

PROVINCIAL CONTEXT

Number of children 0-12 years (2007 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	10,800
1	10,400
2	11,400
3	10,800
4	10,900
5	10,100
6	11,300
7	10,800
8	10,500
9	11,500
10	12,200
11	12,500
12	11,700
Total	144,800



Number of children 0-12 years, aggregated (2007 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0-2	32,600
3-5	31,800
6-12	80,500
Total	144,800

Children 0-14 years identifying with an Aboriginal group (2006)

Age	North American Indian	Métis	Inuit	Multiple	Other	Total
0-4	11,885	4,425	30	55	190	16,590
5-9	11,730	4,480	10	65	230	16,515
10-14	12,170	4,995	35	75	205	17,495
Total	35,785	13,900	75	195	625	50,600

Children 0-14 yrs with disabilities (2006)

Age	Number of children with disabilities	Rate of children with disabilities (%)
0-4	880	1.7
5-9	2,630	4.7
10-14	3,040	4.8
Total	6,550	3.9

Number of children 0-12 years with mothers in the paid labour force (2007 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0	6,400
1	6,400
2	7,000
3	6,500
4	6,400
5	6,400
6	7,600
7	7,300
8	7,200
9	8,000
10	8,800
11	9,300
12	8,800
Total	96,000

Number of children 0-12 years with mothers in the paid labour force, aggregated (2007 rounded estimate)

Age	Number of children
0-2	19,800
3-5	19,300
6-12	57,000
Total	96,000

Number of children by marital status of families (2006)

Age	Children in couple families	Children in lone parent families	(with lone mothers)	(with lone fathers)
0-4	43,040	12,885	11,070	1,815
5-9	45,190	14,830	12,305	2,525
10-14	51,365	15,770	12,830	2,935
Total	139,595	43,485	36,205	7,280

Number of children by mother tongue (2006)

Age	English	French	Non-official language
0-4	51,945	225	4,625
5-9	55,625	275	4,430
10-14	63,000	350	5,010
Total	170,570	850	14,065

Number and percentage of children living in families below the LICO (2006)

Age	Number	Percent (%)
0-2	9,000	29.5
3-5	7,000	23.8
6-12	16,000	21.2
Total	33,000	23.7

Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2007 rounded estimate)

Age of youngest child	Number of mothers	Participation rate (%)
0-2	19,200	68.8
3-5	11,700	77.0
6-15	44,600	87.3

FAMILY-RELATED LEAVE

Maternity leave

Eighteen weeks.

Parental leave

Birth mothers may take 34 weeks immediately following maternity leave. The other parent may also take up to 37 weeks. These parental leaves may be taken consecutively.

Adoption leave

Primary caregiver may take 18 weeks of adoption leave, followed by 34 weeks of parental leave. Other parent may take up to 37 weeks which may be taken consecutively.

Births and EI maternity and parental claims (2007)

Number of births: 12,674

Birth rate per 1,000 population: 12.8

Number of initial maternity claims allowed: 5,980

Average length of maternity claim: 14.7 weeks

Number of parental claims: 6,420

Average length of parental claim: 29.8 weeks

Number of adoptive parent claims: 40

Average length of adoptive claim: 30.7 weeks

Note: Maternity, parental and adoption leaves are determined by provincial and territorial legislation. The federal government pays for up to 15 weeks for maternity leave and 35 weeks for parental and adoptive leave for eligible parents at 55% of earned income to a maximum of \$447/week (2009). See FEDERAL ECEC PROGRAMS for more information.

KINDERGARTEN

LEGISLATION

Saskatchewan. Legislative Assembly. *Education Act*. 1995. E-02. Amended 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002.

The *Independent Schools Regulations* set out the criteria with which independent schools are required to comply. Under the *Education Act*, 1995, independent schools must be registered with the Ministry of Education in order to operate legally.

PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

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KINDERGARTEN SERVICES

KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten is delivered in public schools under boards and private schools (as defined in the Education Act). Part-day kindergarten is provided for five year olds. The Education Act requires 80 full school day equivalents. Schedules and total time vary by school division, but most offer 100 full school day equivalents.

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

Kindergarten is not compulsory (although more than 90% attend), nor is it an entitlement; provision is determined by school divisions.

PREKINDERGARTEN

Prekindergarten may be provided part-day in targeted communities for vulnerable children who meet specified eligibility criteria determined by the school division (i.e. family and environmental risk, existing delays, behavioural challenges, isolation, low socio-economic status, high rate of single parents).

Prekindergarten programs funded by the province must adhere to program guidelines, which include staff qualifications, adult child ratio, class size, facility requirements, parent engagement, and minimum hours of operation. Most prekindergarten programs are operated in schools. School divisions have the option of partnering with a community organization to offer programming. Ten per cent of the programs currently operate in partnership.

Prekindergarten is offered for a minimum of 12 hours per week, usually three hours/day for four days/week. In 2007/08 the Ministry of Education funded 155 prekindergartens for three and four year old children (two years before Grade 1).

AGE ELIGIBILITY

There is no provincial kindergarten eligibility age; it varies by school division. (For Grade 1, a child must be six years old by December 31). In most school divisions, children must be five years old by December 31 of the year in which they begin kindergarten.

CLASS SIZE

There is no provincial class size limit in kindergartens. Average/mean kindergarten class sizes are not available.

In prekindergarten, there is a staff:child ratio of 1:8 with a group size of 16 (one teacher and one assistant).

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Recent amendments to *The Education Act, 1995* and *The Education Regulations, 1986*, continue to permit boards of education the opportunity to provide educational programming and services for children identified with intensive needs who are three years of age or older. Base, Diversity and Intensive Supports funding is provided to school divisions for the provision of educational programming.

During the 2007/08 school year, funding was provided for more than 248 children between the ages of three and five years who required intensive supports to access educational programming and were not yet enrolled in kindergarten. Personal Program Plans for these children may take the form of involvement with a community preschool program, child care centre or early kindergarten entrance.

ENROLMENT (2007/08)

Number of children enrolled in kindergarten (the year before Grade 1): 10,432

Number of children enrolled in prekindergarten (two years before Grade 1): 2,480 (est.)

Note: Prekindergarten enrolment is estimated based on 155 programs with a maximum 16 children.

KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

Qualification requirements: Saskatchewan teacher certification. Teacher certification requires a minimum of four years post-secondary education and either a Bachelor of Education or other recognized degree, plus 48 semester hours of teacher education that includes a practicum. There are no ECE requirements.

There are no requirements for ongoing education or professional development.

Responsibility for certification: The Certifying Official appointed by the Minister of Education.

Representation: The Saskatchewan Teachers Federation (STF). (The STF is not a trade union, but an integrated organization that represents teachers in matters of professional standards and professional development, as well as in collective bargaining and related teacher welfare matters.)

Average salary (2003/04): The average yearly salary of teachers who identified themselves as kindergarten teachers was \$49,981. Information is not available for 2004/05, 2005/06 or 2007/08.

Number of kindergarten teachers in 2003/04: 996 distinct kindergarten teachers (not FTEs). (Some kindergarten teachers also teach other grades. Information is not available for 2006/07 or 2007/08.)

CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

Title: Teacher Assistant

Qualifications: None required

There is no provincial policy regarding assistants although many school divisions provide Teacher Assistants when a class reaches a certain size. Specific class size is set by each division and varies among divisions. For example, if a kindergarten classroom has 33 students registered, instead of creating two kindergarten classrooms of 16 or 17 students, one class may be kept and a teacher assistant added.

Roles vary according to the needs of individual classes, such as class size and the number of children with special needs. In some school divisions non-teaching personnel, including classroom assistants, are unionized while in others they are not. The Canadian Union of Public Employees represents the majority of unionized assistants.

Average wage: Information not available.

CURRICULUM

The provincial kindergarten curriculum is *Children First* (1994). The approach is “learning through play” in a developmentally appropriate environment and advocates development of the whole child including intellectually, socio-emotionally, and physically.

Currently, the 1994 kindergarten curriculum is being updated. The estimated date for completion is fall of 2008. This kindergarten curriculum renewal process is initiated by the Curriculum and E-Learning branch of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education.

For prekindergarten, schools are expected to develop a program based on prekindergarten guidelines established by the Ministry.

MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

Monitoring of kindergarten programs is determined by the local school division.

SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR KINDERGARTEN

The provincial percentage of grants to school divisions is 47%. Boards receive 48% of funding from property tax base through locally determined levies. The remaining 5% of funding is from other revenue generated by or granted to the local school division. This may include tuition fee agreements and other money from other school divisions or bands, student fees, federal grants, food/material sales, rentals, interest dividends.

Parents may pay fees for swimming classes, field trips, etc. This varies from school to school.

There is no public funding of private schools.

PUBLIC SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN (2006/07)

KINDERGARTEN

Average spending per child in kindergarten per location

Major Urban	\$2,384.73
Francophone	7,673.94
Northern	5,222.85
Others	7,727.19

Total spending on kindergarten

44.2 million

PREKINDERGARTEN

Spending on prekindergarten

School divisions receive block funding of \$48,346 plus a transportation allocation for a prekindergarten class of up to 16 three and four year olds. Funding primarily covers the cost of half-time teacher, half-time teacher associate. Based on 16 children per class, the funding can be calculated as \$3,022 per child.

Additional funding of \$14,540 in the initial year for start-up costs.

Total provincial spending on prekindergarten in

2007/08

\$7.8 million

KINDERGARTEN DEVELOPMENTS

2007/08 Thirty-six new prekindergarten programs were established and another 38 will be established in 2008/09.

2008/09 Children with intensive needs are identified through an Impact Assessment Process. The process focuses on the needs of the child and the corresponding supports that are required for the child to be successful in his or her educational program.

REGULATED CHILD CARE

LEGISLATION

Saskatchewan. Legislative Assembly. The *Child Care Act*. Bill 8, 1990 as amended by the Statutes of Saskatchewan, 2000.

Saskatchewan. Legislative Assembly. The *Child Care Regulations*. 2001.

PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

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CHILD CARE SERVICES

UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

Unregulated family child care

Maximum number of children permitted: Eight, including the caregiver's own children under 13 years. Of the eight, five may be younger than six years; of these five, only two may be younger than 30 months.

Nursery schools

Part-time preschools that operate less than three hours/day or three days/week are not regulated.

School-aged (in a school)

Programs solely for school-aged children that are located in schools are not regulated.

REGULATED CHILD CARE

Child care centres

Child care centres provide care to children in group settings. Centres must have a licence from the Early Learning and Child Care Branch and may care for up to 90 children from six weeks to and including 12 years. Child care centres can include nonprofit services, governed by parent boards of directors, and for-profit services that have parent advisory committees.

Teen student support centres

Teen student support centres are located in or near a high school and provide child care services to children of parents attending the high school.

School-age child care

Care outside of school hours for children under 13 in a mixed-age centre, family child care home or in a program solely for school-age children that is not located in a school.

Family child care homes

Family child care homes are operated by individually licensed family child care providers in a residence. A person providing these services may care for up to eight children depending on the children's ages (five children younger than six years; of these five, only two may be younger than 30 months).

Group family child care homes

Group family child care homes are operated by individuals in a residence and are licensed for up to 12 children. The caregiver must have an assistant adult caregiver in attendance when the numbers or ages of children permitted in family child care homes are exceeded (more than eight children, more than five preschool, or more than three under 30 months).

Teen student support family child care homes

Teen student support homes are family child care homes formally associated with a high school, and provide child care services to children of parents attending the high school. Teen student support family child care homes are licensed to care for up to six children, depending on their ages.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Child Care Inclusion Program provides three types of grants to child care facilities to include children with special needs. First, individual inclusion grants are available to licensed centres and family child care homes to include children experiencing a delay or a condition of risk that may result in a delay. For this a referral is needed but not necessarily a diagnosis and the child must attend the program a minimum of 20 hours per month. The amount of the grant varies from \$200 to \$300 per month depending on the need within three defined levels.

Second, an enhanced accessibility grant of up to \$2,000/month may be paid to assist with the additional cost of including a child with exceptionally high needs. For this grant, the child must have a diagnosis and require significant additional support and the parents must be enrolled in an education program or employed.

A third kind of grant for the centres is a training and resource grant of \$100 (\$200 for exceptional needs) per child with special needs, as well as a grant of up to \$600 (\$1,200 for exceptional needs) for adapted equipment required to meet the needs of the child.

Inclusion grants are approved for a one-year period and then are reviewed; enhanced accessibility grants are approved for a maximum of six months, after which time the facility must reapply for funding.

Funding for inclusive child care is intended to support the centre as a whole and not to provide a worker allocated to a specific child. Parents of children with special needs pay for the space but not for the additional supports. There are no waiting lists for funding.

Operators may choose whether or not to provide service. Typically, meetings are held between the referring professional, the parents, the Early Learning and Child Care Consultant and the child care facility. It is important that an appropriate match is made for the child with the facility. Parents may opt for a different service.

ABORIGINAL CHILD CARE

Saskatchewan does not regulate or fund on-reserve child care programs.

The First Nations/Inuit Child Care Initiative has resulted in the development of approximately 76 on-reserve child care centres. There are as well 79 on-reserve Aboriginal Head Start sites and 15 urban/northern Aboriginal Head Start sites.

SPACE STATISTICS (MARCH 2008)

Number of regulated child care spaces*			
<i>Centre-based</i>			
Age Group	Full-day	Part-day	Total
Infants (6 weeks- 17 months)	653	-	653
Toddlers (18-29 months)	1,526	-	1,526
Preschool (30 months-kindergarten)	3,665	-	3,665
School-age (grade 1-13 years)	-	999	999
Total centre-based spaces	5,844	999	6,843
<i>Note: Saskatchewan does not license part-day preschool spaces.</i>			
<i>Family child care spaces</i>			2,330
Enrolled in family child care homes:			1,267
Enrolled in group family child care homes:			1,063
Total number of regulated child care spaces			9,173

Children with special needs in regulated child care: 371

Children receiving fee subsidies 3,718

Number of centres and homes

Number of child care centres	187
Full-day	187
Part-day	0
Number of family child care providers	275

Sponsorship of full-time regulated centre spaces

Nonprofit	6,843
For-profit	0

STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

REGULATED CENTRES

Maximum centre size	90 spaces.
Maximum of 12 infant spaces	

Maximum staff:child ratios and group sizes

Age	Staff:child ratios	Max. group sizes
Infants	1:3	6
Toddlers	1:5	10
Preschool (30 mos-6 yrs)	1:10	20
School-age (grade 1-12 yrs)	1:15	30

Staff qualification requirements

Saskatchewan has three levels of certification:

ECE I — 120-hour child care orientation course or equivalent provided through university, technical institute or similar post-secondary educational facility or regional college;

ECE II — One year early childhood certificate or equivalent;

ECE III — Two year early childhood diploma or equivalent.

Only courses completed through an accredited, recognized university, technical institute, regional college or post-secondary educational facility are considered for ECE Certification. Courses completed through private career institutes are not considered for ECE Certification.

Centre directors hired after July 2001 must have at least a two year diploma or equivalent (ECE III). Directors appointed to a centre director position prior to July 2001 must meet or exceed the qualifications of an ECE II (one year certificate or equivalent) but must upgrade to a two year diploma if they accept employment with another centre.

Effective January 2002, all staff employed in a centre for at least 65 hours per month had to meet the qualifications of an ECE I (120 hour child care orientation course or equivalent provided through regional community colleges). By January 2005, 30% of staff were required to have a one-year certificate or equivalent. By January 2007, a further 20% of staff were required to have a two-year diploma or equivalent.

Individuals must apply to the Early Learning and Child Care Branch for certification. The Branch sets out the requirements for classification, and the courses required to achieve equivalency status.

All individuals who have completed an Early Childhood Education course out-of-province must apply to the Early Learning and Child Care Branch for Certification. Applications for Certification must be accompanied by original official transcripts to verify successful completion of courses. Official transcripts bear the college or university seal and/or signature of the Registrar.

If a licensee is unable to hire a centre director, supervisor, or child care worker whose qualifications meets the requirements of *The Child Care Regulations*, the licensee may apply to the Early Learning and Child Care Branch for an exemption from those requirements. An education plan must also be submitted, indicating how the licensee intends to meet the requirement of the regulations through further education of the individual to be hired.

All staff members in each centre must have completed a first aid and CPR course.

Parent involvement

Nonprofit child care centres are administered by parent boards; 51% of the board members must be parents who are using the program. Nonprofit organizations with community boards and for-profit child care facilities are required to have parent advisory committees.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Provincial program consultants develop, license, monitor and consult with both centres and family child care homes and conduct a minimum of two visits annually. A provincial program consultant is required to have a background in early childhood education.

A facility may be issued a provisional licence to remedy any unmet requirements as long as the health and safety of children are not at risk. If the non-compliance is not corrected within the specified period (to a maximum of six months) the licence will be revoked. There is no appeal board but the facility may appeal directly to the Minister of Education.

REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE

Regulation

Individually licensed.

Maximum capacity

Family child care homes

Up to eight children (including the provider's own children under 13 years) between six weeks and 12 years. Of the eight children, only five may be younger than six years; of these five, only two may be younger than 30 months.

Group family child care homes

Up to 12 children (including the provider's and assistant's own children under 13 years). Of the 12 children, only 10 may be younger than six years, of these 10, only five may be younger than 30 months and only three younger than 18 months.

Teen student support family child care homes

Up to six children (including the provider's own children under 13 years). Of these six children, no more than four may be younger than six years; of these four, only two may be younger than 30 months.

Provider qualification requirements

Must be 18 years old. All require an orientation session with a program consultant and first-aid/CPR training, plus six hours of professional development workshops each licensing year.

An applicant for a licence to operate a home must submit the results of a criminal records search with respect to the applicant and each adult who resides in the premises in which the home will be operated.

Providers whose homes were licensed after July 2001 must have a 40-hour introductory early childhood education course within the first year of licensing.

Providers in group family child care homes have three years to complete the 120-hour orientation course (ECE I). Assistants require first-aid and CPR training, plus six hours of professional development each licensing year.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Program consultants conduct annual visits to renew licences in addition to periodic drop-in visits throughout the year.

FUNDING

CHILD CARE FEE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

Fee subsidies are paid directly to service providers on behalf of eligible parents. Subsidy eligibility is dependent on reason for care, full or part-time care, income level, age of children in care, family size and provincial tier.

To be eligible for consideration, parents must be employed or seeking employment, attending school or a training program, require child care due to special needs, or have a child with special needs. If the parent meets one of these criteria, an income test is applied.

Subsidies are available only in nonprofit child care centres or regulated family child care homes. The minimum user fee is 10% of the actual cost of care. Centres and regulated family child care homes may surcharge subsidized parents above the 10% minimum. The average surcharge to a subsidized parent above the subsidy is 30-40% of the fee. The Child Care Subsidy Program pays the parent portion of the fees for families who are on Social Assistance (SAP) and/or the Transitional Employment Allowance (TEA) programs. The funding is paid to the centre or regulated family child care provider on behalf of the parent.

Parents may be eligible for subsidy for up to four months while actively looking for work. A two-parent family in which both parents are looking for work is not eligible for a subsidy. A parent who does not secure employment within the four months may not reapply for subsidy for the purpose of looking for work for one year unless he/she has been in school or a training program for at least four months (SAP and TEA clients excluded).

Subsidies in unregulated care

Funding is provided to parents on social assistance who are involved in an employment, training or rehabilitation program to pay for the parent portion of regulated care, or the community average cost of unregulated care. Payment is made to the parent and is paid for by the Saskatchewan Assistance Program.

Eligibility for child care fee subsidy

	Turning point	Break-event point
1 or 2 parents, 1 infant	\$19,800	\$36,720

1 or 2 parents, 2 children (1 infant, 1 preschool)	21,000	72,720
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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.

Note: Saskatchewan uses gross income level to determine eligibility; most other provinces use net income. The figures, therefore, are not directly comparable across jurisdictions.

Effective September 1, 2006 The Child Day Care Subsidy underwent significant regulatory changes, which included the creation of tiers by geographic location, based on average child care fees. See Recent Developments section for further details.

Subsidy rates by age by region (tier)

The maximum income threshold to receive a subsidy is dependent on tier, number of children in child care, fee charged, age of children and hours in care.

Care Type	Tier 1	Tier 1
	Full-time (\$)	Part-time (\$)
<i>Child care centres</i>		
Infant	570	400
Toddler	440	310
Preschool	405	285
Kindergarten	365	See note 3
School age: September - June	275	See note 3
School age: July / August	385	275
<i>Group and family child care homes</i>		
Infant	485	340
Toddler	440	310
Preschool	405	285
Kindergarten	365	See note 3
School age: September - June	275	See note 3
School age: July / August	385	275

Care Type	Tier 2	Tier 2
	Full-time (\$)	Part-time (\$)
<i>Child care centres</i>		
Infant	485	340
Toddler	390	275
Preschool	350	245
Kindergarten	325	See note 3
School age: September - June	245	See note 3
School age: July / August	340	245
<i>Group and family child care homes</i>		
Infant	415	295
Toddler	390	275
Preschool	350	245
Kindergarten	325	See note 3
School age: September - June	245	See note 3
School age: July / August	340	245
Care Type	Tier 3	Tier 3
	Full-time	Part-time
<i>Child care centres</i>		
Infant	410	290
Toddler	375	265
Preschool	340	240
Kindergarten	315	See note 3
School age: September - June	230	See note 3
School age: July / August	330	230
<i>Group and family child care homes</i>		
Infant	410	290
Toddler	375	265
Preschool	340	240
Kindergarten	315	See note 3
School age: September - June	230	See note 3
School age: July / August	330	230
<i>Notes</i>		
1. Full-time care is defined as an approved requirement for more than 90 hours of care per month.		
2. Part-time is defined as an approved requirement for 90 hours of care or less per month.		
3. Part-time subsidies are not applicable in the case of kindergarten or school age children from September to June, regardless of the amount of care required.		
4. Tier 1: Regina, Saskatoon, and communities in the Northern Administration District.		
Tier 2: Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Yorkton, Battlefords, Lloydminster, Meadow Lake, Nipawin, Balgonie, Pilot Butte, Warman.		
Tier 3: Other cities, towns and rural areas.		

PUBLIC FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2007/08)

One-time funding

Start-up grants

Child care centres (infant, toddler, preschool)	\$600/space
School Age	300/space
Family child care homes	1,800/home
Family child care homes (north)	2,250/home
Group family child care homes	2,000/home
Group family child care homes (north)	2,500/home
Fire, Health & Safety Grant - homes	1,200/home
Conversion homes- group homes	400/home

Tuition reimbursement

\$150 per class, or \$450 per orientation course per centre staff.

Recurring funding

Early childhood services grants (effective April 1, 2007)

Infant	\$470/space/month
Toddler	282/space/month
Preschool	141/space/month
School-age	94/space/month

Grants are equivalent to \$1,410/month per staff as required by child:staff ratios.

Teen support services grants

Centres

- \$810/infant space/month
- \$680/toddler space/month

Homes

- \$350/designated space/month (maximum three spaces)

Nutrition grants (homes)

- \$40/month/space (\$50/month/space for homes in the Northern Administration District)

Equipment grants

Family child care homes	\$100/space/year
Northern centres	100/space/year

Special needs funding

Individual inclusion

- Grants to assist centres and homes with the additional supervision costs associated with caring for a child with special needs.

Level I program	\$200/month
Level II program	\$250/month
Level III program	\$300/month

Enhanced accessibility

- Grants to assist centres and homes with the additional supervision costs associated with the caring for a child with exceptionally high diverse needs whose parents are working or in training - up to \$2,000/month.

Training and resource grant

- \$100/child with special needs (\$200 for exceptionally high needs)

Adapted equipment grant

- \$600/year (\$1,200 in exceptional circumstances).

ELCC funding

With the availability of federal child care funding in 2007/08, the Early Learning and Child Care program was able to provide additional supports:

Capital Funding

\$3,000/space for new development capital to support the physical infrastructure for a total of 1,050 licensed child care spaces.

\$3,000/home for homes licensed before July 2001, to assist with the costs to have a fire inspection completed and to meet the requirements of that inspection.

\$10,000/centre plus \$150/space over 30 spaces to assist with the costs to maintain and upgrade facilities.

Early Learning Environment Grant

This one-time grant was provided to licensed child care facilities, approved Prekindergarten programs, Early Childhood Intervention Programs and KidsFirst targeted sites to purchase high quality resources, materials, equipment and furniture to enhance learning for children and their families.

Education Support Grant

This one-time grant was provided to help early childhood educators in licensed child care centres and family child care homes upgrade their formal early childhood education qualifications.

PROVINCIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2007/08)

Fee subsidies	\$15,986,400
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One-time funding

Start-up grants (centres and homes) and equipment (homes)	557,100
Capital*	8,071,087

Recurring funding

Centre operating grants**	14,998,391
Teen student child care centre support	2,496,834
Nutrition (family child care homes)	851,440
Early Childhood Training***	1,429,684
Special needs	2,743,053
Total	\$47,133,989

**Includes space development, fire safety, deferred maintenance and learning environment.*

*** Includes transportation and northern equipment funding.*

**** Includes funds paid to licensed child care programs for professional development, educational support and tuition reimbursement*

Other funding

Community Solutions	\$1,577,807
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Funding from the Social Assistance Program is paid directly to parents on social assistance who are involved in an employment, training or rehabilitation program for the parent portion of regulated care and for unregulated care.

SALARIES

Mean gross hourly wage for centre-based child care staff (2007/08)

Directors	\$19.77
Supervisors	14.88
ECE III (2-year diploma) (excluding directors)	15.13
(directors included)	16.19
Child care worker	12.57

Source: November 2007 survey of licensed child care centres conducted by the Early Learning and Child Care Branch.

Median full-time, full-year employment income for centre-based Early Childhood Educators and Assistants (2005)

All	\$19,193
Those with an ECE credential	22,022

Source: Custom tabulations, 2006 census data on National Occupational Classification for Statistics E-217, Early Childhood Educators and Assistants.

Family child care

Information not available.

Average monthly parent fees for full-time centre-based care (2007/08)

Infants (age 0-17 months)	\$569
Toddlers (age 18 months-3 years)	480
Preschool (age 3-5.11 years)	442
School-age	301

Source: November 2007 survey conducted by the Early Learning and Child Care Branch.

Average monthly fee in family child care (2007/08)

Infants (age 0-17 months)	\$571
Toddlers (age 18 months-3 years)	535
Preschool (age 2.5-5 years)	484
School-age	337

Source: November 2007 survey conducted by the Early Learning and Child Care Branch.

ADMINISTRATION

The Early Learning and Child Care Branch, Ministry of Education administers the legislation and is responsible for initiating child care services, consultation, standards and training. Monitoring, licensing, and consultation are provided through five regional offices. The Ministry of Social Services is responsible for the Child Care Fee Subsidy Program.

MUNICIPAL AND OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROLES

Saskatchewan legislation provides for child care centres administered by municipalities. As of 2008, was only one centre was licensed under this provision.

CHILD CARE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

A government-appointed Early Learning and Child Care Advisory Board advises on early learning and child care issues and may assist in the establishment of long-term program directions.

RELATED SERVICES**Kids First**

Established in 2001, this initiative is to provide early childhood supports targeted to “vulnerable” families and their children and is overseen by the Ministries of Health, Social Services, Education, and First Nation and Métis Relations.

Community Solutions Program

The Community Solutions Program provides funding to community organizations for projects that promote and support inclusion of children and families with special needs, that support labour force attachment, that are workplace sponsored or that meet the needs of rural or northern communities. Projects must have an attachment to a regulated child care service.

RECENT HISTORY OF CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

FOR HISTORY BEFORE 2000, SEE THE RELEVANT PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL SECTION OF *ECEC IN CANADA 2006*, available online at: <http://www.childcarecanada.org/ECEC2006/> or in print.

2000 The wage enhancement grant was amalgamated with the centre operating grant to become the Early Childhood Services Grant. The grant was based on the required staff:child ratios and was equivalent to \$680/month/required staff.

2000/01 The *Child Care Act* and accompanying Regulations were amended to allow for group family child care homes to change the funding mechanisms and to increase early childhood training requirements.

2001 \$1.019 million of the \$10 million in Early Childhood Development Initiative funding was allocated to child care for:

- Enhanced operating funding to child care centres;
- Training and equipment grants for family child care;
- Professional development.

In addition, \$370,000 was allocated to the Early Childhood Intervention Program (ECIP), \$200,000 to Saskatchewan Learning to expand their prekindergarten programs and \$100,000 for an initiative to reduce infant mortality. The balance (\$8.4 million) was allocated to Kids First.

2002/03 As part of Income Security Redesign and the Building Independence initiatives aimed at moving families off welfare and into the labour force, \$750,000 was committed for the development of 150 new regulated child care spaces. As well, \$500,000 was added to the Early Childhood Services grant to help centres improve wages and benefits for workers. An additional \$450,000 was made available to expand supports for the inclusion of children and families with special needs.

2003/04 \$2.94 million of Kids First funding was spent on regulated child care; in 2004/05 the allocation was \$3.2 million.

2003/04 The government announced Child Care Saskatchewan, a plan to develop 1,200 new regulated child care spaces over four years to support labour market attachment, taking advantage of federal Early Learning and Child Care funding. Investment in 2003/04 included \$1.8 million for the development of 500 new regulated child care spaces, including capital funding to support new developments, a \$200,000 increase in Early Childhood Services grant funding and \$1 million increase in child care subsidies.

Effective June 2003, Early Childhood Services grants, subsidy eligibility levels and subsidy rates were increased.

2004

April The government moved child care from central to regional delivery. The child care consultants began reporting to the five Department of Community Resources Regions.

2005

Saskatchewan received \$21.7 million through the Early Learning and Child Care Agreement in 2005/06 and \$19.9 million in 2006/07.

Components of the Action Plan on Early Learning and Child Care were announced and included:

- Development of a non-compulsory non-targeted PreK program for 4 year olds;
- Expansion of nonprofit licensed child care spaces;
- Supports for family child care homes;
- Increase in the eligibility levels for fee subsidy ;
- Development of a human resource strategy for the sector;
- Development of an early learning guide for use in early learning settings;

- Continued availability of capital funding for new and expanded facilities;
- Enhancement of accessibility and inclusion supports; and,
- Development of parent supports.

In addition, 20 child care spaces were provided for the Kids First program.

Following the cancellation of the federal programs and reduction from \$146 million over five years to \$42 million over two years, Saskatchewan indicated that their ability to deliver such a system would slow down significantly.

Up to March 31, 2006, the following Early Learning and Child Care enhancements were made to move Saskatchewan's Early Learning and Child Care plan ahead:

- Elimination of the waiting list for children with high level of disability;
- 250 additional licensed child care spaces in 2005/06 beyond commitments under Child Care Saskatchewan;
- Wage lifts for child care centre staff of an average of 3% effective April 1, 2005, 6% effective November 1, 2005 (an additional 9% announced to be effective April 1, 2006);
- Child care subsidy enhancements of an average increase of \$20 per month effective June 1, 2005;
- Contribution to the Saskatchewan Literacy Commission in 2005/06.

2006

April The Early Learning and Child Care Branch moved from the Department of Community Resources and Employment to Saskatchewan Learning (now the Ministry of Education) and amalgamated the Child Care Program, the KidsFirst Program, and Learning's targeted prekindergarten programs in one branch.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

2006

September The Child Day Care Subsidy underwent significant regulatory changes, which included:

- Creation of Tiers by geographic location, based on average child care fees;
- Implementation of new rates that were set to cover 85% of the average fees charged for particular types of care within each Tier;
- New part-time subsidy rates;
- Extended income eligibility;
- Reduced minimum hours requirements for school-age children.

2007/08 Resources were allocated for new Early Learning and Child Care program initiatives including:

- 1,050 new licensed child care spaces.
- \$3,000/space for new space developments;
- \$3,000 per family child care home licensed before July 2001 for a fire inspection and to meet the requirements of that inspection;
- Family child care home supports including nutrition grants, increased start-up funding and support for alternate care programs;
- ECE tuition reimbursement increase from \$70 to \$150 per class;
- An average 3% wage lift for child care centres;
- Additional support for Enhanced Accessibility grants for the inclusion of children with high diverse needs;
- One-time Early Learning Environment Grants for purchasing high quality resources to enhance learning for children made available across the Early Learning and Child Care Sector;
- One-time Education Support Grants provided to assist early childhood educators in licensed child care centres and family child care homes to upgrade their formal early childhood education qualifications.

2008/09 Early Learning and Child Care program initiatives include:

- 500 new licensed child care spaces;
- Capital of \$3,000/space for new space developments;
- An average 4% wage lift for child care centres.

KEY PROVINCIAL ECEC ORGANIZATIONS

Saskatchewan Early Childhood Association
510 Cynthia Street
Saskatoon, SK S7L 7K7
Telephone: (306) 975-0875 / 1-888-658-4408
Facsimile: (306) 975-0879
Website: www.skearlychildhoodassociation.ca

TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation
2317 Arlington Ave.
Saskatoon, SK S7J 2H8
Telephone: (306) 373-1660 or 1-800-667-7762
Facsimile: (306) 374-1122
Email: stf@stf.sk.ca
Website: www.stf.sk.ca

