

Early Years and Child Care Annual Report 2018



The Ministry of Education acknowledges the Government of Canada's support in connection with the **Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework** and the **Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement**. Part 3 of this document outlines Ontario's progress towards meeting early learning and child care goals under the agreement.



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Une publication équivalente est disponible en français sous le titre suivant : *Rapport annuel de 2018 sur le système de la petite enfance et des services de garde d'enfants.*

This publication is available on the Ministry of Education's website, at www.ontario.ca/edu.



PART 1: Overview of the Early Years and Child Care System

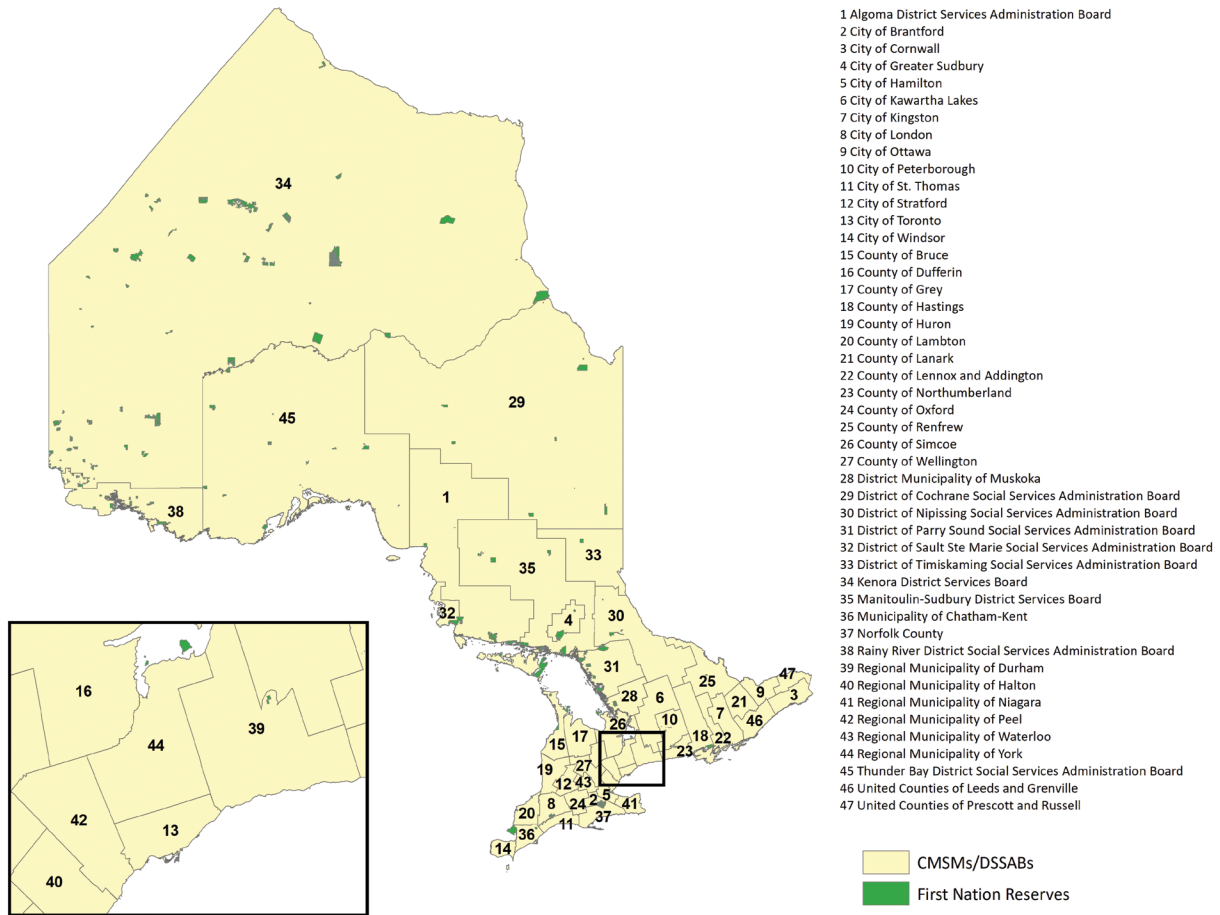
In Ontario, the Ministry of Education is responsible for child care and early years programs. The ministry sets overall policy, legislation, and regulations for the child care and early years sector, under the authority of the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*, and licenses child care providers across the province. The ministry also conducts inspections and investigates complaints about licensed and unlicensed child care.

The ministry oversees and licenses two types of child care:

- licensed child care centres, and
- home child care agencies, which 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.

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

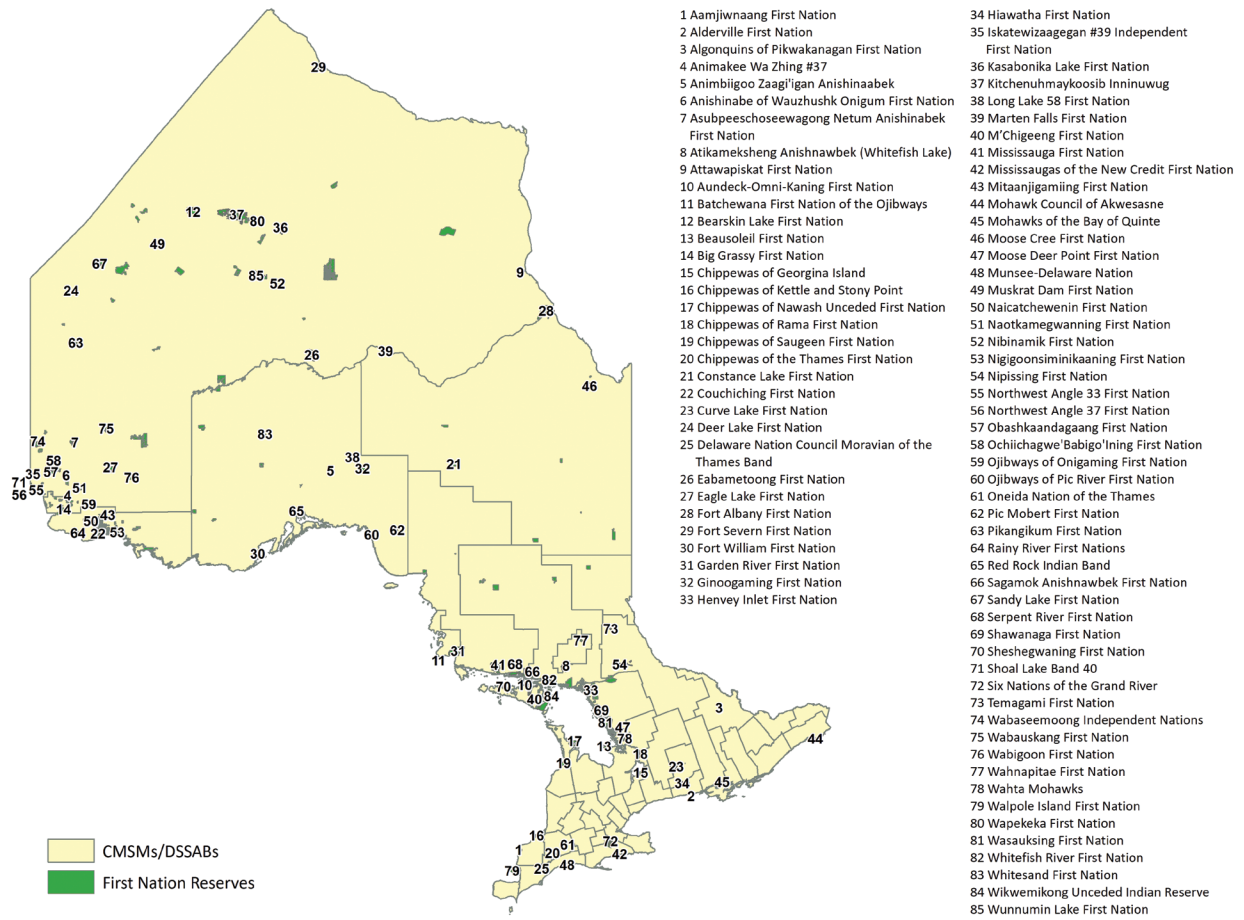


Data sources: Ontario Ministry of Education; Statistics Canada

As of March 31, 2018, the province was funding 85 First Nations to support child care and/or child and family programs on reserve (see Figure 2), of which:

- 44 received funding for child care **only**
- 11 received funding for child and family programs **only**
- 30 received funding for a combination of child care **and** child and family programs.

Figure 2: Ontario First Nations Receiving Provincial Funding for Child Care and/or Child and Family Programs



Data sources: Ontario Ministry of Education; Statistics Canada



PART 2: Early Years and Child Care Key Data and Measures

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 as well as municipalities, school boards, and First Nations. As of March 31, 2018, there were 5,437 licensed child care centres in Ontario. The total number of spaces in licensed centres was 427,032, which included:

- 31,251 spaces in centres that provide services in French
- 5,827 spaces in centres that provide bilingual services
- 3,215 spaces in centres in First Nations communities (on reserve).

As of March 31, 2018, a total of 122 licensed home child care agencies were in operation in the province. These agencies were permitted to contract with a maximum of 7,783 approved homes.¹ Two home child care agencies were operated by First Nations, with a maximum of 31 approved homes. A total of 3,715² homes were deemed to be “active homes”.³

1. “Approved homes” refers to the maximum number of homes with which an agency is permitted to enter into a contract.

2. Data source: 2018 Licensed Child Care Operations Survey, Ontario Ministry of Education. All licensed child care centres and home child care agencies that were operating as of March 31, 2018, were asked to complete the 2018 survey. Close to all licensed child care centres (99.6%) and home child care agencies (99.2%) responded to the survey.

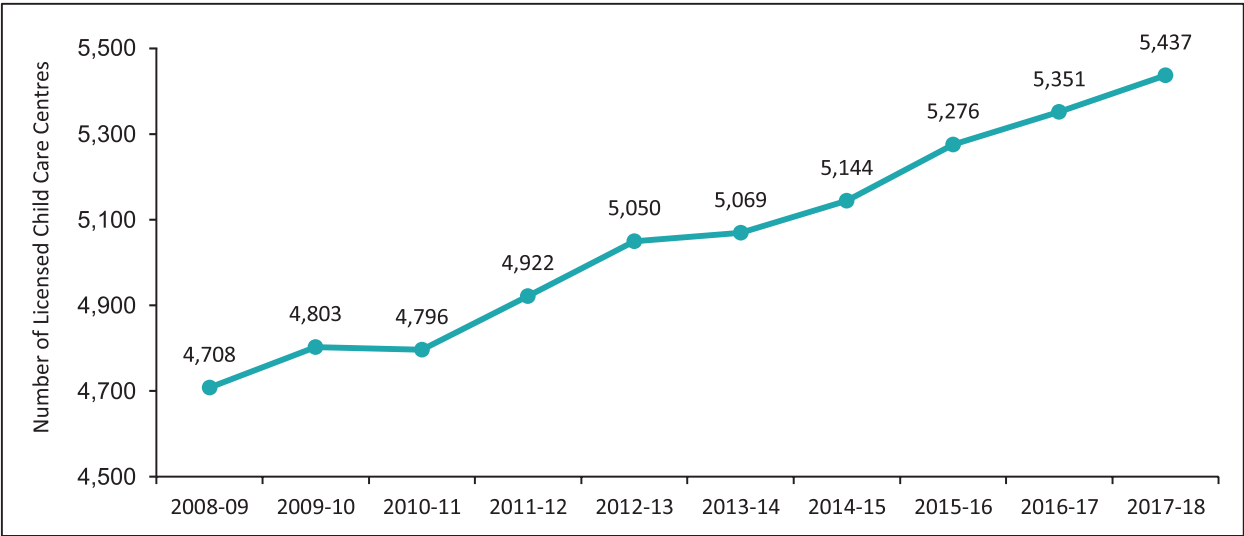
3. “Active homes” refers to the number of home child care providers that have a contract/agreement with an agency.

Overall Trends in Licensed Child Care

Ontario's licensed child care sector continues to grow, driven by growth in licensed child care centres (see Figure 3 and Table 1). Specific areas of growth since 2008-09 include the following:

- The number of licensed child care centres increased by more than 15%, from 4,708 to 5,437. Licensed spaces have increased by 73%, from 246,642 to 427,032.
- The number of spaces has grown across all age groups, including kindergarten (280%), school age (90%), toddler (69%), infant (57%), and preschool (7%).

Figure 3: Number of Licensed Child Care Centres, 2008-09 to 2017-18



Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education

Table 1: Spaces in Licensed Child Care Centres by Age Group, 2008-09 to 2017-18

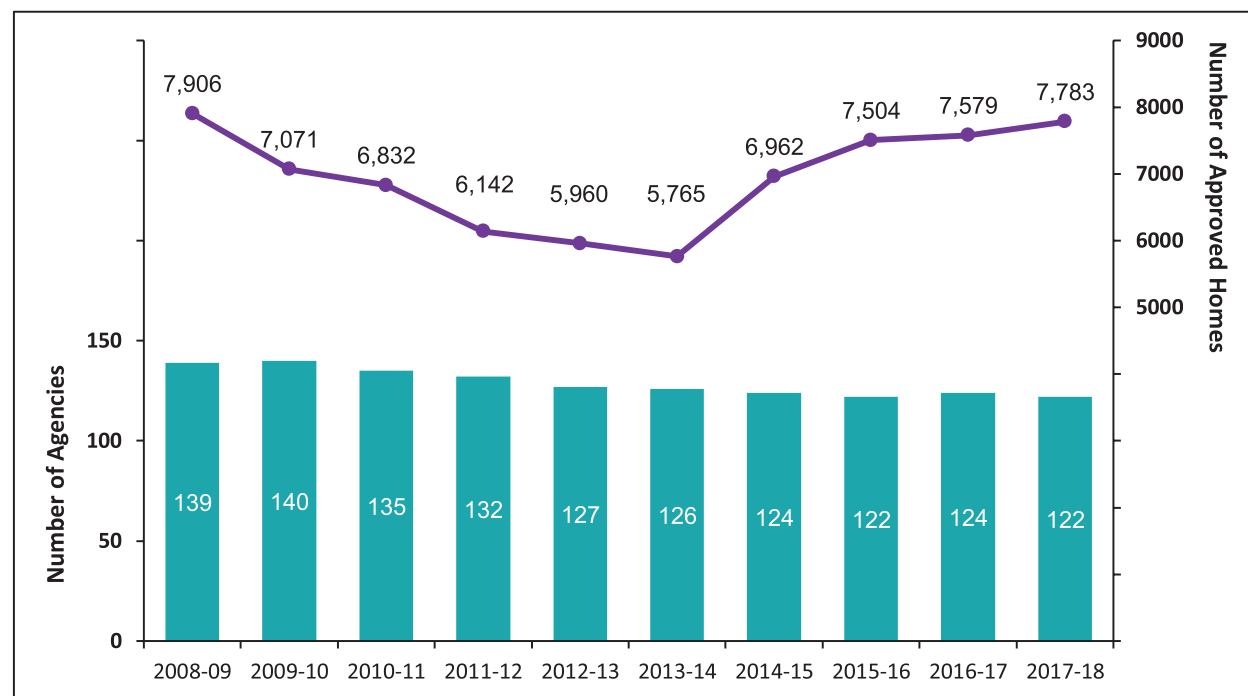
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Number of Spaces	246,642	257,457	264,201	275,873	294,490	317,868	350,801	389,286	406,395	427,032
Infant	8,129	8,511	8,874	9,269	9,634	10,250	11,025	11,759	12,231	12,755
Toddler	26,361	28,083	29,534	30,867	32,578	34,772	37,833	41,211	42,900	44,529
Preschool	101,285	103,174	103,048	103,474	102,731	102,133	102,380	104,802	105,955	108,375
Kindergarten	25,856	27,621	28,944	32,547	40,796	52,168	64,340	85,014	92,035	98,310
School Age	85,808	90,233	93,839	99,743	108,795	118,545	135,223	146,500	153,274	162,901
Family Age Group*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	162

Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education

* As of September 1, 2017, a new licensed age group – “family age group” – for children 0-12 years was introduced for licensed child care centres. This new group allows children of different ages in the same family to be placed in the same group in a play activity room.

Overall, the number of licensed home child care agencies has decreased by 12% since 2008-09, from 139 to 122 (see the bars in Figure 4), and the number of approved homes has decreased by 2%, from 7,906 to 7,783 (see the line in Figure 4).

Figure 4: Licensed Home Child Care Agencies and Approved Homes, 2008-09 to 2017-18



Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education

Child Care by Type of Auspice⁴

As of March 31, 2018, 76% of licensed child care centres were not-for-profit, operated by not-for-profit organizations and First Nations, and 79% of child care spaces were in not-for-profit centres. 86% of licensed home child care agencies were not-for-profit and 91% of approved child care homes were affiliated with not-for-profit agencies. (For details on the changes over time, see Tables 2 and 3.)

Table 2: Licensed Child Care Centres and Spaces in Licensed Child Care Centres by Auspice, 2008-09 to 2017-18

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Number of Centres	4,708	4,803	4,796	4,922	5,050	5,069	5,144	5,276	5,351	5,437
Not-for-profit	3,627	3,663	3,643	3,733	3,859	3,847	3,942	4,007	4,053	4,128
For-profit	1,081	1,140	1,153	1,189	1,191	1,222	1,202	1,269	1,298	1,309
Number of Spaces	246,642	257,457	264,201	275,873	294,490	317,868	350,801	389,286	406,395	427,032
Not-for-profit	186,078	192,256	196,708	205,777	222,851	240,881	272,899	305,317	319,608	337,318
For-profit	60,564	65,201	67,493	70,096	71,639	76,987	77,902	83,969	86,787	89,714

Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education

Table 3: Licensed Home Child Care Agencies and Approved Homes by Auspice, 2008-09 to 2017-18

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Number of Agencies	139	140	135	132	127	126	124	122	124	122
Not-for-profit	124	125	121	118	116	113	111	108	109	105
For-profit	15	15	14	14	11	13	13	14	15	17
Number of Approved Homes	7,906	7,071	6,832	6,142	5,960	5,765	6,962	7,504	7,579	7,783
Not-for-profit	7,446	6,624	6,398	5,812	5,640	5,403	6,500	6,992	7,017	7,114
For-profit	460	447	434	330	320	362	462	512	562	669

Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education

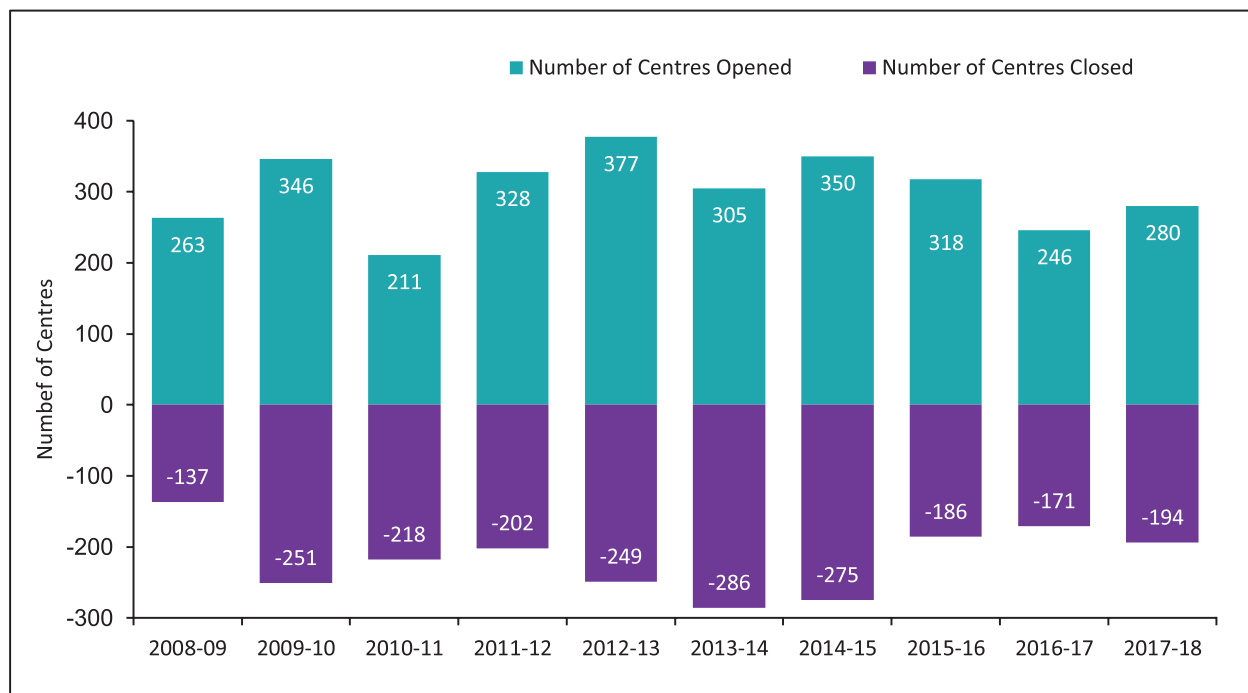
4. "Auspice" refers to the ownership and operation of a service. In this report, licensed child care centres are categorized into two types of auspice: not-for-profit and for-profit.

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 service for the benefit of a community in response to a need for child care, or local planning efforts by municipalities to address an increase in the need for child care. Centres that close typically do so due to low enrolment.

In 2017-18, 280 child care centres opened and 194 closed. On average, there was an annual net increase of 86 centres per year for the past 10 years (see Figure 5). 729 more child care centres were in operation in 2017-18 than in 2008-09.

Figure 5: Licensed Child Care Centre Openings and Closures, 2008-09 to 2017-18

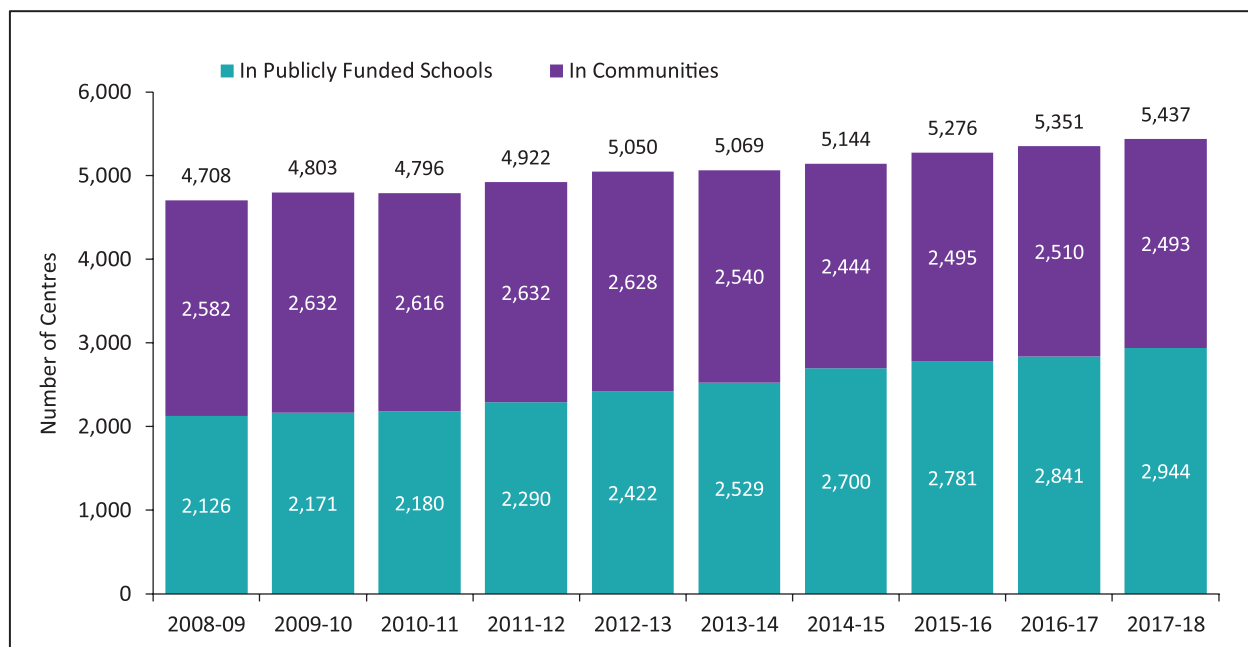


Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education

Licensed Child Care in Publicly Funded Schools and in Communities

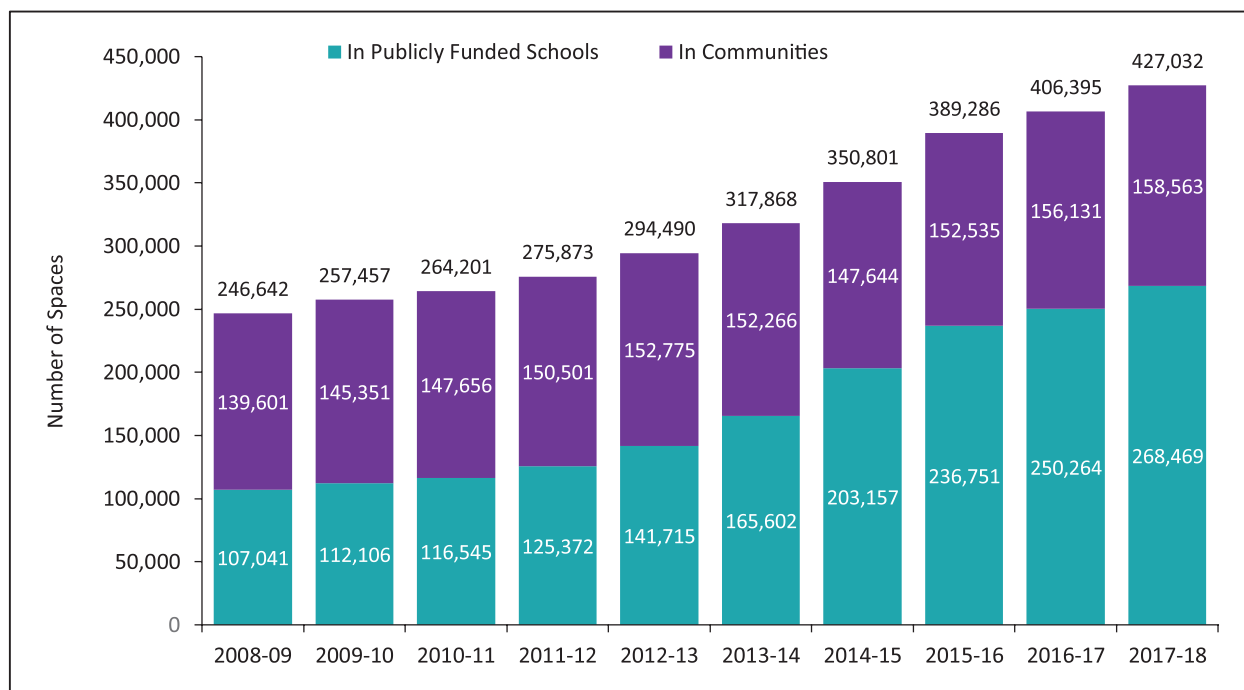
As of March 31, 2018, 54% of child care centres, and 63% of child care spaces, were in publicly funded schools. The remaining 46% of child care centres, and 37% of child care spaces, were located elsewhere in the community. The number of licensed child care centres located in publicly funded schools increased by 4% in 2017-18 compared to the previous year, and spaces increased by 7% in the same period. Since 2008-09, the number of child care centres located in publicly funded schools has increased by 38% (see Figure 6), and spaces have increased by 151% (see Figure 7).

Figure 6: Licensed Child Care Centres in Publicly Funded Schools and in Communities, 2008-09 to 2017-18



Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education

Figure 7: Licensed Child Care Spaces in Publicly Funded Schools and in Communities, 2008-09 to 2017-18



Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education

First Nations Licensed Child Care

As of March 31, 2018, 76 licensed child care centres were operated by 58 First Nations in Ontario. Licensed child care spaces on reserve have increased by 4% since 2008-09 (see Table 4).

Table 4: First Nations Licensed Child Care Centres and Spaces by Age Group, 2008-09 to 2017-18

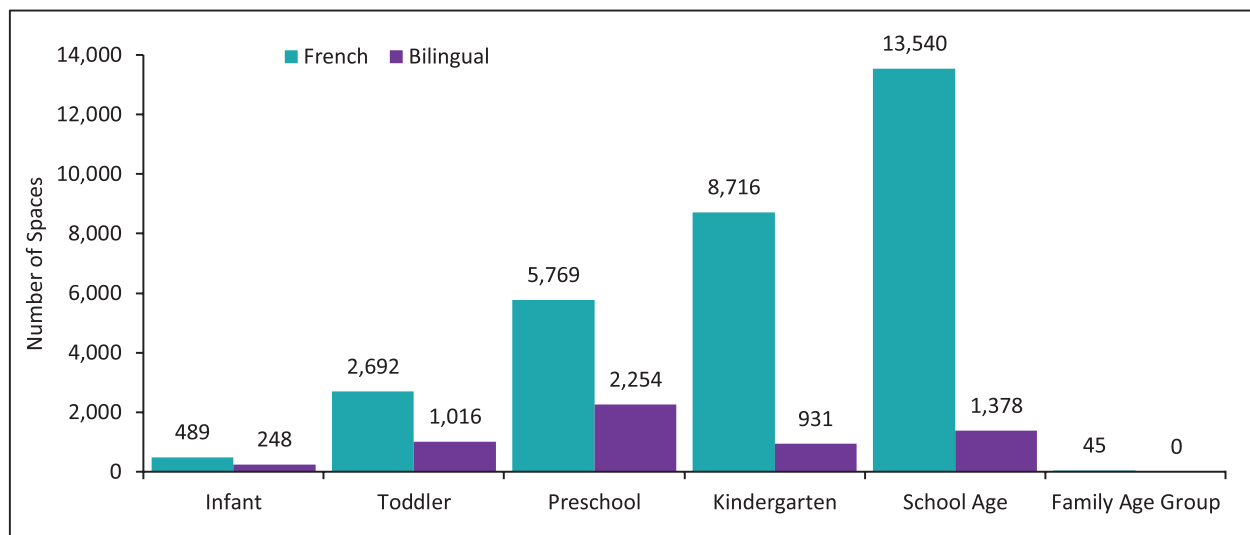
	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Number of Centres	75	77	78	76	76	74	75	76	76	76
Infant	210	221	227	223	232	254	270	296	290	290
Toddler	614	652	662	682	692	702	727	727	727	731
Preschool	1,550	1,581	1,613	1,602	1,624	1,620	1,568	1,541	1,553	1,551
Kindergarten	315	345	279	197	205	172	177	192	192	227
School Age	391	401	391	439	458	443	398	413	413	416
Total Number of Spaces	3,080	3,200	3,172	3,143	3,211	3,191	3,140	3,169	3,175	3,215

Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education

French-language and Bilingual Licensed Child Care

Some licensed child care centres offer services in French or in both English and French (i.e., bilingual). In 2017-18, of the 5,437 licensed child care centres, 302 offered programs in French, and 80 offered bilingual programs. Of the 427,032 licensed child care spaces, 31,251 (7%) were for programs in French and 5,827 (1%) were for bilingual programs. (For more about how these spaces are distributed by age, see Figure 8.)

Figure 8: Licensed Child Care Spaces in French-language and Bilingual Child Care by Age Group, 2017-18



Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education

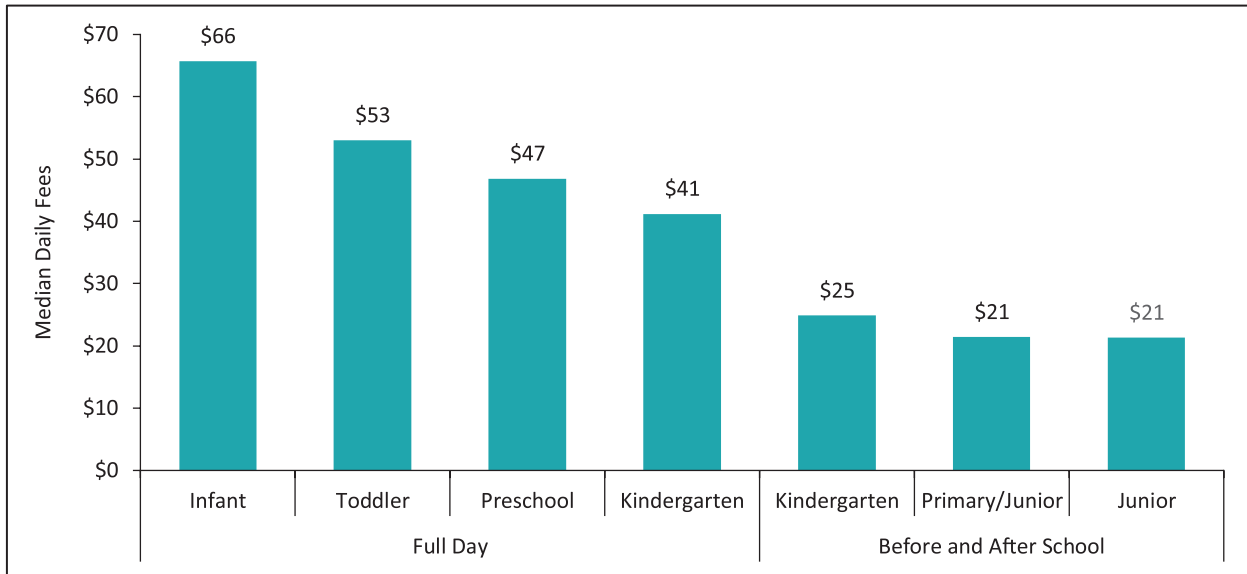
Parent Fees by Age Group

In 2018, median parent fees among licensed child care centres ranged from \$66 per day for infants to \$21 per day for school-aged children. Median parent fees among licensed home child care agencies ranged from \$45 per day for infants to \$25 per day for school-aged children.

Licensed child care continues to be more expensive for younger children than it is for older children. In general, daily parent fees for younger children were higher among licensed child care centres than home child care agencies. Conversely, fees for older children were lower among licensed child care centres than home child care agencies. (See Figures 9 and 10.⁵)

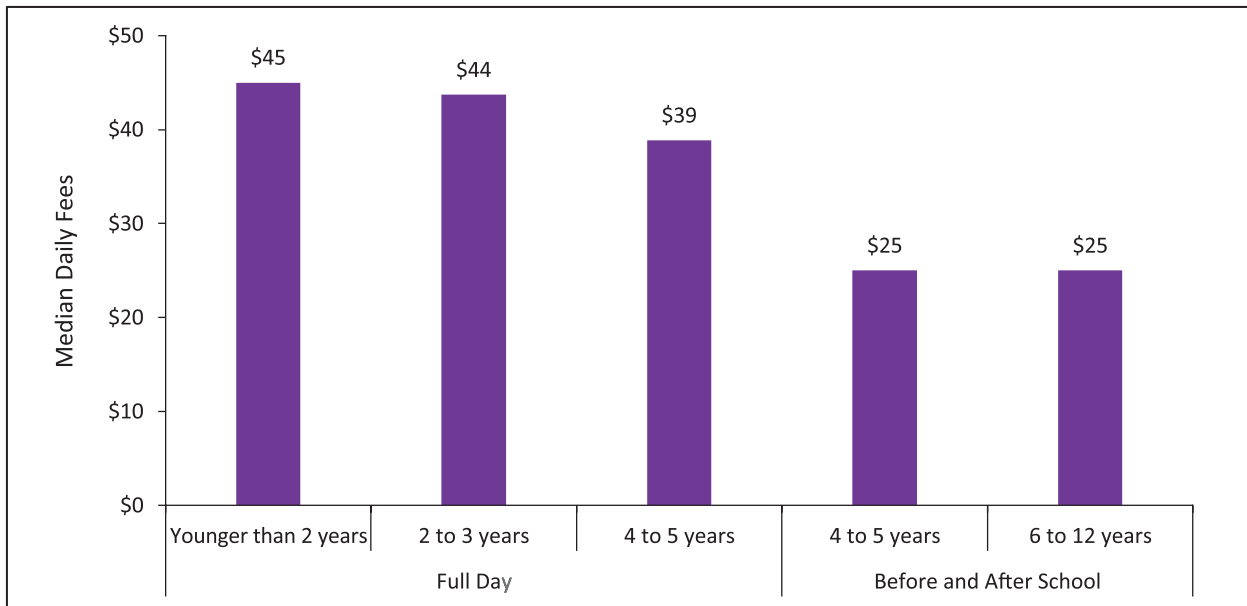
5. Different sets of age categories were used to collect data for licensed child care centres and licensed home child care agencies. Age categories used for licensed child care centres are in accordance with the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*. These age categories do not apply to licensed home child care.

Figure 9: Median Daily Fees by Age Group Among Licensed Child Care Centres, 2018



Data source: 2018 Licensed Child Care Operations Survey, Ontario Ministry of Education

Figure 10: Median Daily Fees by Age Group Among Licensed Home Child Care Agencies, 2018

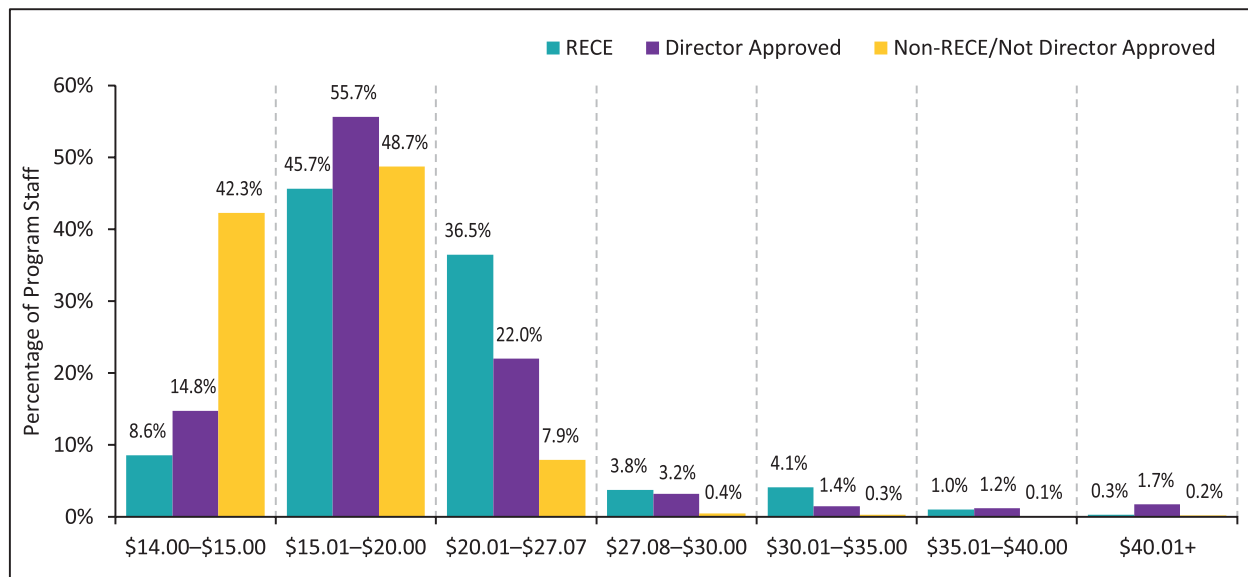


Data source: 2018 Licensed Child Care Operations Survey, Ontario Ministry of Education

Staff Wages by Category

The majority of full-time program staff in licensed child care centres earned between \$15 and \$20 per hour (see Figure 11). Program staff fall into one of three categories: Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs), staff approved by a ministry director,⁶ and staff who are not RECEs and have not been director-approved.

Figure 11: Hourly Wages of Full-time Program Staff in Licensed Child Care Centres, 2018



Data source: 2018 Licensed Child Care Operations Survey, Ontario Ministry of Education

6. 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 ("current member"); or
- has been otherwise approved by a director.

For more information, see "Staff Qualifications" under "Licensed Child Care Indicators".

EarlyON Child and Family Centres

EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer free drop-in 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:

- 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.

The ministry's **EarlyON Child and Family Centre website** allows parents and caregivers to find child and family programs in their communities.

Consolidated Municipal Service Managers and District Social Services Administration Boards assumed responsibility for EarlyON Child and Family Centres in January 2018. These service system managers are responsible for the local management of EarlyON centres as part of their responsibility for the management of child care and other human services.

As of March 31, 2018, there were approximately 1,155 EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations across Ontario of which 376 were main EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations and 779 were mobile/satellite EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations.⁷

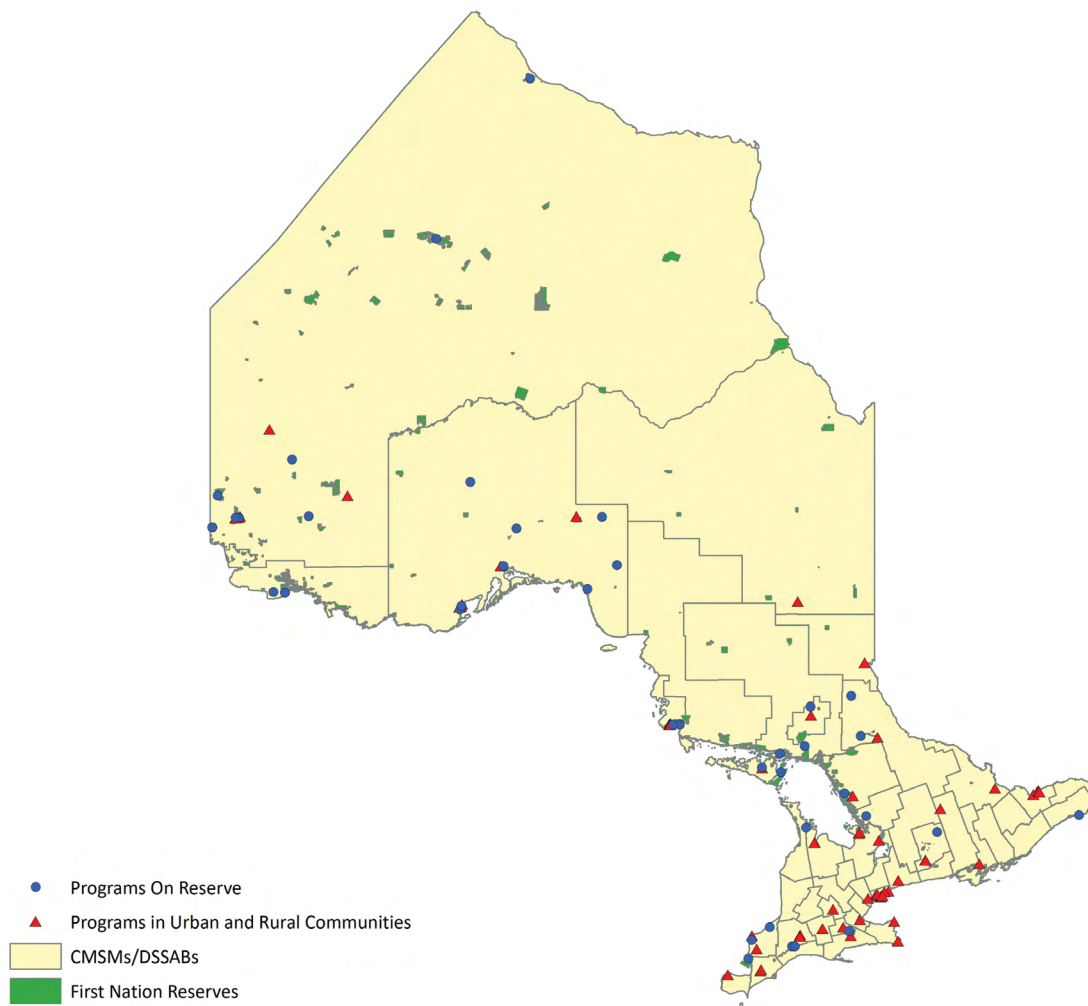
Of the total number of EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations, approximately 400 offer non-standard hours, 110 offer French-language programming, and 65 offer Indigenous programming.

7. The Ministry of Education recognizes that 2018 is a year of transition as service system managers continue to work with community partners to implement plans to integrate child and family programs into a system of EarlyON Child and Family Centres. As a result, the data provided in this report are approximations, as communities continue to provide updates to the ministry on the implementation. The ministry has been working with service system managers and service providers to regularly update the provincial EarlyON website to ensure that parents and caregivers have up-to-date information regarding the EarlyON Child and Family Centres in their communities.

Indigenous Programs On Reserve and in Urban and Rural Communities

As part of Ontario's commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous people, the ministry established or enhanced 43 on reserve programs (5 enhanced, 38 new) and 60 programs in urban and rural communities (10 child care programs, 13 joint child care and child and family programs, and 37 child and family programs). (See Figure 12.)

Figure 12: Indigenous Child Care and Child and Family Programs On Reserve and in Urban and Rural Communities



Data sources: Ontario Ministry of Education; Statistics Canada

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 each 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 (i.e., a measure of whole populations based on geographical or administrative boundaries) by the ministry, municipalities, school boards, and community organizations to inform decision-making and plan early years programs and services. The ministry 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:

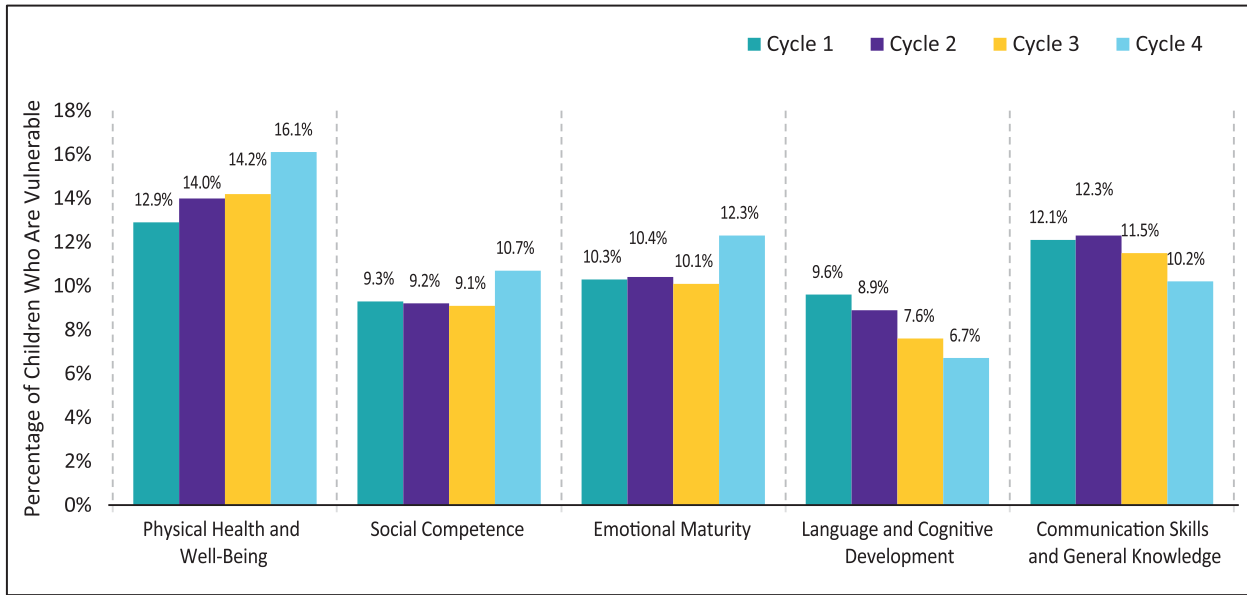
- over a three-year period for Cycle 1 (2004-06), Cycle 2 (2007-09), and Cycle 3 (2010-12)
- in a single year, every three years, for Cycle 4 (2015) and Cycle 5 (2018).⁸

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 vulnerable children⁹ 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 13). The results can also be combined to look at all those who are vulnerable in *one or more* of the five domains (see Figure 14). Combining domains in this way provides a fuller picture and captures those children who may be vulnerable in single domains or in multiple domains.

8. 113,323 EDI questionnaires were analysed for Cycle 1; 110,916 for Cycle 2; 119,494 for Cycle 3; and 125,858 for Cycle 4. Cycle 5 data was not yet available at the time of this report’s release.

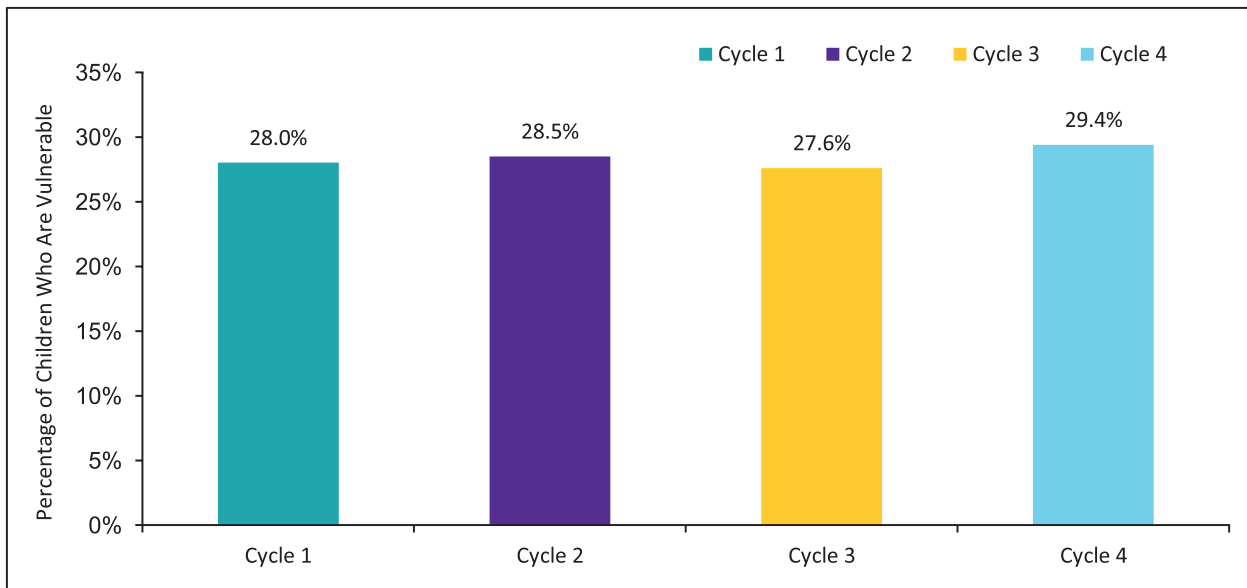
9. “Vulnerable” describes children who score below the 10th percentile of the Ontario EDI baseline population scores. This indicates that they are struggling in comparison to the baseline population.

Figure 13: Percentage of Vulnerable Children by EDI Domain, 2004-15



Data source: Offord Centre for Child Studies, McMaster University

Figure 14: Percentage of Children Who Are Vulnerable in One or More EDI Domains, 2004-15



Data source: Offord Centre for Child Studies, McMaster University



PART 3: Indicators under the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement

The federal government committed \$400 million in their 2016 budget, and an additional \$7 billion over years in their 2017 budget, to establish a Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework¹⁰ with provinces and territories.¹¹ Under the framework, the federal government and these 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. These 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 Agreement.¹² Under the agreement, the federal government

10. Available on the Government of Canada's website at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/early-learning-child-care/reports/2017-multilateral-framework.html>

11. Quebec is not part of the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework.

12. Available on the Government of Canada's website at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/early-learning-child-care-agreement/agreements-provinces-territories/ontario.html>

agreed to allocate \$439 million to Ontario over three years (i.e., 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20).¹³ Current annual investments include:¹⁴

- \$100 million to support access for children and families to child care
- \$40 million to support access to EarlyON Child and Family Centres
- \$5 million to support innovative approaches that provide access to high quality training and professional learning opportunities for the early years and child care workforce.

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 Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. For more about the indicators that are being used to measure Ontario's progress, see **Appendix: List of Indicators under the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement**.

2017-18 Expenditures and Actions

Under the agreement, Ontario received \$146.5 million in federal funding in the 2017-18 fiscal year, of which \$18.8 million was carried forward to the 2018-19 fiscal year. Ontario's actual expenditures in the 2017-18 fiscal year were \$127.7 million.

The 2017-18 funding supported the following three action areas:

- increasing access to affordable, high quality licensed child care
- increasing access to EarlyON Child and Family Centres
- innovative approaches to providing access to high quality training and professional learning opportunities for the early years and child care workforce.

13. Actual allocations may vary according to the latest population estimates.

14. Totals may not add up due to rounding.

Table 5: Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement Expenditures and Actions for 2017-18

Areas	Federal Allocations	Actions	Actual Expenditures
Licensed Child Care	Ontario allocated \$100 million of the federal funding for increased subsidies and access to licensed child care in Ontario. There are two components to this investment, including \$80 million for children aged 0-6, and \$20 million to support access to affordable child care across the system based on local priorities.	<p>The federal funding was provided to service system managers through provincial-municipal service agreements.</p> <p>Service agreements, including funding under the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, were provided to service system managers on June 16, 2017. Service system managers then submitted their proposed strategies to the ministry for approval.</p>	\$100 million
EarlyON Child and Family Centres	Ontario allocated \$40 million of the federal funding to service system managers to support the integration of the ministry's former four child and family programs into a cohesive system of services and supports for children aged 0-6 and their parents and caregivers beginning January 1, 2018.	<p>Service system managers submitted their initial plans for the implementation of EarlyON Child and Family Centres on September 29, 2017.</p> <p>Responsibility for EarlyON Child and Family Centres was transferred to service system managers in January 2018.</p>	\$26.2 million
Professional Development	\$2 million was used to increase the number of students supported through the Early Childhood Education Qualifications Upgrade Program (ECE QUP).	The ECE QUP is an important part of the government's plan to support the ongoing professionalization of the sector. Along with provincial funding, up to \$5.5 million in grants was available in 2017-18.	\$1.5 million
	\$3 million was dedicated to establish Centres of Excellence to support the early years and child care workforce.	The ministry announced a Call for Proposals for Centres of Excellence for Early Years and Child Care. Three organizations were selected to lead the Provincial, Indigenous and Francophone Centres of Excellence. Service plans from lead organizations were due July 20, 2018.	(No expenditures for Centres of Excellence in 2017-18)

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 (see **Appendix: List of Indicators under the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement**).

Quality

Staff Qualifications

Ontario Regulation 137/15 under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 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 6). 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; or
- an employee who is otherwise approved by a director.

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 6: 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

The ministry 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:¹⁵

- 81% of licensed child care centres employed RECEs for supervisor positions, and the remaining 19% had director approval for one or more such positions
- 62% of licensed child care centres employed only RECEs for the positions requiring qualified employees, and the remaining 38% of centres had director approval for one or more such positions
- 81% of licensed home child care agencies employed RECEs for all home child care visitor positions, and the remaining 19% had director approval for one or more such positions.

15. Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education, as of March 31, 2018.

Pedagogical Framework

How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014 (referred to hereafter as 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 are also in place to help child care licensees embed HDLH into practice.

As of March 31, 2018, 7 out of 5,437 licensed child care centres had outstanding non-compliances with the requirements regarding the development and implementation of a program statement that is consistent with HDLH, and these non-compliances were all resolved by the time this report was released. The ministry continues to support the implementation of the HDLH pedagogy in licensed child care programs in the province.

Access

As of March 31, 2018, there were 427,032 licensed child care spaces in centres across the province, with 20,637 spaces added to the system over the previous year. It is estimated that there are enough spaces in licensed child care centres for 22% of children in the province.¹⁶ (For a comparison of the past two years, see Table 7.)

Table 7: Ontario Child Population, Licensed Spaces, and Percentage of Children with Access to Licensed Child Care, 2016-17 to 2017-18

	2016-17	2017-18
Child population aged 0-12	1,943,469	1,966,462
Licensed spaces in centres for children aged 0-12	406,395	427,032
Percentage of children aged 0-12 for whom there are licensed child care spaces	21%	22%

Data source for child population: Ontario Ministry of Finance.

16. The estimation does not account for children cared for in homes contracted with licensed home child care agencies.

Affordability

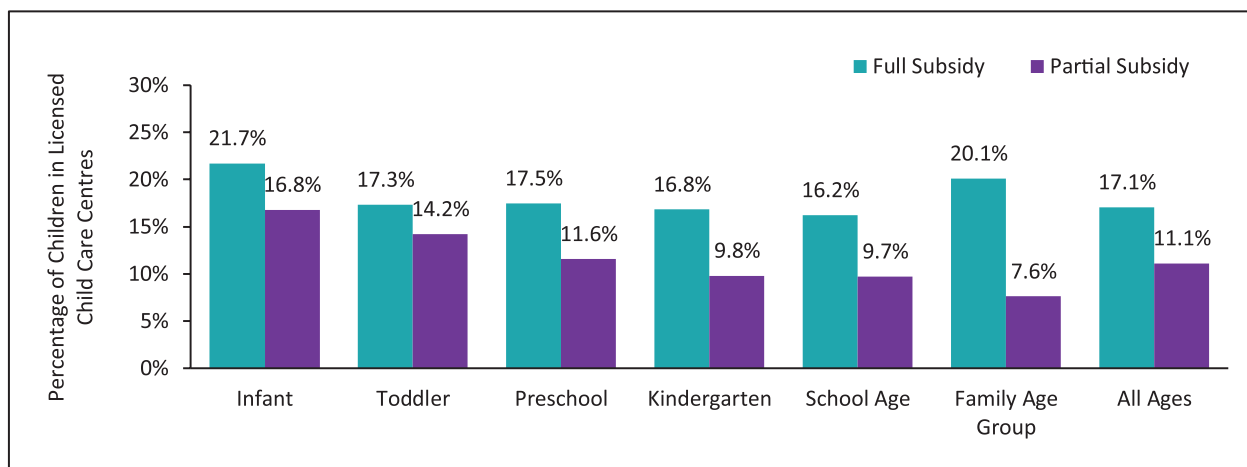
The funding under the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement supports new full and/or partial fee subsidies and increased access through the following priorities:

- Supporting children aged 0-6 years through additional fee subsidies, increased access, broadly reducing licensed child care fees and by increasing affordability, and/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, and/or broadly reducing licensed child care fees and by increasing affordability.

In 2017, service system managers indicated that approximately 9,400 children would be supported under the above priorities.¹⁷

In 2018, approximately 28% of children in licensed child care centres received a subsidy (see Figure 15), and 67% of children in licensed home child care received a subsidy (see Figure 16).

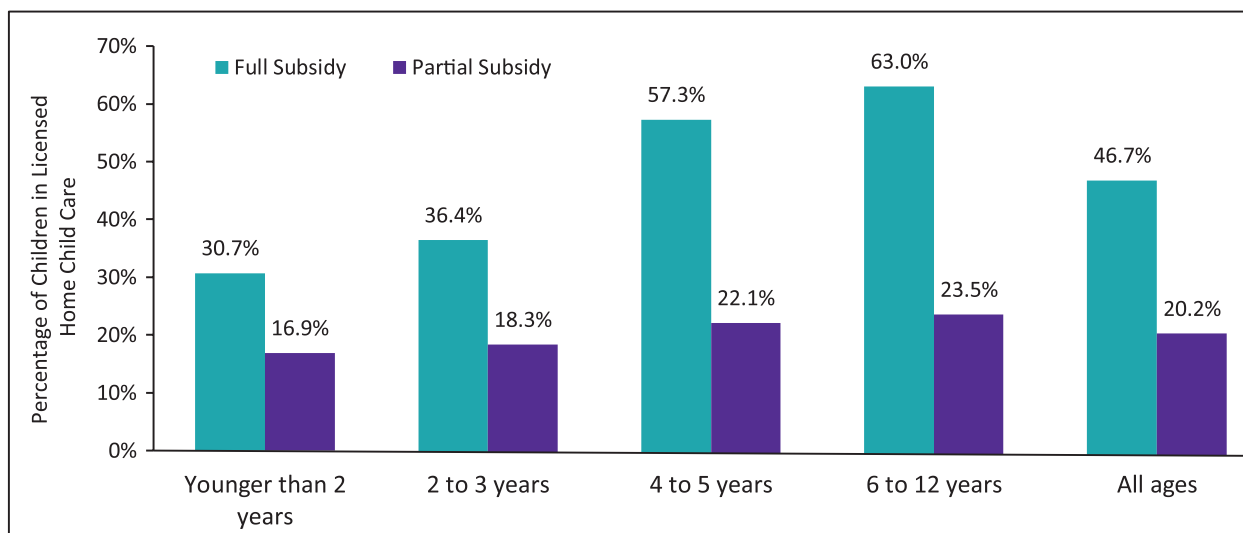
Figure 15: Percentage of Children in Licensed Child Care Centres Receiving a Full or Partial Subsidy by Age, 2018



Data source: 2018 Licensed Child Care Operations Survey, Ontario Ministry of Education

17. Data source: Transfer payment agreements with service system managers, Ontario Ministry of Education.

Figure 16: Percentage of Children in Licensed Home Child Care Receiving a Full or Partial Subsidy by Age, 2018



Data source: 2018 Licensed Child Care Operations Survey, 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 that work non-standard schedules. In Ontario, a small proportion of licensed child care centres and home child care agencies provide care during non-standard hours:¹⁸

- 1% of centres reported that service was available during the week after 7 p.m.; 9% reported the availability of weekend care; and less than 1% reported the availability of overnight care.
- 12% of home providers reported that service was available during the week after 7 p.m.; 10% reported the availability of weekend care; and 7% 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/guardians. Under Ontario Regulation 138/15, a “child with special needs” means a child whose cognitive, physical, social, emotional, or communicative needs, or

18. Data source: 2018 Licensed Child Care Operations Survey, Ontario Ministry of Education.

whose needs relating to overall development, are of such a nature that additional supports are required for the child.

A total of 31,766 children were funded through Special Needs Resourcing between January 1 and December 31, 2016. Municipalities did not report Special Needs Resourcing data by funding source, so data specific to federal funding was not available.

Indigenous-led Centres in Urban and Rural Areas

A total of 25 licensed child care centres reported that they were Indigenous-led organizations operating in urban and rural communities.¹⁹

French-language and Bilingual Child Care

There was an increase in the number of licensed child care centres offering French-language or bilingual programs between 2016-17 and 2017-18 (see Table 8).

Table 8: Licensed Child Care Centres Offering French-language or Bilingual Programs and Spaces Available, 2016-17 to 2017-18

Licensed child care centres offering French-language programs		
	2016-17	2017-18
Number of centres	294	302
Number of spaces	28,623	31,251
Licensed child care centres offering bilingual programs		
	2016-17	2017-18
Number of centres	65	80
Number of spaces	4,694	5,827

Data source: Child Care Licensing System, Ontario Ministry of Education

19. Data source: 2018 Licensed Child Care Operations Survey, Ontario Ministry of Education.

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, 2018, there were 427,032 licensed child care spaces for children aged 0-12 in Ontario. Approximately 21% of families with children in the province earned a family income below \$40,000, 40% earned between \$40,000 and \$100,000, and 39% earned above \$100,000.²⁰

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

- more than 92,000 spaces are used by children from families with income below \$40,000
- about 170,000 spaces are used by children from families with income between \$40,000 and \$100,000
- about 165,000 are used by children from families with income above \$100,000.

20. Data source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016104.

EarlyON Child and Family Centres 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 child and family centres (see **Appendix: List of Indicators under the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement**).

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 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.

Service system managers are required to ensure that qualified staff teams are responsible for delivering programs and services at every EarlyON centre. Qualified staff teams must include at least one RECE to deliver mandatory core services related to supporting early learning and development. Where 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.

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*, EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer an environment that engages parents and caregivers as co-learners and leaders in influencing positive child, family, and community experiences and outcomes.

Access, Affordability, Flexibility, and Inclusion

As of March 31, 2018, there were approximately 1,155 EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations across Ontario, of which 376 were main EarlyON Child

and Family Centre locations and 779 were mobile/satellite EarlyON Child and Family Centre locations.

Of the total number of locations, approximately 400 locations offered non-standard hours, 110 offered French-language programming, and 65 offered Indigenous programming.

Approximately 145 new EarlyON Child and Family Centre rooms in 88 locations were approved by the ministry in 2017-18, of which 84 new rooms in 47 locations were approved using approximately \$21.4 million invested by the federal government through the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. The ministry is also monitoring EarlyON expansion supported through operating funding under the agreement over the next three years.

In 2016-17, 334,268 children were served by child and family programs at EarlyON centres,²¹ or approximately 32% of children in the province aged 0-6.²² There were approximately 2,119,624 visits to EarlyON centres made by children, and 1,636,106 visits made by parents and caregivers.²³

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 (see **Appendix: List of Indicators under the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement**).

ECE Qualification Upgrade Program

Individuals working in child care and early years programs can apply for grants to help upgrade their qualifications. This involves earning 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.

21. Data source: Ontario Ministry of Education. Some 2016-17 submissions from municipalities were still under review at the time this report was released. The numbers are preliminary.

22. Percentage is an estimate based on the number of children served and the total population of children in the province aged 0-6.

23. Data source: Ontario Ministry of Education. Some 2016-17 submissions from municipalities were still under review at the time this report was released. The numbers are preliminary.

Financial support is available to eligible applicants in the form of education grants, travel grants, and a training allowance.

The ministry continues to work towards expanding access to the program to increase the number of RECEs in child care and early years programs.

In 2017-18, a total of 1,114 applications were approved under the ECE Qualification Upgrade Program.

In 2017-18, the ministry allocated \$1.5 million federal funding through a service agreement with North Bay Regional Health Centre, the administrator of the ECE Qualification Upgrade Program. Due to the timing of the funding and the nature of the program, this funding was carried forward to the 2018-19 service agreement. The ministry is working with North Bay Regional Health Centre to increase outreach and uptake of the program across the province in order to fully utilize this funding in 2018-19. The ministry anticipates that improvements to the program will be reflected in an increased number of grant approvals, which will be shared in the 2018-19 fiscal year report.

Centres of Excellence for Early Years and Child Care

Centres of Excellence for Early Years and Child Care are a new initiative being funded as part of Ontario's action plan under the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. The centres will connect practitioners, educational institutions, and service providers through innovative professional learning networks across Ontario.

In November 2017, the ministry announced a Call for Proposals to the early years and child care sector and received proposals from a broad range of partners across the province. The following lead organizations, working in collaboration with partners across the province, were selected to lead the Provincial, Indigenous, and Francophone Centres of Excellence:

- Provincial Centre of Excellence — Western University and Ontario Reggio Association
- Indigenous Centre of Excellence — Ontario Aboriginal Head Start Association and Kenjgewin Teg Education Institute
- Francophone Centre of Excellence — Collège Boréal and L'Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario.

The roles of Centres of Excellence will include:

- supporting alignment with *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* and promoting cohesion in pedagogical approaches and practices across early years programs
- building the pedagogical leadership capacity of program staff in the early years sector through innovative models and strategies that are grounded in current research and that result in positive, inclusive, and culturally relevant early years experiences for all children and their families
- creating linkages to and/or developing professional learning resources that are responsive to the needs of the sector and accessible online through a Centre of Excellence portal.

Appendix: List of Indicators under the Agreement

HIGH QUALITY CHILD CARE			
Principles	Indicators Related to Planned Investment*	Indicators as Reported by Ontario	Reference to the Data in the Report
High Quality	Number and percentage of providers with Early Childhood Education (ECE) certification	Number and percentage of program staff who are Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) Percentage of licensed child care centres employing only RECEs for the positions requiring qualified employees	See "Staff Qualifications" under "Licensed Child Care Indicators"
	Number and percentage of programs adopting Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years – How Does Learning Happen	Number of affirmations confirming programming alignment with How Does Learning Happen?	See "Pedagogical Framework" under "Licensed Child Care Indicators"
Accessible Affordable and Flexible	Number and percentage of children who have access to licensed child care	Percentage of children aged 0-12 for whom there are licensed child care spaces	See "Access" under "Licensed Child Care Indicators"
	Number and percentage of children receiving subsidies	Number and percentage of children receiving child care fee subsidies	See "Affordability" under "Licensed Child Care Indicators"
	Number and percentage of licensed child care programs that offer flexible hours	Number and percentage of programs providing care during non-standard hours	See "Flexibility and Inclusion" under "Licensed Child Care Indicators"
	Number of additional licensed child care spaces created	Number of additional licensed child care spaces created in licensed centres	See "Access" under "Licensed Child Care Indicators"
	Number of children receiving subsidy by family income	Number and percentage of children receiving child care fee subsidies by family income	See "Affordability" under "Licensed Child Care Indicators"
Inclusive	Number of child care programs designed to serve French linguistic minority communities and Indigenous People off-reserve	Number of French-language licensed child care centres	See "French-language and Bilingual Child Care" under "Licensed Child Care Indicators"
		Number of Indigenous-led centres in urban and rural communities	See "Indigenous-led Centres in Urban and Rural Areas" under "Licensed Child Care Indicators"
	Number of children with additional support needs participating in child care programs	Number of children funded through Special Needs Resourcing	See "Special Needs Resourcing" under "Licensed Child Care Indicators"
	Number and proportion of children from low-income and middle class families participating in early learning and child care programs	Number and percentage of children for whom a licensed space is available by income	See "Children in Licensed Child Care by Income" under "Licensed Child Care Indicators"

* This column lists the indicators outlined in the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

HIGH QUALITY EARLY LEARNING**

Principles	Indicators Related to Planned Investment*	Indicators as Reported by Ontario	Reference to the Data in the Report
High Quality	Number and percentage of providers with Early Childhood Education (ECE) certification	Qualification requirements for program staff working in child and family centres	See “Staff Qualifications” under “EarlyON Child and Family Centres Indicators”
	Number and percentage of programs adopting Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years – How Does Learning Happen	Service guideline requires programming alignment with How Does Learning Happen?	See “Pedagogical Framework” under “EarlyON Child and Family Centres Indicators”
Accessible Affordable and Flexible	Number of new EarlyON Child and Family Centres (including full and part-time locations)	Number of EarlyON Child and Family programs offering full- and part-time hours	See “Access, Affordability, Flexibility and Inclusion” under “EarlyON Child and Family Centres Indicators”
	Number of child and family visits to early learning programs	Number of child and family visits to EarlyON Child and Family Centres	
	Number and percentage of children who have access to early learning programs	Number and percentage of children served by EarlyON Child and Family Centres	
	Number and percentage of early learning programs that offer flexible hours	Number and percentage of EarlyON Child and Family programs that offer programming during non-standard hours	
Inclusive	Number of early learning programs designed to serve French linguistic minority communities and Indigenous People off-reserve	Number of child and family centres that offer culturally relevant programming for Indigenous children and families	See “Access, Affordability, Flexibility and Inclusion” under “EarlyON Child and Family Centres Indicators”
		Number of child and family centres that offer French-language programming for Francophone children and families	

* This column lists the indicators outlined in the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

** “Early learning” under the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement refers to EarlyON Child and Family Centres in the context of Ontario.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Principles	Indicators Related to Planned Investment*	Indicators as Reported by Ontario	Reference to the Data in the Report
ECE Qualification Upgrade Program	Number of individuals supported through the Qualifications Upgrade Program per annum	Number of individuals supported through the Qualifications Upgrade Program	See "ECE Qualification Upgrade Program" under "Professional Learning Indicators"
Innovative Service Delivery	Innovative service delivery to support professional learning	Number of Centres of Excellence established	See "Centres of Excellence for Early Years and Child Care" under "EarlyON Child and Family Centres"

* This column lists the indicators outlined in the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

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