

# Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services, January 2021

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Tuesday, June 15, 2021

Over half of the 52,794 child care providers in Canada reported that they were unlicensed and home-based in January 2021, while 28% were licensed and home-based and 18% were centre-based. Although there are more unlicensed providers than licensed providers, 74% of children were enrolled in centre-based child care.

## There are twice as many unlicensed home-based child care providers as licensed providers

Across the country, except in Quebec, British Columbia, Manitoba and in the three territories, there were more unlicensed than licensed centre-based and home-based child care businesses caring for children aged 5 and younger.

**Table 1**  
**Child care businesses by business type,<sup>1</sup> province or territory, January 2021**

	Centre-based	Licensed and home-based	Unlicensed and home-based	Total
	number			
<b>Canada</b>	<b>9,762</b>	<b>14,782</b>	<b>28,250</b>	<b>52,794</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	117	94	373	584
Prince Edward Island <sup>2</sup>	61	...	151	213
Nova Scotia	231	83	784	1,098
New Brunswick	296	136	588	1,019
Quebec	3,052	9,238	7,219	19,509
Ontario	2,983	1,726	10,937	15,646
Manitoba	492	304	712	1,508
Saskatchewan	283	277	1,441	2,001
Alberta	1,118	1,361	4,147	6,626
British Columbia	1,086	1,509	1,878	4,473
Territories (the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon)	42	55	19	116

... not applicable

1. Type of child care provider or business (i.e., centre-based, licensed home, or unlicensed home) was self-reported by survey respondents.

2. For Prince Edward Island, licensed home-based businesses are reported under Prince Edward Island centre-based child care businesses.

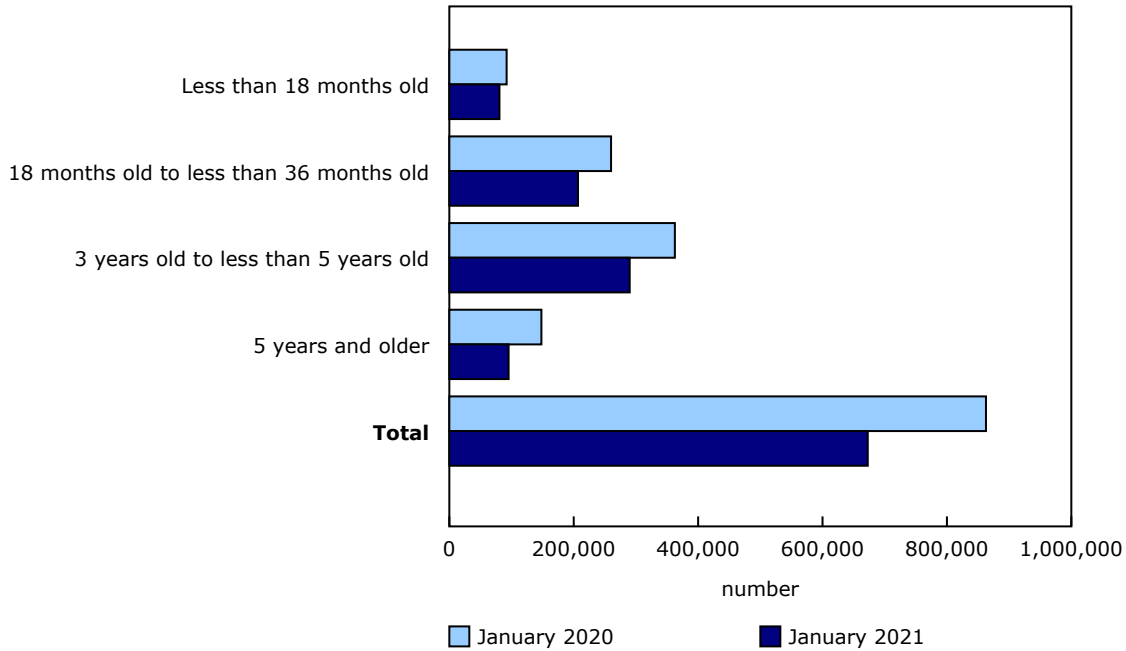
Source(s): Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services, January 2021 (5338).

## Child enrolment down by over one-fifth since the onset of the pandemic

Although there are more unlicensed home-based child care providers than licensed providers, most children in child care are registered in centre-based child care businesses. Almost three-quarters (74%) of children in child care were enrolled in centre-based child care in January 2021, while 15% were in unlicensed home-based child care and 11% were in licensed home-based child care. Despite a 22% (-190,063) decline in child enrolment overall from January 2020 to January 2021, the shares of children in all three types of child care were relatively unchanged.



**Chart 1**  
**Number of children enrolled in all child care businesses by children's age group, January 2020 and January 2021**



Source(s): Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services, January 2021 (5338).

## Flexible child care options not common

Child care providers offer various child care options to parents, including full-time and part-time, before school, after school, evenings, weekends, overnight, drop in and flexible programs.

Full-time child care was by far the most common service offered. In January 2021, 99% of licensed home-based child care providers, 91% of centre-based providers and 86% of unlicensed home-based providers offered this option. Conversely, part-time programs were far less common, with 43% of centre-based providers, 30% of unlicensed home-based providers and 19% of licensed home-based providers offering this option.

**Table 2**  
**Percentage of child care businesses by type of program offered and by business type, January 2020 and January 2021**

	January 2020			January 2021		
	Centre-based	Licensed and home-based	Unlicensed and home-based	Centre-based	Licensed and home-based	Unlicensed and home-based
	%					
Full time	90.5	99.1	86.6	91.4	99.2	86.2
Part time	43.7	18.0	33.7	42.7	19.1	29.8
Before school	28.7	12.0	18.8	23.4	9.5	14.4
After school	31.6	15.0	24.7	25.0	10.7	18.1
Evenings	1.9	1.5	4.5	0.8	0.6	3.9
Weekends	0.6	2.8	5.4	0.4	2.4	3.4
Overnight	0.2	0.0	1.5	0.2	0.0	1.5
Drop in	7.5	5.6	9.7	6.5	6.0	7.6
Flexible	11.7	6.8	19.7	11.1	8.4	14.7

Source(s): Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services, January 2021 (5338).

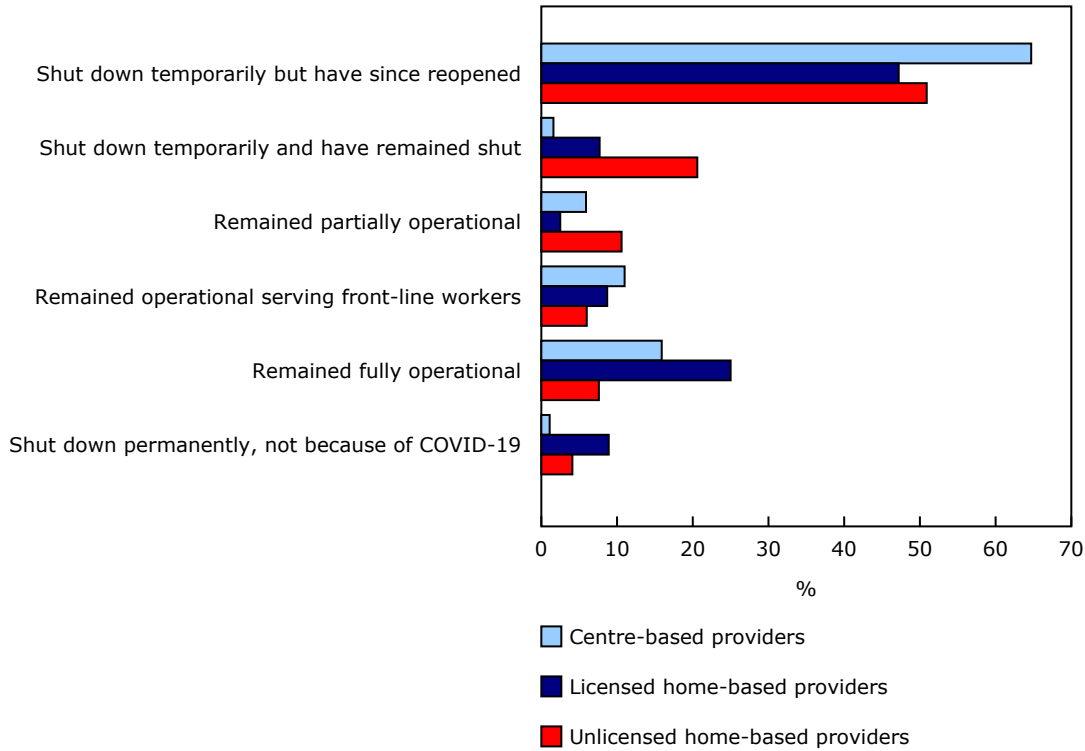
All types of providers reported a decline in offerings of child care before or after school in January 2021 compared with the same month a year earlier. One reason for the decline was [school closures](#), as a result of which child care providers were not able to offer before and after school care. Another important factor was that [parents felt it unsafe](#) to send their children to child care during the pandemic.

### Half of child care providers report temporarily shutting down during the pandemic but reopening since

About 8% of all responding child care providers said they had remained open to serve front-line workers at some point during the pandemic, while 14% remained fully operational the entire time.

Approximately two-thirds (65%) of centre-based child care providers and half of unlicensed (51%) and licensed (47%) home-based providers said that they had shut down temporarily because of the pandemic, but that they have since reopened.

**Chart 2**  
**Proportion of child care providers, by operational status during the COVID-19 pandemic and by business type, January 2021**

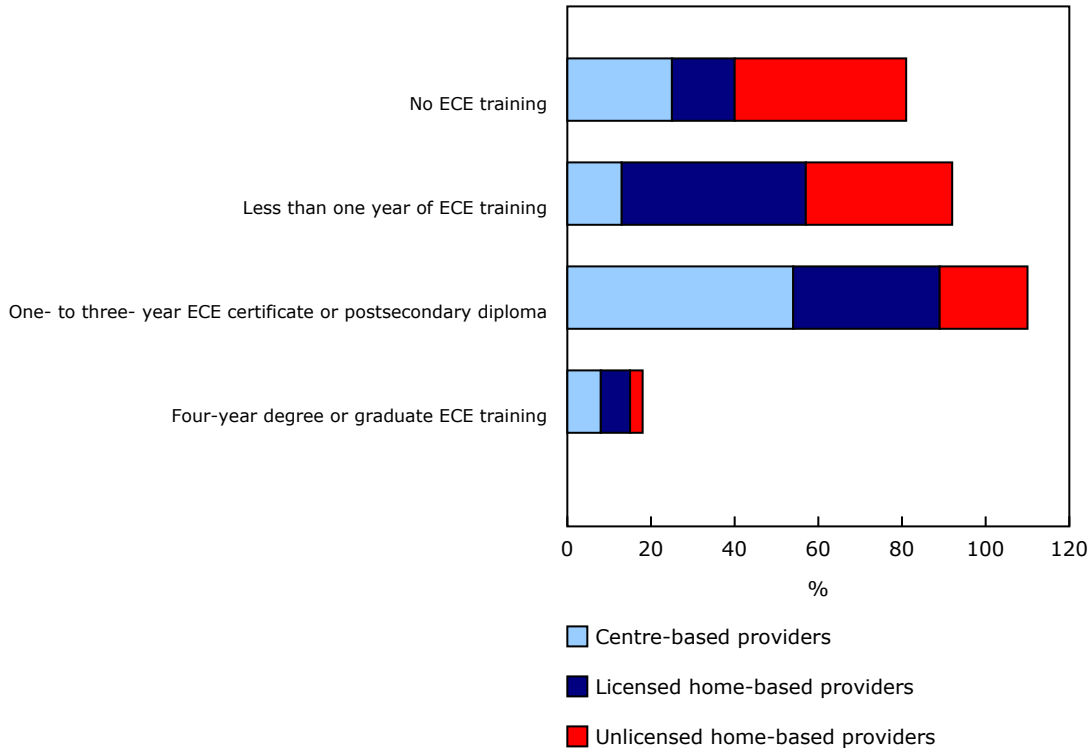


Source(s): Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services, January 2021 (5338).

### Centre-based child care employees most likely to have Early Childhood Education qualifications

Over half of employees working for centre-based child care providers (54%) had completed an Early Childhood Education (ECE) one-, two-, or three-year certificate in, or obtained an ECE diploma from, a postsecondary institution. In comparison, this was the case for about one-third (35%) of licensed home-based child care providers and their employees, and approximately one-fifth (21%) of unlicensed home-based providers and their employees. In total, 44% of licensed home-based providers and their employees had completed an ECE course or workshop of less than one year. Meanwhile, 41% of unlicensed home-based providers and their employees had not obtained any ECE-related training.

**Chart 3**  
**Proportion of child care providing employees, by Early Childhood Education training and by business type, January 2021**



**Note(s):** Early Childhood Education (ECE).  
**Source(s):** Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services, January 2021 (5338).

### Child care fees are highest for the youngest children and lowest for those aged 5 and older

Child care providers were asked to report the average daily fee, including subsidies, per child, by child age group. As a child's age increases, child care fees decrease. For all three types of child care providers, parents or guardians paid the highest average daily fee for children under 18 months of age. The lowest fees were for children aged 5 and older.

In January 2021, the average daily fee for children under 18 months of age was \$46 at centre-based child care providers and \$37 at licensed and unlicensed home-based providers. Compared with January 2020, the average daily fee charged by centre-based child care providers for children under 18 months of age was up slightly, while it was unchanged for licensed and unlicensed home-based child care.

The average daily fee for children under 18 months of age in centre-based child care ranged from \$30 in Manitoba to \$65 in Ontario in January 2021, while at licensed home-based providers, fees ranged from \$26 in Manitoba to \$50 in British Columbia.

**Table 3**  
**Average daily child care fees (\$) per child by age group and by business type, January 2020 and January 2021**

	Less than 18 months old		18 months to less than 36 months old		3 years to less than 5 years old		5 years and older	
	January 2020	January 2021	January 2020	January 2021	January 2020	January 2021	January 2020	January 2021
	average daily fee (\$)							
Centre-based providers	45	46	41	41	37	37	29	29
Licensed home-based providers	37	37	35	34	33	33	29	28
Unlicensed home-based providers	37	37	37	38	35	36	28	30

Source(s): Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services, January 2021 (5338).

**Note to readers**

The Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services is a pilot survey on the provision of child care services at the national, provincial and territorial levels for children aged 5 and younger. The survey collects data from centre-based, and licensed and unlicensed home-based providers. The sample size of the survey is 4,000 units. It is a voluntary survey with a response rate of 56%. The survey sample was selected from Statistics Canada's Business Register. Understanding the child care sector through the lens of the provider offers an important perspective when developing an early learning and child care system.

Available tables: [42-10-0016-01](#), [42-10-0017-01](#) and [42-10-0019-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5338](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; [STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca)) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; [STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca](mailto:STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca)).