Maupin's Blog

How Child Care Works in Ontario

- The Ontario Ministry of Education is responsible for funding, licensing and developing policy to support the provision of licensed child care.
- The province provides funding to municipalities and First Nations for child care fee subsidies, wage subsidies, special needs resourcing and administration.

Overview of child care in Ontario

- There are two options for regulated child care in Ontario:
  - centre-based licensed child care
  - home-based child care associated with a licensed private-home day care agency
- Licensed child care programs are operated by non-profit and for-profit providers, school boards, First Nations and municipalities.
- As of March 2012, there are:
  - 4,922 licensed child care centres
  - 132 licensed private-home day care agencies
  - 275,900 spaces in licensed child care centres
  - 17,000 children enrolled in home-based care associated with licensed private-home day care agencies

Licensed Child Care in Ontario—Key Facts

- 47 CMSMs and DSSABs are responsible for planning and managing child care services at the municipal level, within provincial legislation, regulations, standards and guidelines.
- The Ontario government provides funding to 56 First Nations, one Tribal Council and four transfer payment agencies for on-reserve licensed child care.

Child Care Funding

- Since 2003, provincial child care funding has increased by 90 per cent, to more than $1 billion.
- The government has introduced transition funding, growing to $51 million annually at full implementation, to help the child care sector deal with the impact of full-day kindergarten.
- In addition, the government is investing $12 million over five years to help non-profit child care centres make retrofits and renovations to serve younger children.
- In 2012-13, the government announced an additional $90 million investment to transition and modernize the child care sector as it adapts to full-day kindergarten.
- From 2012 to 2015, the government is investing $113 million to convert school space for licensed child care.
**Child Care Modernization**

- The government is taking steps to realize its vision of a more seamless and integrated system to support young children and their families by modernizing child care.
- To help inform the next steps of child care modernization, the government has released a discussion paper—*Modernizing Child Care in Ontario: Sharing Conversations, Strengthening Partnerships, Working Together*.
- The discussion paper outlines the government’s long-term vision for child care and seeks feedback on targeted medium-term objectives to help achieve that vision over the next three years.
- The discussion paper is posted on Ontario’s Regulatory Registry until Sept. 24, 2012 and on the Ministry of Education’s website at www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/modernizing.html

**Child Care Legislation**

- The *Day Nurseries Act* is the legislation that governs licensed child care in Ontario. It sets out requirements to protect the health, safety and well-being of children in care.
- The Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch of the Ministry of Education inspects licensed child care programs at least once a year. Inspections are carried out to:
  - assess compliance with the *Day Nurseries Act*
  - investigate complaints, issue licences and renew licences
  - monitor operators who are having difficulty meeting licensing standards
- In Ontario, an adult may care for up to five unrelated children under the age of 10 without needing a licence. (This is commonly referred to as informal child care.) Informal caregivers are not regulated or monitored. However, licensing staff will investigate complaints from the public about a person who might be providing care to more than five unrelated children without a licence.

**Key Links**

The regulation that governs the operation of licensed child care programs under the *Day Nurseries Act* is available at:

- [www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90d02_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/statutes/english/elaws_statutes_90d02_e.htm)
- The *Day Nurseries Act for Child Care Supervisors of Ontario* website is designed to support supervisors in Ontario’s licensed child care centres by helping them to better understand provincial licensing requirements. A package for prospective operators on the website outlines licensing requirements for a new child care centre. [www.childcarelearning.on.ca](http://www.childcarelearning.on.ca)
- The Early Learning Framework website provides support and resources for early childhood educators and other professionals as they work with young children in early childhood settings: [www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/oelf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/oelf)
- Ontario’s licensed child care website, [www.ontario.ca/licensedchildcare](http://www.ontario.ca/licensedchildcare), provides information about licensed child care centres and private-home day care agencies, including their most recent inspection findings.
- The College of Early Childhood Educators is a professional self-regulatory body for early childhood educators formed to protect the public interest and focus on quality and standards in early childhood care and education settings. [www.collegeofece.on.ca](http://www.collegeofece.on.ca)

**More Information**

Visit [www.ontario.ca/childcare](http://www.ontario.ca/childcare) for more information about child care in Ontario.

Updated August 2012