

Northwest Territories

TERRITORIAL CONTEXT



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

Age	Number of children
0	670
1	670
2	665
3	670
4	635
5	615
6	650
7	670
8	650
9	615
10	695
11	750
12	690
Total	8,645

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

Age	Number of children
0-2	2,005
3-5	1,920
6-12	4,720
Total	8,645

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

Age	North American Indian	Métis	Inuit	Multiple	Other	Total
0-4	1,170	250	425	25	10	1,870
5-9	1,250	300	375	10	10	1,950
10-14	1,385	405	510	25	20	2,350
Total	3,805	955	1,310	60	40	6,170

Children 0-14 yrs with disabilities (2006)

Age	Number of children with disabilities	Rate of children with disabilities (%)
0-4	50	1.6
5-9	80	2.6
10-14	150	4.2
Total	280	2.9

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

Age	Number of children
0-2	1,400
3-5	1,200
6-12	2,900
Total	5,500

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	2,455	715	565	145
5-9	2,345	665	525	145
10-14	2,605	885	680	200
Total	7,410	2,260	1,770	490

Number of children by mother tongue (2006)

Age	English	French	Non-official language
0-4	2,820	35	305
5-9	2,770	40	245
10-14	3,210	35	300
Total	8,800	110	850

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

Information not available.

Workforce participation of mothers by age of youngest child (2006)

	Number of mothers in the labour force	Participation rate
With children at home	5,385	75.6
Children under 6 years only	895	66.3
· With at least one child under 2 years	445	61.4
· Children 2-5 years only	455	72.8
Children under 6 years as well as children 6 years and over	950	72.2
Children 6 years and over only	3,540	79.5
· Youngest child 6-14 years	2,050	84.5

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 Census

FAMILY-RELATED LEAVE

Maternity leave

Seventeen weeks.

Parental leave

Thirty-seven weeks may be shared between the parents. Fifty-two weeks is the maximum allowed for combined maternity and parental leave.

Adoption leave

Thirty-seven weeks.

Births and EI maternity and parental claims (2007)

Number of births: 695

Birth rate per 1,000 population: 16.3

Number of initial maternity claims allowed: 330

Average length of maternity claim: 14.8 weeks

Number of parental claims: 390

Average length of parental claim: 28.8 weeks

Number of adoptive parent claims: 40

Average length of adoptive claim: 13.0 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

Note: 2008/09 kindergarten information was not available for the Northwest Territories. The majority of the following information is from the 2005/06 period.

LEGISLATION

Northwest Territories. Legislative Assembly. *Education Act*, R.S.N.W.T. 1995, c. 28.

The legislation applies to public and private schools.

There is a departmental directive that provides additional guidelines (funding and reporting, administration, monitoring and education program) for private schools.

TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR KINDERGARTEN

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KINDERGARTEN SERVICES

KINDERGARTEN

The Northwest Territories (NT) funds and delivers denominational education. Both “public” and Catholic school boards are publicly funded.

Kindergarten is delivered in public and private schools.

Kindergarten programs can be half-time or full-time. To qualify for full-time funding from the Government of the NT, a kindergarten program must be offered in a school for a minimum of 780 hours per year. The choice of full-day or half-day programming is made by the Divisional Education Council or delegated to the District Education Authority, based upon the needs of students and wishes of the parents in the community. A jurisdiction can choose to offer either a full-day or a half-day program, or both. The language of instruction in kindergarten must be one of the official languages of NT.

Kindergarten is not compulsory in the Northwest Territories. Access is a legislated entitlement.

AGE ELIGIBILITY

Five years old by December 31.

CLASS SIZE

There is no territorial class size limit.

Mean kindergarten class size: Information not available.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

There is a policy of inclusion of children with special needs. Children have access to the education program in a regular instructional classroom setting. Boards are required to provide support to make this possible through School Support funding. There is an exemption from inclusion for children with extreme needs; the child may be in a treatment centre instead of a classroom.

The number of kindergarten children with identified special needs is not available.

ENROLMENT (2005/06)

Number of children enrolled in kindergarten (the year before Grade 1) 2005/06: 647.

Note: Data for part-time and full-time enrolment are not available.

KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS

Qualification requirements: A Teaching Certificate (B.Ed. or post-secondary degree plus one year course work in a Faculty of Education) or one of the following three levels of education and experience specific to kindergarten:

- Interim Kindergarten Teaching Certificate: two-year diploma in Early Childhood plus 25 hours of teacher training;
- Standard Kindergarten Teaching Certificate: Holds an interim Kindergarten Teaching Certificate and has completed two academic years of teaching;
- Kindergarten Specialist Certificate: Holds a Standard Kindergarten Teaching Certificate and has successfully completed a one year teacher training program approved by the Registrar.

Teachers are required to take 120 hours of professional development over 5 years, with a minimum of 15 hours each year.

Responsibility for certification: NT Teacher Qualification Service.

Representation: Northwest Territories' Teachers' Association.

Average salary: Information not available.

CLASSROOM ASSISTANTS

Title: Education Assistant.

Qualifications: No qualifications required.

There is no territorial policy regarding Education Assistants. However, student support funding is provided to school boards based on the number of students and the school board makes the decisions regarding assistants.

Role: Assistants usually work with students who have special needs. Some assistants provide support as language specialists. Roles vary at the discretion of the boards, as they are provided with block funding to allocate as they see fit.

Unionization varies by position; some are with Union of Northern Workers, others belong to NT Teachers' Association.

Average wage: Information not available.

CURRICULUM

The approved kindergarten curriculum for the NT is *Children First: A Curriculum Guide for Kindergarten* (1994, Saskatchewan).

SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR KINDERGARTEN

The territorial government provides block funding to boards according to a formula. There is some additional targeted/dedicated funding for Aboriginal Languages.

There is a provision for fees for programs offered outside of the regular curriculum, but schools have chosen not to charge any fees.

Private schools receive some funding from NT (40% of the adjusted school funding formula for the district). In 2005/06, there were no private schools in the NT.

SPENDING ON KINDERGARTEN (2005/06)

Average spending per kindergarten student

2005/06 estimate \$6,700 (half of the \$13,400 FTE funding the board receives per K-12 student).

Note: Figures exclude capital.

Total territorial spending on kindergarten (2005/06)

\$4,206,000

SPECIAL FEATURES

NT is the only jurisdiction in Canada where Aboriginal languages are recognized as Official Languages alongside English and French (there are 11 official languages in NT).

KINDERGARTEN DEVELOPMENTS

2005

Fall Changes were made to the *Education Act* to remove maximum hours for kindergarten programs in schools. It has been revised so that school jurisdictions may choose to offer full-day kindergarten and/or half-day Kindergarten and be funded accordingly by the GNT (funding for full-time kindergarten started in fall 2006).

September Revisions to the kindergarten curriculum were started. Mandatory implementation was targeted for the 2007/08 school year.

■ REGULATED CHILD CARE

LEGISLATION

Northwest Territories. Legislative Assembly. *The Northwest Territories Child Day Care Act* and the *Child Day Care Standards and Regulations* 1988.

TERRITORIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHILD CARE

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CHILD CARE SERVICES

UNREGULATED CHILD CARE

Unregulated family child care

Maximum number of children permitted: Four including the caregiver's own children up to 12 years.

REGULATED CHILD CARE

Day care centres

Group care, instruction and supervision for five or more children aged 0-12 years by a person who is not a relative of the majority of the children.

Nursery schools

Programs for children under six years of age for four consecutive hours or less a day.

After-school care

Care outside school hours for school-aged children up to and including 11 years of age, not exceeding five hours outside the required school program.

Note: There are no regulated after-school care programs that operate during the summer months.

Family day homes

Care in a private home for up to eight children under 12 years (including the caregiver's own children).

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

There are no segregated child care programs for children with special needs.

Care providers are funded to provide extra support to children with special needs, through higher operating grants, funded at the infant rate. Parents may be eligible for fee subsidies for their children with special needs even if they are not employed or at school. They must meet the same financial eligibility requirements as other parents receiving subsidy, and have a medical referral from a recognized health care official for the child to be in developmental care. Children may be placed on waiting lists for service.

ABORIGINAL CHILD CARE

The Northwest Territories is comprised of Inuit and Dene communities outside the capital City of Yellowknife. The majority of community-based programs are equally available to all children. The Aboriginal Head Start programs are the only programs targeted specifically towards Aboriginal children. However, they may include non-Aboriginal children if their capacity allows.

SPACE STATISTICS (MARCH 2008)

Number of regulated child care spaces	
<i>Centre spaces</i>	
Infant (0-2 years)	130
Preschool (2-5 years)	785
After-school (6-12 years)	453
Total regulated centre-based spaces	1,368
<i>Family child care spaces</i>	
Infant (0-2 years)	100
Preschool (2-5 years)	200
After-school (6-12 years)	100
Total number of regulated spaces	1,768
<i>Note: All centres are licensed for full-time spaces even though many operate as part-day nursery schools/playschools.</i>	
Number of children with special needs in regulated child care	
Information not available.	
Number of children receiving subsidies	
Information not available.	
Number of centres and homes	
Number of child care centres	67
Number of full-day child care centres	23
Number of part-day nursery schools/preschools	20
Number of stand-alone school age centres	24
Number of licensed family child care providers	50
Sponsorship of full-time regulated centre spaces	
Nonprofit (all centres are nonprofit and family day homes are considered to be nonprofit).	

STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS

REGULATED CENTRES

Maximum centre size

Not specified.

Maximum staff:child ratios and group sizes

Age	Staff:child ratios	Max. group sizes
0-12 months	1:3	6
13-24 months	1:4	8
25-35 months	1:6	12
3 years	1:8	16
4 years	1:9	18
5-11 years	1:10	20

Staff qualification requirements

Must be at least 19 years of age and have a first-aid certificate and a clear criminal record with regard to offences respecting a child.

There are no early childhood training requirements.

Parent involvement

The legislation requires nonprofit programs to have boards of directors with at least 51% parent members. For-profit programs are required to establish and confirm in writing with the Director of Early Childhood and School Services a plan for involving the parents or guardians of children attending the centre in the operation of the program.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Licences may be granted for 3-5 years, often issued in conjunction with annual inspections. All licensed child care centres are inspected by an Early Childhood Consultant from the Early Childhood Program, the Public Health Department, and Fire Marshall's office. The Early Childhood Consultant is required to have a background in early childhood education, either an ECE credential and four years experience at the supervisory level in a child care centre, or a teaching credential and six years front-line child care experience.

REGULATED FAMILY CHILD CARE (COMMUNITY DAY CARE HOMES)

Regulation

Individually licensed.

Maximum capacity

Maximum of eight children under 12 years (including the provider's own children). No more than six of the eight children may be five years or under, no more than three children may be under three years, and no more than two children may be under two years.

Provider qualification requirements

A provider must be a minimum of 19 years of age and have a first-aid certificate and a clear criminal record with regard to offences respecting a child.

There are no early childhood training requirements.

Licensing, monitoring and enforcement

Homes are visited at least once a year by staff from the Early Childhood Program and a representative from each of the Public Health Department and the Fire Marshall's office. Licences are usually issued in conjunction with annual inspections.

FUNDING

CHILD CARE SUBSIDY PROGRAM

Fee subsidies are paid directly to the parents unless the parent requests that the regulated child care service is paid directly. In the case of unregulated care, the subsidy is paid to the parent based on an invoice signed by the child care provider.

The intention of the subsidy program is to provide assistance for the parent to work, take part in a training program or be at school. Eligibility is determined by an income test that takes into consideration parent costs and family size as well as income.

Subsidies are payable to any regulated for-profit or non-profit service or for an unregulated arrangement. This program is the responsibility of the Government's Income Security Division.

Eligibility for fee subsidy

Eligibility varies according to the number of family members, actual shelter costs, community of residence, and eligibility for enhanced benefits such as disability allowance and educational expenses. These needs are based on Income Assistance Program schedules.

The lower of the maximum monthly entitlement or the actual monthly child care cost is used when calculating the monthly entitlement.

Maximum child care subsidy rates are as follows:

Type of care	Maximum monthly rate	Maximum daily rate
<i>Full-time</i>		
Regulated centre	\$700	\$32
Regulated day home	600	28
Unregulated care	500	23
<i>Part-time</i>		
Regulated centre	\$350	\$16
Regulated day home	300	14
Unregulated care	250	11
After-school	145	7

PUBLIC FUNDING FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2007/08)

One-time funding

Start-up funding

Available to nonprofit licensed centres and family day homes, including part-time, infant, after-school and special needs spaces. Funding ranges from \$1,560-\$4,446/space. There are ten different rates based on the cost of living in different parts of the territory.

Operating funding

Available to nonprofit, licensed centres and family day homes from \$3.00-\$29.80/occupied space/day, depending on the age of the child and the location of the program. For example, in Yellowknife an infant space receives \$15.60/day and a preschool space \$10.40; in Aklavik the rates are \$23.40 and \$19.80 respectively; and in Paulatuk they are \$29.60 and \$19.80. Family child care homes and centres receive the same amounts in operating grants.

TERRITORIAL ALLOCATIONS FOR REGULATED CHILD CARE (2007/08)

Fee subsidies	*\$1,042,000
Start-up and operating grants	***1,500,000
Total	\$2,542,000

**The fee subsidy budget includes spending on both regulated and unregulated child care.*

***All licenced nonprofit centres and family child care homes are eligible for start-up and operating funding.*

****Breakdown between one-time start-up and ongoing operating grants is not available*

The budget allocations for fee subsidies and operating grants remains unchanged from 2004/05. However, in 2004/05 both budgets were underspent. In 2005/06 the expenditures for the operating grants came close to the amount allocated.

SALARIES

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

All \$30,017

Those with an ECE credential: Information not available

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.

FEES

Median monthly parent fees for centre-based full-time care (2001)

Infants and preschool average \$600/month

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

Average daily fee in family child care

Information not available.

ADMINISTRATION

The Early Childhood Program of the Department of Education, Culture and Employment is responsible for the development of standards, the regulation of child care services, fee subsidy administration, contributions and program development support to child care programs.

MUNICIPAL OR OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ROLE

There is no local government role.

CHILD CARE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

There is no territorial plan for the development of child care. New centres must complete a needs assessment before they are eligible to apply for start-up funding.

RELATED PROGRAMS

The Territorial Government provides communities with funding through the Healthy Children Initiative to enhance existing early childhood programs and services. This funding is provided to each community using a population formula, and interested nonprofit groups may submit proposals to regional management committees for review.

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.

2001 The Early Childhood Development Framework for Action and Action Plan were launched. The Framework identifies key priorities for the enhancement of existing early childhood programs, including licensed child care. The Northwest Territories allocated \$2 million to the Framework for Action, which was supplemented by the Early Childhood Development Initiative allocation of \$400,000.

April 2002 Operating contributions were increased. Operational funding is available to nonprofit, licensed centres and family day homes from \$2.00-\$22.80/occupied space/day, depending on the age of the child and the location of the program.

May 2003 Aurora College (formerly Arctic College) had the first five graduates from the distance education Early Childhood Education Certificate program.

2003/04

As a result of recruitment efforts by the Child Care Consultants there was a considerable increase in the number of regulated family child care providers — from 27 to 39. This expansion took place primarily in the communities surrounding Yellowknife.

The \$33,000 received in the Multilateral Framework Agreement funding was used to support post-secondary Early Childhood Education. The 2004/05 allocation was used to fund a Regulation Review including the cost of community consultation.

2005

Summer Expenditures on child care operating grants came close to reaching the budget allocation for the first time. As a result, the first-come, first-served provision for grants was removed. As of November 2006, all centres continued to receive operating grants, and there were no waiting lists.

Fall The Child Care User Subsidy Program was reviewed as part of an overall review of all income security programs.

2006 The territorial government of the Northwest Territories did not sign an Early Learning and Child Care Agreement with the Government of Canada; however, \$941,000 for 2005/06 and \$862,000 for 2006/07 were received in trust.

A regulation review was announced.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CHILD CARE AND OTHER ECEC SERVICES

2007

A new child care subsidy user program targeted to parents enrolled in post-secondary education programs in NT was announced.

January The government announced the investment of the 2004/05 and 2005/06 Trust funding in improving post-secondary training and providing a one time funding grant to all licensed nonprofit early childhood programs. It also announced that the 2006/07 Trust Funds would be invested over a three-year period expanding family literacy training and program delivery.

April Rent/mortgage contributions were announced for nonprofit licensed early childhood programs that incur rent or mortgage expenses. Financial assistance can be accessed for a maximum of 25% of the annual rent or mortgage costs.

A 30% increase was announced for the Start-up and Operation Contribution scales. Both sources of funding are available to nonprofit licensed centres and family day homes. Funding allocations are determined using 10 area scales that are based on factors such as the cost of living in isolated communities.

2008 There was an expansion in staff positions within the government's Early Childhood Program. The change increased program staff from 4.5 positions to seven.

■ KEY TERRITORIAL ECEC ORGANIZATIONS

There is no territorial child care organization.

TEACHERS' ORGANIZATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Northwest Territories Teachers' Association
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P.O. Box 2340
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