178,643	186,652	194,815	200,971	202,510	205,673	222,765	227,237
F o r- p r o f i t	65,370	71,415	74,478	77,479	81,444	84,991	85,701	90,492	94,601	99,209

Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
N u m b e r o f s p a c e s 0- 5	215,578	242,786	253,121	264,131	276,259	285,962	288,211	296,165	317,366	326,446

Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education (as of March 31 each year).

Licensed child care centres — openings and closures

Licensed child care centres open and close on a regular basis with more centres opening than closing in most years. Child care centres open for reasons such as the expansion of an existing program, a desire to provide a child care service in a community or local planning efforts by service system managers to address an increase in the need for child care. Centres that close typically do so due to low enrolment.

As of 2023-24, there were 692 more child care centres in operation than in 2014-15, with an annual net increase of 77 centres per year (see Table 5). In 2023-24, 212 child care centres opened and 152 closed – a net increase of 60 centres.

Table 5: Number of licensed child care centre openings and closures, 2014-15 to 2023-24										
Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
N u m b e r o f c e n t r	350	318	246	280	272	213	184	211	369	212

Y e a r	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
e s o p e n e d										
N u m b e r o f c e n t r e s c l o s e d	-275	-186	-171	-194	-186	-171	-243	-172	-138	-152

Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education (as of March 31 each year).

Licensed child care in publicly funded schools and in communities

As of March 31, 2024, 54.8% of child care centres and 64.6% of child care spaces were in publicly funded schools. The remaining 45.2% of child care centres and 35.4% of child care spaces were located elsewhere in the community. The number of licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools increased by 0.3% in 2023–24 compared to the previous year and spaces located in publicly funded schools increased by 1.7% in the same period.

Since 2014–15, the number of child care centres located in publicly funded schools has increased by 18.6%, and spaces have increased by 64.2% (see Table 6).

Table 6a: Number of licensed child care centres in publicly funded schools and in communities, 2014–15 to 2023–24

Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
I n p u b l i c l y f u n d e d s c h o o l s	2,699	2,782	2,841	2,943	2,990	3,004	2,987	2,996	3,190	3,200
I n c o m m u n i t i e s	2,445	2,494	2,510	2,494	2,533	2,561	2,519	2,549	2,586	2,636
C e n t r e s	5,144	5,276	5,351	5,437	5,523	5,565	5,506	5,545	5,776	5,836

Table 6b: Number of licensed child care spaces in publicly funded schools and in communities, 2014-15 to 2023-24

Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
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Y e a r	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
I n p u b l i c l y f u n d e d s c h o o l s	203,133	236,850	250,320	268,445	282,048	294,979	296,567	300,286	328,124	333,568
I n c o m m u n i t i e s	147,668	152,436	156,075	158,587	164,548	167,823	167,971	172,711	176,931	182,887
S p a c e s	350,801	389,286	406,395	427,032	446,596	462,802	464,538	472,997	505,055	516,455

Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education (as of March 31 for each year).

First Nations licensed child care

As of March 31, 2024, 75 licensed child care centres were operated by 58 First Nations or on First Nation reserves in Ontario. The number of First Nations licensed child care spaces has increased by 8.2% since 2014–15 (see Table 7).

Table 7a: First Nations licensed child care centres, 2014–15 to 2023–24

Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
N u m b e r o f c e n t r e s	75	76	76	76	75	75	74	73	75	75

Table 7b: First Nations licensed child care spaces by age group, 2014-15 to 2023-24

Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
I n f a n t	270	296	290	290	290	309	309	303	313	311
T o d d l e r	727	727	727	731	717	747	747	742	767	767
P r e s c h o o l	1,568	1,541	1,553	1,551	1,529	1,584	1,568	1,550	1,622	1,626
K i n	177	192	192	227	225	228	208	188	188	188

Y e a r	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
d e r g a r t e n										
S c h o o l a g e	398	413	413	416	413	459	459	492	492	492
F a m i l y a g e	N/A *****	N/A *****	N/A *****	0	15	15	15	15	15	15
N u m b e r o f s p a c e s	3,140	3,169	3,175	3,215	3,189	3,342	3,306	3,290	3,397	3,399

Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education (as of March 31 each year).

French-language and bilingual licensed child care

Some licensed child care centres offer services in French or in both English and French (bilingual). In 2023–24, of the 5,836 licensed child care centres, 313 (5.4%) offered programs in French and 113 (1.9%) offered bilingual programs. Of the 516,455 licensed child care spaces, for children aged 0 to 12,

38,402 (7.4%) were for programs in French and 8,291 (1.6%) were for bilingual programs. For further details about how these spaces are distributed by age, see Table 8.

Table 8: Number of licensed child care spaces in French-language and bilingual child care by age group, 2023–24		
Language	French	Bilingual
Infant	717	361
Toddler	3,169	1,623
Preschool	6,725	3,126
Kindergarten	10,814	1,344
School age	16,857	1,809
Family age	120	28
Number of spaces	38,402	8,291

Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education (as of March 31, 2024).

Parent fees by age group

Full-day child care continues to be more expensive for younger children than it is for older children. As of December 2023, mean full-day parent fees for licensed child care centres ranged from \$36.95 per day for infants to \$13.18 per day for kindergarten children. Mean full-day parent fees for licensed home child care agencies ranged from \$24.43 per day for children under two years of age to \$14.02 per day for children aged 4 to 5 years. In general, full day parent fees for children aged 0 to 5 years were higher among licensed child care centres than home child care agencies.

On average, before and after school care was more expensive for school age children than for kindergarten children in both centres and homes due to the implementation of the CWELCC fee reduction for younger children. Fees for before and after school care were lower in licensed child care centres compared to home child care agencies (see Table 9).^[7]

Table 9a: Mean daily fees by age group among licensed child care centres	
Age group	2024 (\$)
Infant (Full Day)	36.95
Toddler (Full Day)	31.97
Preschool (Full Day)	29.40

Age group	2024 (\$)
Kindergarten (Full Day)	20 . 74
Kindergarten (Before and After School)	13 . 18
School age (Before and After School)	23 . 57

Table 9b: Mean daily fees by age group among licensed home child care Agencies

Age group	2024 (\$)
Younger than 2 years (Full Day)	24 . 43
2 to 3 years (Full Day)	23 . 36
4 to 5 years (Full Day)	21 . 68
4 to 5 years (Before and After School)	14 . 02
6 to 12 (Before and After School)	24 . 99

Data source: 2024 Licensed Child Care Operations Survey, Ontario Ministry of Education (data as of December 31, 2023).

Staff wages by category

Program staff in licensed child care centres fall into one of three categories: Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs), staff approved by a ministry director^[8] or staff who are not RECEs and have not been director approved. As of December 2023, among full-time RECE program staff employed by licensed child care centres, 46.7% earned between \$20.00 and \$25.00 per hour and 29.9% earned between \$25.01 and \$28.59 per hour; 22.2% of full-time director approved program staff earned between \$16.55 and \$19.99 per hour and 55.3% earned between \$20.00 and \$25.00 per hour; and, 47.8% of non-RECE, not director approved program staff earned between \$16.55 and \$19.99 and 45.8% earned between \$20.00 and \$25.00 per hour (see Table 10). In November 2023, Ontario introduced a workforce strategy to support the recruitment and retention of qualified professionals working in licensed child care, including increasing the wage floor and wage eligibility ceiling for eligible RECEs beginning as of January 2024.

Table 10: Hourly wages of full-time program staff in licensed child care centres, 2023			
Hourly wage range	RECE (%)	Director approved (%)	Non-RECE/not director approved (%)
\$16.55–19.99	8 . 7	22 . 2	47 . 8
Total	100 . 0	100 . 0	100 . 0

Hourly wage range	RECE (%)	Director approved (%)	Non-RECE/not director approved (%)
\$20.00–\$25.00	46.7	55.3	45.8
\$25.01–\$28.59	29.9	14.5	4.4
\$28.60–\$29.99	4.6	2.1	0.6
\$30.00–\$32.49	3.9	1.9	0.6
\$32.50–\$34.99	3.8	0.9	0.3
\$35.00–\$37.49	1.2	0.6	0.1
\$37.50–\$39.99	0.8	0.6	0.1
\$40.01+	0.6	2.0	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Data source: 2024 Licensed Child Care Operations Survey, Ontario Ministry of Education (data as of December 31, 2023).

EarlyON Child and Family Centres

EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer free drop-in and registered programs for caregivers and children from birth to six years old. The centres are open to all families in Ontario and offer a range of services including:

- play-based learning and development activities such as reading, storytelling, games and sing-alongs
- advice from professionals trained in early childhood development
- information about other family services in the community
- opportunities to connect with other families with young children

EarlyON Child and Family Centre programs and services are offered through a variety of service delivery methods to meet the unique needs of families in their communities, including mobile, virtual and outdoor programs.

The ministry's EarlyON Child and Family Centre webpage (<https://www.ontario.ca/earlyon>) allows parents and caregivers to find child and family programs in their communities.

As of June 28, 2024, there were 770 main EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations and 488 mobile/satellite EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations. In addition, there were 108 EarlyON Child and Family Centres offering virtual service supports to meet the needs of families across the province.

Of the total number of EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations, 288 offer non-standard hours, 196 offer French-language programming and 131 offer Indigenous programming.^[9]

Child and Family Programs in urban and rural communities and on reserve

As part of Ontario's commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, the province continues to support child and family programs in First Nation communities and in urban and rural communities.

In 2024, Ontario supported 65 child and family programs in First Nation communities on-reserve (21 child and family programs and 44 joint child care and child and family programs) and 50 Indigenous-led child and family programs in urban and rural communities off-reserve (including 13 child and family programs and 37 joint child care and child and family programs).

Early years developmental health and well-being

Information on children's developmental health and well-being prior to Grade 1 is collected throughout the province using the Early Development Instrument (EDI). The EDI is a questionnaire that teachers complete about the skills and abilities of their Year 2 (senior) kindergarten students. It measures developmental health and well-being across five domains:

- physical health and well-being
- social competence
- emotional maturity
- language and cognitive development
- communication skills and general knowledge

The EDI is used as a population measure (such as, a measure of whole populations based on geographical or administrative boundaries) by the province, municipalities, school boards and community organizations to inform decision-making and plan early years programs and services. The province uses the EDI as a key indicator to monitor the state of young children in Ontario.

Since 2004, the EDI has been collected across the province in three-year cycles:

- over a three-year period for Cycle 1 (2004–06), Cycle 2 (2007–09) and Cycle 3 (2010–12)
- in a single year, every three years, for Cycle 4 (2015), Cycle 5 (2018) and Cycle 6 (2023)^[10]

EDI results can be compared over time to get a sense of how young children's developmental health and well-being is changing in Ontario. Examining the percentage of children who are vulnerable^[11] by domain is a way of monitoring areas where children's level of difficulty in meeting age appropriate developmental expectations may change over time (see Figure 2). The results can also be combined to look at all those who are vulnerable in one or more of the five domains (see Figure 3). Combining domains in this way provides a fuller picture and captures those children who may be vulnerable in single domains or in multiple domains.

Overall, there is a slight increase in the vulnerability rate between Cycle 5 and Cycle 6 (see Figure 3). In 2023, 31.1% of kindergarten children were vulnerable in one or more of five domains, compared to 29.6% in 2018. The vulnerability rates increased in four domains: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity and communication skills and general knowledge (see Figure 2).

The increased vulnerability from Cycle 5 to Cycle 6 may be associated with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. When the main pandemic restrictions were imposed in 2020, the 2023 EDI cohort were turning 3 years old. Their social worlds shrunk, the environments and activities in their lives became almost non-existent – they experienced limited availability or even closures of child care centres, lack of play dates and play groups, limited preschool and dramatic shrinking of social and family networks.

Additional information about the EDI is available from the Offord Centre for Child Studies (<https://edi.offordcentre.com/>) at McMaster University.

Figure 2: Percentage of vulnerable children by EDI domain, Cycles 1 to 6

Percentage of vulnerable children by EDI domain, Cycles 1 to 6						
Cycle	2004–06 (Cycle 1) %	2007–09 (Cycle 2) %	2010–12 (Cycle 3) %	2015 (Cycle 4) %	2018 (Cycle 5) %	2023 (Cycle 6) %
Physical health and well-being	12.9	14.0	14.2	16.1	16.3	17.6
Social competence	9.3	9.2	9.1	10.7	9.9	10.1

Cycle	2004–06 (Cycle 1) %	2007–09 (Cycle 2) %	2010–12 (Cycle 3) %	2015 (Cycle 4) %	2018 (Cycle 5) %	2023 (Cycle 6) %
Emotional maturity	10.3	10.4	10.1	12.3	11.3	13.1
Language and cognitive development	9.6	8.9	7.6	6.7	7.5	6.7
Communication skills and general knowledge	12.1	12.3	11.5	10.2	10.0	10.5

Data source: Offord Centre for Child Studies, McMaster University.

Figure 3: Percentage of children who are vulnerable in one or more EDI domains, Cycles 1 to 6

Percentage of children who are vulnerable in one or more EDI domains, Cycles 1 to 6	
Cycle	Percentage of children vulnerable in one or more domains %
2004–06 (Cycle 1)	28.0
2007–09 (Cycle 2)	28.5
2010–12 (Cycle 3)	27.6
2015 (Cycle 4)	29.4
2018 (Cycle 5)	29.6
2023 (Cycle6)	31.1

Data source: Offord Centre for Child Studies, McMaster University.

Part 3: The federal-provincial early learning and child care agreements

Canada-Ontario Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement

In March 2022, Ontario signed a historic CWELCC agreement with the federal government that will lower parent fees for children under the age of six in participating licensed child care programs, to an average of \$10 per day by the end of fiscal year 2025-2026. As a first step, families saw an immediate 25% reduction in their fees retroactive to April 1, 2022. Fees were further reduced by an average of 50%, from 2020 levels, by the end of December 2022.

Priorities

Ontario's Action Plan under the CWELCC Agreement outlines the key principles and priorities for this funding as well as the actions to be taken in the fiscal years 2022–23 and 2023–24 to work towards the goal of implementing CWELCC. The Action Plan sets objectives and targets that align with five priority areas:

- **Affordability:** average parent fees for children under six in participating child care programs were reduced 50%, from 2020 levels, by the end of December 2022 and will be further reduced to \$10 per day inclusive of fee subsidies by the end of fiscal year 2025-26 for licensed child care spaces
- **Increasing access:** 86,000 new licensed child care spaces (above 2019 levels) for children under six in participating child care programs will be created by the end of 2026, and expansion will be supported in geographic areas and diverse communities where it is needed the most
- **Enhancing quality:** improvements to wage compensation and professional development opportunities to support the recruitment and retention of qualified professionals working in licensed child care, to support the growth in the number of RECEs to make up 60% of the workforce in licensed child care by 2025–26
- **Supporting inclusion:** more children from diverse communities and populations (such as, Indigenous, Francophone, Black and other racialized groups, newcomers, low-income families and children with special needs), can access high-quality, inclusive child care by 2025–26
- **Strengthening data/reporting:** Ontario's data and reporting systems will be modernized and upgraded to effectively support implementation and measure success by 2025–26

2024 Consultations and Engagements

As part of the CWELCC agreement, Ontario has committed to extensive stakeholder engagement. In Spring 2024, Ontario initiated a series of virtual consultation sessions with 29 stakeholder groups to gather valuable input on the key pillars under the CWELCC agreement, including affordability, access, inclusion, workforce, quality and implementation and ongoing supports. Additionally, a survey for parents and guardians was open for three weeks to collect feedback on these pillars directly from families, which received close to 11,000 responses.

The consultations and survey were key opportunities to hear from a broad range of stakeholders, including families, child care providers, experts, Indigenous peoples, official language minority communities and other interested parties. These engagements were essential in shaping the direction of Ontario's early years and child care system and are an important step in finalizing the 2024-2025 Action Plan.

Reporting on progress

Ontario's CWELCC Action Plan outlines the indicators (<https://www.canada.ca/en/early-learning-child-care-agreement/agreements-provinces-territories/ontario-canada-wide-2021.html#h2.18>) that are used to measure progress and commits to reporting on the results achieved according to the indicators and targets starting in the fiscal year 2023–24.

The sections below outline expenditures on the CWELCC initiatives for 2023–24, followed by the progress achieved, according to the indicators and targets under the five priority areas.

Table 11: Expenditures under the CWELCC Agreement	
CWELCC	Actual Expenditures 2023–24 ^[12] (\$ million)
Allocations to Service System Managers: Fee Reduction and Workforce Compensation	1,886.7
Allocations to Service System Managers: Start-up Grants	109.3
Allocations to Service System Managers: Emerging Issues	53.3
Allocations to Service System Managers: Professional Learning	4.6
Allocations to Service System Managers: Municipal Administration	27.9
Total CWELCC Expenditures	2,086.3

CWELCC *****	Actual Expenditures 2023–24 ^[12] (\$ million) ***
Early Childhood Education Qualification Upgrade Program (ECE QUP) *****	0 . 5
Provincial Administration	4 . 1
Total CWELCC Expenditures *****	2 , 086 . 3

Priority Area 1 - Affordability

In Ontario's 2023-2024 Action Plan, the province committed to providing funding to licensed child care operators enrolled in the CWELCC system to support: *****

- a fee reduction of up to 25% for children aged 0 to 5 years retroactive to April 1, 2022

- a 50% fee reduction on average for children aged 0 to 5 years by the end of 2022

- \$10 per day average child care fees for children aged 0 to 5 years by the end of fiscal year 2025–26

For families to receive reduced fees, individual child care licensees must enrol in the CWELCC system through their local service system manager. *****

By December 31, 2022, Ontario met its first two fee reduction targets and average child care fees were reduced by an average of about 50% from 2020 levels. ***

Table 12 shows a reduction in mean parent fees by about 50% or more across all age groups and settings among CWELCC-enrolled programs as of December 31, 2023, when compared to the mean parent fees as of March 31, 2022. *****

Table 12a: Mean daily fees for children aged 0 to 5 years by age group for licensed child care centres			
Age group	2022 (\$) ***	2024 (\$) (CWELCC only) *****	% Reduction Compared to 2022 (%) *****
Infant (Full Day)	75 . 01	36 . 44	–51 . 42
Toddler (Full Day)	62 . 76	30 . 31	–51 . 70
Preschool (Full Day)	55 . 46	26 . 08	–52 . 98
Kindergarten (Full Day)	49 . 29	20 . 76	–57 . 89
Kindergarten (Before and After School)	26 . 07	13 . 01	–50 . 08

Table 12b: Mean daily fees for children aged 0 to 5 years by age group for licensed child care homes
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Age group	2022 (\$)	2024 (\$) (CWELCC only)	% Reduction Compared to 2022 (%)
Younger than 2 years (Full Day)	48.69	23.88	-50.95
2 to 3 years (Full Day)	47.30	22.91	-51.57
4 to 5 years (Full Day)	43.57	21.56	-50.51
4 to 5 years (Before and After School)	27.17	14.02	-48.38

Data source: 2022 and 2024 Licensed Child Care Operations Surveys, Ontario Ministry of Education (data as of March 31, 2022 and December 31, 2023, respectively). The 2024 mean daily child care fees are based on data from licensed child care programs enrolled in the CWELCC system. CWELCC fee reductions may be reduced by less than 50 per cent due to the \$12 per day floor.

Priority Area 2 - Access

To increase access, Ontario is committed to creating 86,000 new licensed child care spaces for children aged 0 to 5 years (above 2019 levels) in participating child care programs by December 31, 2026. The province is working with service system managers to ensure affordable child care is available in the communities that need it most.

Start-up Grants

In December 2022, Ontario announced a \$213 million Start-up Grant program to support the creation of new child care spaces in targeted regions and for underserved communities and populations. Service system managers have identified their priority neighbourhoods and populations in their Directed Growth Plans, and licensees can apply for Start-up Grants through their service system managers.

Information about the grant was provided to service system managers in the CWELCC Guidelines released in June 2023, including a notional allocation of \$54.8 million to support child care space creation in 2023.

In March 2024, Ontario announced its release of an additional \$75.3 million in Start-up Grant funding to service system managers, for a total of \$160.7 million in the 2024 calendar year. An added \$151 million in funding has been earmarked for 2025. This will amount to a total of \$366.5 million in investments in Start-up Grants since 2023.

At the same time, the province also increased service system manager flexibility in allocating Start-up Grants to eligible centre-based licensees by removing the funding cap of \$90 per square foot and by lowering the number of child care spaces for a grant of up to \$350,000 in funding from every 50 to every 20 child care spaces created. Eligible home child care licensees can now receive grants of up to \$1,200 per CWELCC space created, to a maximum of \$7,200 per provider, an increase from \$1,000 per CWELCC space created and a previous maximum of \$6,000 per provider (see Table 13). These changes were implemented to address sector feedback on the need for more flexibility, to provide available funding sooner and to better align with actual space creation costs, while supporting Directed Growth.

Table 13: Change in Start-up Grant funding

Child care space type	Prior Start-up Grant funding amounts per child care space	New Start-up Grant funding amounts per child care space	Net increase per child care space
Centre-based	\$7,000	\$9,000	+\$2,000
Home-based	\$1,000	\$1,200	+\$200

In 2023, Start-up Grants supported 7,642 net new licensed child care spaces, among which:

- 5,560 were in centres and 2,082 in homes

- 737 were for infant, 2,327 for toddler and 4,578 for preschool
- 4,135 were for-profit and 3,507 not-for-profit.

Space increase

The number of licensed child care spaces for children aged 0 to 5 years are shown in Table 14. As of March 2024, there are 345,159 licensed spaces for children aged 0 to 5 years in Ontario, an increase of more than 56,000 spaces from the 2019 level.

The number of CWELCC spaces for children aged 0 to 5 years are summarized in Table 15 for the available time points. As of March 2024, 317,104 licensed child care spaces in centres and homes are enrolled in the CWELCC systems and 27,993 net new CWELCC spaces have been created towards the commitment of 86,000 spaces under the agreement

Table 14a: Number of spaces in licensed child care centres and enrollment in licensed home child care agencies for children aged 0 to 5 years by type of setting, auspice and age group (Centres) ^[13]				
Year	2019	2022	2023	2024
Auspice (Not-for-profit)	194,815	205,673	222,765	227,237
Auspice (For-profit)	81,444	90,492	94,601	99,209
Age Group (Infant)	13,626	15,260	15,715	16,142
Age Group (Toddler)	46,865	51,888	53,894	56,314
Age Group (Preschool)	112,042	119,846	123,731	127,860
Age Group (Kindergarten)	103,308	108,247	123,014	125,118
Age Group (Family age)	418	924	1,012	1,012
Total	276,259	296,165	317,366	326,446

Table 14b: Number of spaces in licensed child care centres and enrollment in licensed home child care agencies for children aged 0 to 5 years by type of setting, auspice and age group (Homes) ^[13]				
Year	2019	2022	2023	2024
Age Group (Younger than 2 years)	3,554	4,255	4,067	5,464
Total	12,852	12,476	13,635	18,713

Year	2019	2022	2023	2024
Age Group (2 to 3 years)	5,350	5,870	7,080	10,801
Age Group (4 to 5 years)	3,948	2,351	2,488	2,448
Total	12,852	12,476	13,635	18,713

Table 14c: Number of spaces in licensed child care centres and enrollment in licensed home child care agencies for children aged 0 to 5 years by type of setting, auspice and age group (Auspice)^[13]

Year	2019	2022	2023	2024
Not-for-profit Total	207,667	218,149	236,400	245,950
For-profit Total	81,444	9,492	94,601	99,209
Total	289,111	308,641	331,001	345,159

Data source: Child Care Licensing System and Licensed Child Care Operations Survey, Ontario Ministry of Education. Data as of March 31, for spaces in centres each year. For enrollment in homes, data as of March 31, 2018 and 2022 respectively for 2019 and 2022; data as of December 31, 2022 and 2023 for enrollment in homes respectively for 2023 and 2024. The data represent all licensed child care programs, regardless of whether they are enrolled in the CWELCC system or not and include spaces operated by First Nations.

Table 15: Number of CWELCC spaces in licensed child care centres and homes for children aged 0 to 5 years by type of setting and auspice

Type (Setting/Auspice)	2022	2023	2024
Setting: Centres	287,590	295,708	298,130
Setting: Homes	14,150	94,601	18,974
Auspice: Not-for-profit	227,518	237,026	238,724
Auspice: For-profit	74,222	77,656	78,380
Total	301,740	314,682	317,104

Data source: CWELCC enrolment reports from CMSMs/DSSABs. For the purposes of the CWELCC Agreement, all home child care agency licensees (as defined under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*) are deemed to be not-for-profit licensed child care, regardless of auspice. Data for 2022, 2023 and 2024 are as of December 2022, December 2023 and March 2024, respectively.

Priority Area 3 - Inclusion

Ontario is committed to building a child care system for all children by developing an inclusion plan that supports child care access for low-income children, vulnerable children, children from diverse communities, Francophones and Indigenous children.

Informed by sector consultations in early 2023, Ontario released the finalized Access and Inclusion Framework in June 2023. The Framework supports service system managers in developing and implementing local service plans with increased focus on access as it relates to inclusion.

The Framework has maintained its close link with the Directed Growth strategy to create spaces in communities most in need — the allocation of nearly 86,000 new child care spaces to service system managers — and the province's CWELCC commitments under Ontario's Action Plan.

The province will continue to engage with the sector on updates to the Access and Inclusion Framework, on data gathering and assessment of barriers to access and inclusion and on workforce and data collection initiatives to support ongoing CWELCC policy and program development.

The province is in the early stages of engaging with Indigenous partners to develop a collaborative plan that supports Indigenous children's access to affordable, high-quality and culturally appropriate early learning and child care. The goal is to identify and leverage best practices and remove barriers to the creation of Indigenous-led child care. Currently, the province is undertaking tri-lateral conversations with Indigenous partners and the Government of Canada.

Special Needs Resourcing

The province provides Special Needs Resourcing funding to service system managers and First Nations to support the inclusion of children with special needs in licensed child care settings, including home child care, camps and authorized recreation programs, at no additional cost to parents and caregivers. Under Ontario Regulation 138/15, a "child with special needs" means a child whose cognitive, physical, social, emotional, or communicative needs, or whose needs relating to overall development, are of such a nature that additional supports are required for the child. Funding for Special Needs Resourcing may only be used to hire services to support the inclusion of children with special needs, provide professional development opportunities to staff working with children with special needs, or purchase or lease specialized equipment and supplies to support children with special needs.

In 2023, a total of \$194.8 million (11.6% of provincial funding) was spent on Special Needs Resourcing, benefiting a total of 44,092 children.^[14]

French-language and bilingual programs

Ontario has committed to maintaining or increasing the level of licensed child care spaces offering French-language programs and bilingual programs for children aged 0 to 5 years by 2025–26. The province also plans to continue to meet or exceed the number of French spaces for children aged 0 to 5 years proportional to the population of French-speaking people in Ontario.

In 2021, there were 19,900 licensed child care spaces offering French-language programs and 5,600 licensed spaces offering bilingual programs for children aged 0 to 5 years. Since then, there's been growth in both categories. As of March 31, 2024, there were 21,545 spaces offering French-language programs and 6,482 spaces offering bilingual programs for children aged 0 to 5 in the province. Approximately, 7.4% of licensed child care spaces were in French-language programs, exceeding Ontario's French-speaking community, which makes up approximately 4% of the population.

Priority Area 4 - Workforce and Quality

Under the CWELCC system, Ontario is supporting the recruitment and retention of RECEs through improved compensation for lower-wage earners, including wage minimums and the development of strategies to improve recruitment and retention.

Wage Enhancement

In November 2023, a comprehensive workforce strategy was announced to support the recruitment and retention of RECEs through further improvements to wage compensation and professional development opportunities, to be implemented in 2024.

In 2024, the wage floor increased to \$23.86 per hour for RECE program staff and \$24.86 per hour for RECE child care supervisors and RECE home child care visitors. The wage eligibility ceiling increased to \$26.00 per hour for RECE program staff and \$29.00 per hour for RECE child care supervisors and RECE home child care visitors. Eligible RECEs received an up to \$1 per hour wage increase on January 1, 2024, as long as their wages were below the wage eligibility ceiling.

The provincially funded Wage Enhancement Grant (WEG) also supports a wage enhancement for eligible child care professionals working in licensed child care settings. Licensees are required to apply for WEG to be eligible for the wage floor or annual wage increase under the CWELCC system. The

wage floor and annual wage increase are calculated after the Wage Enhancement Grant has been accessed.

According to data reported by service system managers, in 2023:

- 5,586 RECE program staff, 609 RECE supervisors and 157 RECE home child care visitors were supported by the wage floor.
- 17,966 RECE program staff, 1,301 RECE supervisors and 170 RECE home child care visitors were supported by the annual wage increase.

The table below outlines the wage ranges for full-time RECE program staff, supervisors and home child care visitors working in licensed child care. From March 2022 to December 2023, wage increases are shown across all three categories.

Table 16: Hourly wages of full-time RECE program staff, supervisors and home child care visitors in licensed child care, 2022						
Hourly Wage Range ^[15]	RECE Program Staff 2022 (%)	RECE Program Staff 2024 (%)	RECE Supervisors 2022 (%)	RECE Supervisors 2024 (%)	RECE Home Child Care Visitors 2022 (%)	RECE Home Child Care Visitors 2024 (%)
\$15.00–\$19.99	32.4	8.7	7.8	1.5	6.5	0.4
\$20.00–\$25.00	43.8	46.7	26.3	14.4	17.4	16.9
\$25.01–\$28.59	14.7	29.8	24.2	24.0	27.0	19.9
\$28.60–\$29.99	2.5	4.6	7.4	8.3	10.0	13.5
\$30.00–\$32.49	2.2	3.9	8.9	13.8	8.3	17.2
\$32.50–\$34.99	2.4	3.8	7.5	11.2	7.0	11.2
\$35.00–\$37.49	1.0	1.2	4.7	7.0	7.4	3.4
\$37.50–\$39.99	0.6	0.8	3.6	7.0	3.9	4.5
\$40.01+	0.4	0.6	9.5	12.8	12.6	13.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Data source: Licensed Child Care Operations Surveys, Ontario Ministry of Education. The 2022 survey refers to data as of March 31, 2022, and the 2024 survey refers to data as of December 31, 2023.

Percentage of RECEs

Ontario aims to increase the percentage of staff who are RECEs in the licensed child care workforce to 60% by 2025–26. As of December 31, 2023, there were 40,359 full-time program staff employed by licensed child care centres, of which 22,600 (56.0%) were RECEs (see Table 17). The slight reduction in the percentage of RECEs is attributed to a more significant increase in the total number of full-time program staff (7,914 or 24%) compared to the increase in full-time RECE program staff (3,488 or 18%) between March 31, 2022 and December 31, 2023.

Table 17: Number and percentage of full-time RECE program staff

Staff Type	2022	2023	2024
Number of full-time RECE program staff	19,112	20,947	22,600
Total number of full-time RECE and non-RECE program staff	32,445	35,967	40,359
% of full-time RECE program staff	58.9%	58.2%	56.0

Data source: Licensed Child Care Operations Surveys, Ontario Ministry of Education. The 2022, 2023 and 2024 surveys refer to data as of March 31, 2022, December 31, 2022 and December 31, 2023, respectively.

Professional Development

In 2024, Canada and Ontario invested \$18.5 million in professional development, including sustaining workforce initiatives funded under the 2021–22 Early Childhood Workforce Agreement, to improve recruitment and retention of the Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE) workforce and other program staff, and to support the implementation of the CWELCC Agreement.

This funding will support professional learning opportunities that build capacity of the early years and child care sector to support the provision of high-quality programs that align with *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014*. Access to continuous professional learning opportunities can support higher levels of staff engagement, growth, recognition, professional efficacy and satisfaction. Enhancing current professional learning supports to include mental health information for the child care and early years workforce will promote more meaningful relationships, enriched experiences and a greater sense of well-being for children, educators and families.

Table 18: Results achieved for training and professional development

Table 18: Results achieved for training and professional development		
Indicators	Targets	Results
Number of program staff and supervisors (RECE and non-RECE) supported through Professional Learning and Development Strategy	75% of program staff and supervisors enrolled in two professional learning days	In 2023, 36,476 program staff and supervisors (RECE and non-RECE) were supported through the Professional Learning and Development Strategy, representing approximately 81% full-time program staff and supervisors in the licensed child care sector.
Number of child care programs (centre-based and home child care agencies) and EarlyON Centres supported	50% of child care programs and EarlyON Centres supported through the Professional Learning and Development Strategy	In 2023, 2,457 (about 37%) child care programs and EarlyON Centres were supported through the Professional Learning and Development Strategy.
Number of program staff participating in mentorship programs	25% of new program staff and supervisors participating in mentorship programs	In 2023, 3,522 program staff participating in mentorship programs.
Number of individuals supported through recruitment and retention initiatives.	Support individuals through recruitment and retention initiatives	In 2023, 33,485 individuals supported through local recruitment and retention initiatives.

Indicators	Targets	Results
Increase in the number of applications approved (including Francophone and Indigenous applications approved)	Increase the number of applications for grants under the ECE QUP by 40%	In 2023–24, a total of 3,232 applications were approved under the Early Childhood Educators Qualifications Upgrade Program. Over the last 5 years, there has been an increase in the number of applications received, demonstrating an overall growth rate of 81%.
Number of ECE graduates supported with one-time CECE registration fees	Support approximately 400 graduates with one-time ECE registration fees	In 2023-24, 225 ECE graduates were supported with one-time CECE registration fees.
Number of professionals supported through Professional Learning Strategies	Support approximately 1,800 professionals	In 2023-24, 1,969 individuals were supported through Professional Learning strategies for Francophone and Indigenous communities.

Priority Area 5 – Implementation and Ongoing Supports

Ontario is committed to ensuring the implementation of the CWELCC agreement is done in a manner that reflects Ontario's principles of accountability and transparency.

To achieve this, Ontario is exploring the development of an IT solution to support greater consistency across the province, reduce administrative burden across the sector (especially for families), and support data collection and analysis, including reporting to the federal government on key indicators associated with the CWELCC system.

In 2023–24, 1.5% of the CWELCC expenditures was used for administration of CWELCC initiatives at the provincial and municipal level including associated IT costs and the implementation of the digital transformation initiative mentioned above.^[16]

Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement

The federal government committed \$400 million in their 2016 budget and an additional \$7 billion over 10 years in their 2017 budget, to establish a Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework (<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/early-learning-child-care/reports/2017-multilateral-framework.html>) with provinces and territories. Under the framework, the federal government, provinces and territories agreed to work together over time to achieve broad long-term goals for early learning and child care systems that are high-quality, accessible, affordable, flexible and inclusive. Provinces and territories also agreed to report annually on progress made in relation to the framework and on the impact of federal funding, while reflecting the priorities of each jurisdiction in early learning and child care.

On June 12, 2017, Ontario was the first province to sign an agreement under the framework, known as the three-year Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Agreement (<https://www.canada.ca/en/early-learning-child-care-agreement/agreements-provinces-territories.html>) . Under the agreement, the federal government agreed to allocate \$439 million to Ontario over three years (2017–18, 2018–19 and 2019–20).^[17] In July 2020, the federal and provincial governments agreed on a one-year extension of the Canada-Ontario ELCC Agreement, which allocated nearly \$147 million in 2020–21 for early learning and child care investments. In August 2021, the federal and provincial governments agreed on a four-year renewal of the Canada-Ontario ELCC Agreement. Under the renewal, Ontario received nearly \$147 million in federal funding in 2021–22 to continue early learning and child care investments in the province, and the annual funding gradually increases to \$211 million in 2024–25.

This section highlights Ontario's progress in working towards increasing quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility and inclusion in early learning and child care under the Canada-Ontario ELCC Agreement. Please see the indicators (<https://www.canada.ca/en/early-learning-child-care-agreement/agreements-provinces-territories/ontario-2017.html>) that are being used to measure Ontario's progress.

1) Expenditures and actions

Under the agreement, Ontario received \$215.1 million in federal funding in the 2023–24 fiscal year, which included \$3.0 million carried forward from the 2022–23 fiscal year. Ontario’s actual expenditures in the 2023–24 fiscal year were \$207.8 million.^[18]

The 2023-24 funding supported the following three action areas:

- affordable, high-quality licensed child care
- EarlyON Child and Family Centres
- high-quality training and professional learning opportunities for the early years and child care workforce

Table 19: Canada-Ontario ELCC Agreement expenditures and actions for 2023-24

Areas	Federal allocations	Actions	Actual expenditures ^[19] (\$ million)
High-Quality Licensed Child Care	Ontario allocated \$146.4 million of the federal funding for increased subsidies and access to licensed child care in Ontario.	The federal funding was provided to service system managers through provincial-municipal service agreements. In December 2022, service system managers received consolidated 2023 service agreement and funding guidelines for licensed child care and EarlyON Child and Family Centres, including funding under the Canada-Ontario ELCC Agreement.	\$143.8
EarlyON Child and Family Centres	Ontario allocated \$60.7 million of the federal funding to support EarlyON Child and Family Programs.	The federal funding was provided to service system managers to support 770 main EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations, 488 mobile/satellite EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations and 108 EarlyON Child and Family Centres offering virtual supports across Ontario.	\$58.4
Professional Development	Ontario allocated \$4.0 million of the federal funding to increase the number of students supported through the Early Childhood Educators Qualifications Upgrade Program.	The federal funding was provided through grants that were made available for 2023–24 to support individuals working in eligible early years and child care settings to obtain an early childhood education diploma or leadership certification.	\$4.0
Professional Development	Ontario allocated \$4.0 million of the federal funding to support professional learning for the early years and child care workforce.	The federal funding was provided to support culturally relevant professional learning strategies for Francophone and First Nation, Métis, Inuit and Indigenous staff working in the child care and early years sector	\$1.5

Data source: Ontario Ministry of Education.

2) Licensed child care indicators

The indicators reported in this section are reflective of the areas of investment under the agreement for increasing quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility and inclusion in licensed child care.

Quality

Staff qualifications

Ontario Regulation 137/15 under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/14c11>) sets out the minimum requirements for staff qualifications in licensed child care centres and home child care agencies, including requirements for the ratio of employees to children, the

maximum number of children in a group and the proportions of employees that must be qualified employees in licensed child care centres, which varies for different age groups (see Table 20). The minimum requirements are as follows:

A **supervisor** shall be a person who:

- is a member in good standing of the College of Early Childhood Educators, has at least two years of experience providing licensed child care and is approved by a ministry director; or
- in the opinion of a director, is capable of planning and directing the program of a child care centre, being in charge of children and overseeing staff

A **qualified employee** for any licensed age group shall be a person who is:

- an employee who is a member in good standing of the College of Early Childhood Educators
- an employee who is otherwise approved by a director

With respect to a licensed junior school age group or a licensed primary/junior school age group, the following are also qualified employees:

- an employee who has a diploma or degree in child and youth care
- an employee who has a diploma or degree in recreation and leisure services
- an employee who is a member in good standing with the Ontario College of Teachers

A **home child care visitor** is an employee of a home child care agency who monitors and provides support at licensed home child care locations. A home child care visitor shall be a person who:

- is a member in good standing of the College of Early Childhood Educators, has at least two years of experience working with children under 13 years old, and is approved by a director; or
- is, in the opinion of a director, capable of providing support and supervision at a home child care premises

Table 20: Staff/child ratios, group sizes and proportion of employees that must be qualified employees for different age categories in licensed child centre-based care

Age categories	Age range	Ratio of employees to children	Maximum number of children in group	Proportion of employees that must be qualified employees
Infant	Younger than 18 months	3 to 10	10	1/3
Toddler	18 months or older but younger than 30 months	1 to 5	15	1/3
Preschool	30 months or older but younger than 6 years	1 to 8	24	2/3
Kindergarten	44 months or older but younger than 7 years	1 to 13	26	1/2
Primary/junior school age	68 months or older but younger than 13 years	1 to 15	30	1/2
Junior school age	9 years or older but younger than 13 years	1 to 20	20	1/1

Data source: *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*, Ontario Ministry of Education.

For further information about child care rules in Ontario see *Child Care Rules in Ontario* (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/child-care-rules-ontario>).

The province monitors and enforces staff qualification requirements in all licensed child care centres and home child care agencies. Centres and agencies meet the requirements by employing supervisors, staff and home child care visitors who are RECEs, or through director approvals as described above. It is estimated that:^[20]

- 82% of licensed child care centres employed at least one RECE for supervisor positions
- 98% of licensed home child care agencies employed at least one RECE for all home child care visitor positions

Pedagogical framework

How Does Learning Happen: Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014 (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-does-learning-happen-ontarios-pedagogy-early-years>) (HDLH) is a professional learning resource for those working in child care and child and family programs. It supports pedagogy and program development in early years settings that is shaped by views about children, educators and families and the relationships among them. Additional regulations under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/14c11>) are also in place to help child care licensees embed HDLH into practice.

As of March 31, 2024, all licensed child care centres and home child care agencies had achieved compliance with the requirements regarding the development and implementation of a program statement that is consistent with HDLH either before their licence was first issued or before it was renewed. The province continues to support the implementation of the HDLH pedagogy in licensed child care programs in the province.

Access

As of March 31, 2024, there were 516,455 licensed child care spaces for children aged 0 to 12 years in centres across the province, with 11,400 spaces added to the system over the previous year (see Table 21). It is estimated that there are enough spaces in licensed child care centres for 25.8% of children aged 0 to 12 years in the province.^[21]

Table 21: Ontario child population, licensed spaces and percentage of children with access to licensed child care for children aged 0 to 12, 2014–15 to 2023–24										
Year	2014–15	2015–16	2016–17	2017–18	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
Child population aged 0 to 12 (million)	1.92	1.93	1.94	1.95	1.96	1.96	1.95	1.96	1.98	2.00

Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
n)										
S p a c e s i n L i c e n s e d C h i l d C a r e C e n t r e s (m i l l i o n)	0.35	0.39	0.41	0.43	0.45	0.46	0.46	0.47	0.51	0.52
P e r c e n t a g e o f c h	18.3	20.1	21.0	21.9	22.8	23.6	23.9	24.1	25.5	25.8

Y e a r	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
il d r e n a g e d 0 t o 1 2 f o r w h o m t h e r e a r e l i c e n s e d c h il d c a r e s p a c e s (%)										

Data source: Child population data from Summer 2023 population projections, Ontario Ministry of Finance. Space data from the Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education (as of March 31 each year).

Affordability

The funding under the Canada-Ontario ELCC Agreement supports new full or partial fee subsidies and increased access through the following priorities:

- Supporting children aged 0–6 years through additional fee subsidies, increased access, broadly reducing licensed child care fees and by increasing affordability or not-for-profit community-based capital projects (excluding capital projects for child care programs that run during school hours for kindergarten and school age children).
- Supporting children aged 0–12 years through additional fee subsidies, increased access or broadly reducing licensed child care fees and by increasing affordability.

In 2023, 105,328 children in Ontario received fee subsidies.^[22] Of those, 8,218 children were supported through funding provided by the Canada-Ontario ELCC Agreement,^[23]with the remainder of fee subsidy funding provided by Ontario and service system managers.

It is estimated that 66% of children who receive fee subsidies live in families with incomes of \$40,000 and below (see Table 22).

Table 22: Percentage of children receiving fee subsidies by family income, 2023	
Family income	Percentage (%)
\$20,000 and below	32
\$20,001–\$40,000	34
\$40,001–\$60,000	22
\$60,001–\$80,000	8
\$80,001–\$100,000	3
\$100,000 and above	1
Total	100

Data source: Estimated percentages derived from data collected in Education Finance Information System Ontario Ministry of Education.

Flexibility and inclusion

Non-standard hours

Flexibility in child care service delivery is important for meeting the needs of parents and caregivers who work non-standard schedules. In Ontario, a small proportion of licensed child care centres and home child care providers offer care during non-standard hours:^[24]

- 9.0% of child care centres reported the availability of weekend care and less than 1% reported the availability of care during the evening or overnight
- 5.6% of home child care providers reported the availability of weekend care, 5.4% reported the availability of evening care and 3.5% reported the availability of overnight care

Special Needs Resourcing

The province provides Special Needs Resourcing funding to service system managers and First Nations to support the inclusion of children with special needs in licensed child care settings, including home child care, camps and authorized recreation programs, at no additional cost to parents and caregivers.

A total of 44,092 children were funded through Special Needs Resourcing in 2023, the most recent year for which there are data available.^[25]

Indigenous-led child care centres

A total of 41 licensed child care centres reported that they were Indigenous-led organizations operating in urban and rural communities.^[26]

French-language and bilingual child care

As of March 31, 2024, a total of 313 centres offered French-language programs and 113 centres offered bilingual programs.

Children in licensed child care by income

The ministry does not collect income data from families that enroll their children in licensed child care. This indicator is estimated using the number of licensed child care spaces in the province and data on the distribution of families across income levels from Statistics Canada.

As of March 31, 2024, there were 516,455 licensed child care spaces for children aged 0–12 years in Ontario. Approximately 21.6% of families with children in the province earned a family income below \$40,000, 39.7% earned between \$40,000 and \$100,000 and 38.7% earned above \$100,000.^[27]

It is estimated, based on the income distribution, that:

- about 112,000 spaces are used by children from families with income below \$40,000
- more than 205,000 spaces are used by children from families with income between \$40,000 and \$100,000
- about 200,000 are used by children from families with income above \$100,000

3) EarlyON Child and Family Centres indicators

The indicators reported in this section are reflective of the areas of investment under the Canada-Ontario ELCC Agreement for increasing quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility and inclusion in child and family centres.

Quality

Staff qualifications

Experiences in EarlyON Child and Family Centres are designed to foster positive outcomes and support nurturing relationships for children and their parents/guardians and caregivers based on the latest evidence and research. RECEs play a key role in delivering high-quality early years programs because they have specialized knowledge and expertise in child development and in play and inquiry-based learning.

Every EarlyON Child and Family Centre should employ at least one RECE who oversees all mandatory core services related to supporting early learning and development. If an EarlyON Child and Family Centre is unable to recruit at least one RECE to deliver these core services, the service system manager may grant an exemption from the requirement but must report the number of exemptions to the province.

The province extended the transition period for ensuring EarlyON Centres employ at least one RECE at every centre to deliver mandatory core services to January 2024. However, EarlyON staff who are not RECEs but have more than 10 years of experience in relevant programs can be employed to meet this staffing requirement through a legacy provision.

Pedagogical framework

EarlyON Child and Family Centres are expected to provide programs that reflect the view of children, parents and caregivers and educators as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential and experience. Guided by How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014 (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-does-learning-happen-ontarios-pedagogy-early-years>), EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer an environment that engages parents and caregivers as co-learners and leaders in influencing positive experiences and outcomes for children, families and the community.

Access, affordability, flexibility and inclusion

As of June 2024, there were 770 main EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations and 488 Mobile/satellite EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations. In addition, there were approximately 108 EarlyON Child and Family Centres offering virtual services supports to meet the needs of families across the province.

Of the total number of locations, 288 locations offered non-standard hours, 196 offered French-language programming and 109 offered Indigenous programming.

In 2023, the most recent year for which there are data available, 272,463 children were served by child and family programs at EarlyON centres,^[28] or approximately 26.5% of children in the province aged 0–6 years.^[29] In the same year, there were 2,321,804 visits made by children to EarlyON centres and 2,100,816 visits made by parents and caregivers.^[30]

Table 23: Number of children served and visits to child and family programs, 2022 to 2023			
Item	2022	2023	Percentage Change (%)
Number of children served	216,491	272,463	25.9
Number of visits by children	1,389,398	2,321,804	67.1
Number of visits by parents or caregivers	1,156,141	2,100,816	81.7

Data source: Education Finance Information System, Ontario Ministry of Education.

4) Professional learning indicators

The indicators reported in this section are reflective of the area of investment under the agreement for innovative approaches to providing access to high-quality training and professional learning opportunities for the early years and child care workforce.

Early childhood educators' qualifications upgrade program

This program enables individuals working in eligible child care and early years settings to apply for grants to support them in obtaining an early childhood education diploma and becoming eligible to apply for membership with the College of Early Childhood Educators. The program also provides opportunities for leadership development, targeted to those who are working in supervisory roles or who aspire to do so and who are already RECEs. In addition, the program prioritizes Francophone and First Nations, Métis and Inuit applicants, as well as individuals working under director approvals or Letters of Permission.

Financial support is available to eligible applicants in the form of education grants, travel grants and training allowances. In 2023-24, Ontario allocated \$3.5 million in provincial funding, \$2 million in federal funding under the ELCC Agreement and \$0.5 million in federal funding under the CWELCC Agreement. In addition, \$3.5 million in one-time funding was allocated to the ECE QUP in 2023-24 with \$1.5 million from the province and \$2 million from the federal ELCC agreement. In 2023-24, a total of 3,232 applications were approved under the Early Childhood Educators Qualifications Upgrade Program. Over the last 5 years, there has been an increase in the number of applications received demonstrating an overall growth rate of 81%.

Professional learning strategy for Francophone and Indigenous professionals

Given that professional learning needs are often heightened in Francophone and Indigenous communities and fewer supports are available, focused professional learning opportunities have been provided to better meet needs through more targeted, differentiated cultural and regional approaches.

In 2023-24, Ontario allocated \$1.5 million in federal funding under the ELCC Agreement to three organizations to support professional learning for Francophone and Indigenous professionals in the early years and child care sector. This funding was allocated to the following organizations:

- Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario (AFÉSEO) for early years and child care professionals working in francophone settings
- FIREFLY for early years and child care professionals in First Nations communities on-reserve
- Ontario Aboriginal Head Start Association (OAHS) for early years and child care professionals working with First Nation, Métis, Inuit, or Indigenous off-reserve

Funds provided to these organizations aim to enhance culturally relevant experiences through the delivery of high-quality child care and early years programs, in alignment with How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014 (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/how-does-learning-happen-ontarios-pedagogy-early-years>). The organizations also create linkages or develop professional learning resources that are responsive to the needs of the sector. In 2023-24, approximately 2,000 child care and early years professionals were supported through the professional learning initiative.

Ontario acknowledges the Government of Canada's support in connection with the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework (<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/early-learning-child-care/reports/2017-multilateral-framework.html>) and the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (<https://www.canada.ca/en/early-learning-child-care-agreement/agreements-provinces-territories/ontario-2017.html>), Canada-Ontario Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (<https://www.canada.ca/en/early-learning-child-care-agreement/agreements-provinces-territories/ontario-canada-wide-2021.html>). Part 3 of this document outlines Ontario's progress towards meeting early learning and child care goals under these agreements.

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Footnotes

- [1] ^ The "family age group" designation allows children of different ages in the same family to be placed in the same group in a play activity room, as long as they are between the ages of 0–12 years. This designation is used by licensed child care centres and came into effect on September 1, 2017.
- [2] ^ The number of approved homes in 2023-24 are not comparable to previous years. In October 2023, the province revised the licensing process for approved homes to align with "active homes" operated by home child care agencies, resulting in a change in the number of approved homes.
- [3] ^] "Approved homes" refers to the maximum number of homes that an agency is permitted to contract with.
- [4] ^ The "family age group" designation allows children of different ages in the same family to be placed in the same group in a play activity room, as long as they are between the ages of 0–12 years. This designation is used by licensed child care centres and came into effect on September 1, 2017.
- [5] ^ "Active homes" refers to the number of home child care providers that have a contract/agreement with an agency.
- [6] ^ "Auspice" refers to the ownership and operation of a service. In this report, licensed child care centres are categorized into two types of auspices: not-for-profit and for-profit.
- [7] ^ Different sets of age categories were used to collect data for licensed child care centres and licensed home child care agencies. Age categories used for licensed child care centres are in accordance with the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*. These age categories do not apply to licensed home child care.
- [8] ^ *Ontario Regulation 137/15* sets out rules under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* governing staff in licensed child care centres. For each group of children in licensed child care centres, the licensee is required to employ at least one program staff member who is listed on the College of Early Childhood Educators' Public Register as a member in good standing or who has been otherwise approved by a director. For more information, see "Staff Qualifications" under "Licensed Child Care Indicators".
- [9] ^ Data source: EarlyON (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/find-earlyon-child-and-family-centre>) web page on Ontario.ca, Ontario Ministry of Education.
- [10] ^ 113,323 EDI questionnaires were analysed for Cycle 1; 110,916 for Cycle 2; 119,494 for Cycle 3; 125,858 for Cycle 4; 123,912 for Cycle 5; and 94,766 for Cycle 6.
- [11] ^ "Vulnerable" describes children who score below the 10th percentile of the Ontario EDI baseline population scores. This indicates that they are struggling in comparison to the baseline population.
- [12] ^ Expenditure amounts include both federal and provincial contributions. Final figures are subject to change pending the 2023–24 audit. Numbers may not add due to rounding.
- [13] ^ For the purposes of this CWELCC Agreement, all home child care agency licensees (as defined under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*) are deemed to be not-for-profit licensed child care, regardless of auspice.
- [14] ^ Data source: Education Finance Information System, Ontario Ministry of Education. The total number includes federal, provincial and municipal funding sources. Final figures are subject to change pending ministry review
- [15] ^ The wage ranges are approximately aligned between time points.

- [16] ^ Expenditure amounts include both federal and provincial contributions. Expenditures amounts per draft 2023–24 audited financial statements. Final figures are subject to change pending the 2023–24 audit.
- [17] ^ Actual allocations may vary according to the latest population estimates.
- [18] ^ Expenditures amounts per draft 2023–24 financial statements. Final figures are subject to change pending the 2023–24 audit. Numbers may not add due to rounding.
- [19] ^ Expenditures amounts per draft 2023–24 financial statements. Final figures are subject to change pending the 2023–24 audit. Numbers may not add due to rounding.
- [20] ^ Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education, as of March 31, 2024.
- [21] ^ The estimation does not account for children cared for in homes contracted with licensed home child care agencies. All the “Percentage of children aged 0–12 for whom there are licensed child care spaces” are updated with the 2023 Summer child population projection data, Ontario Ministry of Finance.
- [22] ^ Data source: Education Finance Information System, Ontario Ministry of Education. The total number includes federal, provincial and municipal funding sources. Final figures are subject to change pending ministry review.
- [23] ^ Data source: Education Finance Information System, Ontario Ministry of Education.
- [24] ^ Data source: 2024 Licensed Child Care Operations Survey, Ontario Ministry of Education (as of December 31, 2023). Final figures are subject to change pending ministry review.
- [25] ^ Data source: Education Finance Information System, Ontario Ministry of Education. The total number includes federal, provincial and municipal funding sources. Final figures are subject to change pending ministry review.
- [26] ^ Data source: 2024 Licensed Child Care Operations Survey, Ontario Ministry of Education (as of December 31, 2023).
- [27] ^ Data source: Statistics Canada estimates for 1971–2022 and Ontario Ministry of Finance projections (Summer 2023).
- [28] ^ Data source: Education Finance Information System, Ontario Ministry of Education. Final figures are subject to change pending ministry review.
- [29] ^ Percentage is an estimate based on the number of children served and the total population of children in the province aged 0–6 years.
- [30] ^ Data source: Education Finance Information System, Ontario Ministry of Education. Final figures are subject to change pending ministry review.