

Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services, 2022

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In 2022, 45,366 businesses across Canada provided child care services to children aged 0 to 12 years. Of these businesses, 31% were child care centres, 33% were home-based settings operating with a license, and 36% were home-based settings operating without a license.

Centres served a larger number of children, reporting that they had 821,298 children (either full time or part time) enrolled, while licensed and unlicensed home care providers reported fewer children, with 96,677 and 73,821 children enrolled respectively.

The results are from the Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services (CSPCCS), which collected information about the provision of child care services in Canada for children aged 12 and younger in the spring of 2022. The survey took place against the backdrop of a \$27.2 billion investment in early learning and child care by the Canadian government.

Businesses sampled for this survey were drawn both from Statistics Canada's Business Register and from publicly available lists of licensed/regulated child care providers and may underestimate some settings, such as child cares operated by schools or school boards.

For the purpose of this survey, child care businesses were described in three broad categories: child care centres, licensed home-based child care, and unlicensed home-based child care. Child care centres are generally larger in terms of both the number of children served and the number of employees and are typically located in a non-residential building. Licensed home-based providers adhere to established regulations determined by provincial or territorial standards, are smaller than centres in terms of the number of children attending and generally have no additional employees. Unlicensed home-based child care providers are also small in terms of the number of children attending and generally have no employees but choose to provide a service outside of the regulated system, with the only requirement being a maximum number of children at one time.

Table 1
Child care services for children 0 to 12 years by type, province or territory, April 2022

	Centre-based	Licensed home-based	Unlicensed home-based	Total
	number			
Canada	13,929	14,925	16,512	45,366
Newfoundland and Labrador	122	94	263	479
Prince Edward Island ¹	86	...	113	200
Nova Scotia	296	109	498	903
New Brunswick	404	140	461	1,005
Quebec	3,400	7,634	3,490	14,525
Ontario	4,384	2,282	6,763	13,429
Manitoba	628	343	476	1,447
Saskatchewan	366	278	951	1,595
Alberta	1,860	1,745	2,678	6,282
British Columbia	2,313	2,238	803	5,354
Territories (the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon)	69	63	17	149

... not applicable

1. For Prince Edward Island, licensed home-based businesses were combined with unlicensed home-based child care businesses due to a small number of licensed home-based child cares.

Source(s): Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services, 2022 (5338).

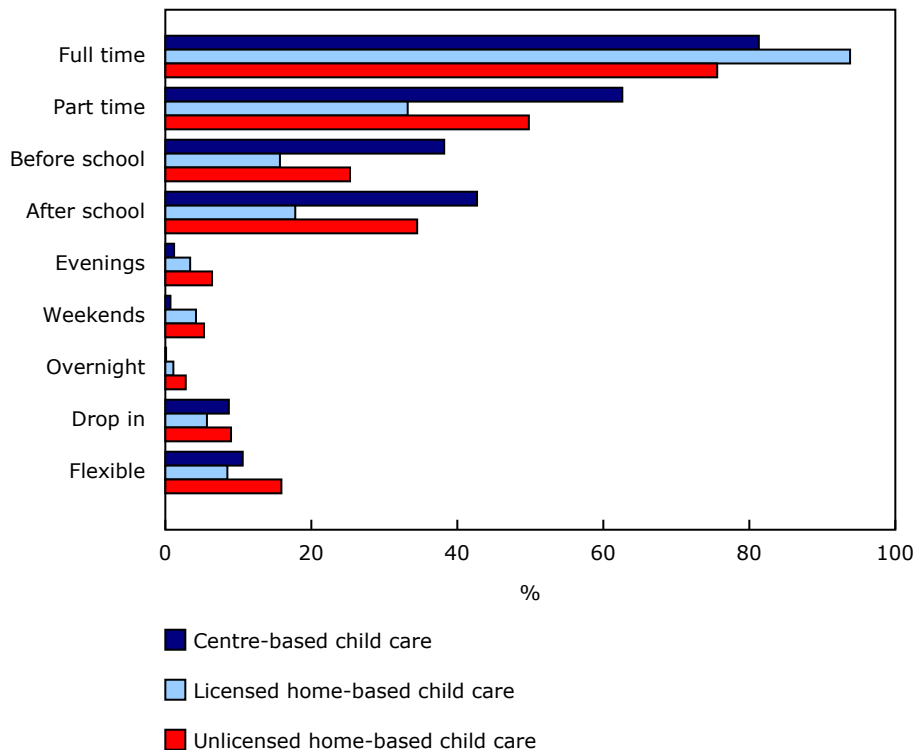
Unlicensed home-based providers more likely to offer child care during non-standard hours

Child care providers offer various child care options to parents, including care that is full time (six or more hours per day, five days per week) or part time (either part of the week for six or more hours per day or up to five days per week with less than six hours per day), before school, after school, evenings, weekends, overnight, drop in and flexible programs.

Full-time child care was the most common service offered in all types of child care businesses. In 2022, 81% of child care centres, 94% of licensed home-based child care providers and 76% of unlicensed home-based providers offered full-time child care.

Conversely, part-time programs were less common, with 63% of child care centres, 33% of licensed home-based providers and 50% of unlicensed home-based providers offering this type of care. Unlicensed home-based providers were more likely to offer child care during non-standard hours (that is, evenings, weekends, and overnight) and were more likely to offer flexible child care (16%) in comparison to centres (11%) and licensed homes (8%).

Chart 1
Type of child care program offered, Canada, 2022



Source(s): Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services, 2022 (5338).

Most child care centres reported having waitlists

Previous [parent-reported surveys](#) have shown that many parents using child care services experienced difficulty finding them. According to the CSPCCS, in 2022, 78% of child care centres had active waitlists. Since the survey did not collect information from parents, it is not possible to determine the reason that children were on the waitlist (e.g., preferred location, time, services, or if they did not have any child care at all when surveyed).

The CSPCCS also assessed availability of child care spaces. About 4 in 10 child care centres reported having at least one available full-time spot, followed by one-quarter of licensed home-based settings and 19% of unlicensed home-based settings. The CSPCCS did not collect information on the age categories (i.e., infant, toddler, preschool, school-aged) in which spaces were available.

Most child care centres reported having difficulties filling vacant staff positions

In spring 2022, about one in three (34%) child care centres were looking to fill a vacant position for an employee with Early Childhood Education credentials or training. Furthermore, almost 90% of child care centres reported having difficulties filling vacant positions. The most common reasons included applicants' lack of qualifications, having few or no applicants to choose from, and applicants' lack of related work experience.

A profile of child care centres providing care to children aged 0 to 5 years and challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic

A new article released today, "[Characteristics of child care centres serving children aged 0 to 5 years in Canada, 2021 to 2022](#)," provides a snapshot of child care centres specifically providing care to children aged 5 years and under in April 2022. The article describes aspects of child care service delivery, such as centre characteristics (licensing, auspice), services provided (enrolment options), child enrolment (enrolment counts, accommodations for disability, fees), and staff qualifications and pay (employee counts, education and training, salaries, adherence to jurisdictional requirements). Results may differ from those presented here due to the focus on centres that served children aged 0 to 5 years (i.e., the exclusion of child care centres that only served children aged 6 years and older).

In addition to describing child care centres, the report suggests that nearly all centres reported negative impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic in the year prior to the interview. Common impacts related to increased costs associated with COVID-19 health and safety requirements, reduced child enrolment, and difficulties in recruiting and retaining skilled employees. The report also describes characteristics of centres based on their reported level of impact from the pandemic.

Note to readers

The Canadian Survey on the Provision of Child Care Services is a survey on the provision of child care services at the national, provincial and territorial levels for children aged 12 years and younger. The survey sample was selected from Statistics Canada's Business Register and from publicly available provincial and territorial lists of regulated home child care. This leaves a potential gap for child care services located within schools that provide before and after school care, which may not be classified as separate child care businesses and therefore not included in our target sample. As such, child care centres that serve school-aged children may be underrepresented. The degree of this gap may vary across provinces and territories depending on how school-based child care services are regulated and managed.

At the time of data collection, child care businesses had generally resumed operations after being mandated to close temporarily during the earlier months of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the survey was collected before the full implementation of the Canada-wide system of early learning and child care.

Nominal categories to estimate the number of children in child care

The number of children using child care services was reported by the business owner or director and were captured in four nominal categories: infants, toddlers, preschool-aged, and school-aged children. Respondents were asked to report in accordance with how each of these categories were defined within their provincial or territorial jurisdiction. At the time of the survey, the toddler category was not defined in legislation for Alberta, Manitoba, New Brunswick, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon. "Toddler" was therefore not a valid response for these provinces and territories, and any values provided were included in the preschool-aged category. Totals for the toddler category therefore exclude these provinces and territories.

Child Care options

Information collected on the types of care options offered included full-time, part-time, before or after school, during evenings, weekends, or overnight, and on a drop-in or flexible basis. Full-time child care refers to six or more hours a day, five days per week, and part-time child care refers to six or more hours per day for part of the week or less than six hours per day for up to five days per week.

Geographical characteristics

Due to small sample sizes in the territories, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon were combined.

Tables available soon

Please note that tables related to this release will be available soon.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 5338.

The article "[Characteristics of child care centres serving children aged 0 to 5 years in Canada, 2021 to 2022](#)," is now available in the March 2023 online issue of *Economic and Social Reports*, Vol. 3, no. 3 (36-28-0001).

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; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).