



A GREAT PLACE TO GROW PUBLIC CHILD CARE

Manitoba profile

Public child care and early childhood education

Manitoba has no history of publicly-delivered child care. All child care centres are private non-profit or for-profit (more than 95% are non-profit). There is no provision for a local government role in providing, administering or funding child care.

There is one form of publicly-delivered early childhood education in Manitoba: kindergarten is available to all five-year-olds on a part-time basis. Several school divisions also provide kindergarten for four-year-olds. In Winnipeg they are called “nurseries”, but unlike nursery schools under the child care legislation, they are part of the public education system, not child care.

Who provides child care?

Child care in Manitoba has always been predominantly non-profit. The proportion of for-profit care has been slowly declining—from a high of 13.1% in 1998, to 4.5% in 2008—as total non-profit spaces rise and total for-profit spaces remain fairly stagnant with an occasional drop. The increase in the supply of regulated spaces in Manitoba has been modest since 2001—fewer than 5,000 new spaces have been added over seven years. Between 2006 and 2008, the non-profit sector increased by 1,917 spaces and the for-profit sector dropped by 240 spaces.

Why public early childhood education and child care?

Most people don't think of non-profit community-based child care centres as “private”, but they are. That's because parent or voluntary groups—not public entities such as municipalities or school boards—bear the responsibility for creating and maintaining centres. Almost all of Canada's patchwork delivery of regulated child care services is private, relying on for-profit or non-profit services. And today, Canada is experiencing an alarming trend—a surge in for-profit child care. In some provinces, almost all new spaces are for-profit.

Children and families would be far better served by a public system that blends early childhood education and child care—in other words, publicly funded and delivered early childhood education and care programs managed and mostly operated by local governments or education authorities.

Here's what well-designed public systems can deliver:

- Integrated early childhood education and kindergarten programs.
- Better access and inclusion of families—no matter where they live or their language, origins or abilities.
- More consistent quality.
- With small or no fees, all parents who want child care can afford it.
- Services that are planned and accountable to communities.

What we want

Our vision is a public system where every child can attend a program that blends early childhood education and care. The research and experience shows that systems based on privately funded and delivered child care are not a foundation for building blended, high quality ECEC programs.

Support public child care—it's the way to go for a great place to grow.



Public funding

Public funding for child care was stagnant in Manitoba from 1992 to 1998. Between 1998 and 2001 it began to grow. It has increased steadily since then, and in 2006-2008 there was an increase in annual funding of almost \$20 million.

Operating and capital grants are available only to non-profit child care centres. Historically, there has been little capital funding for child care in Manitoba, but now the province has a Capital Fund for capital grants. The bulk of public child care funding in Manitoba is for operating funding, which is calculated through a “unit funding” scheme linked to wages. Subsidies comprise about a third of the provincial budget.

Manitoba is one of two provinces to cap parent fees (the other is Quebec). Maximum daily fees are \$28 (infants), \$18.80 (preschool and full-day school-age), and \$9.60 (school-age part-day). The remainder of non-profit centres’ budgets are made up of public funding, determined through the province-wide unit funding formula.

TABLE 1
Sponsorship of regulated centre-based spaces, Manitoba - 2008

Non-profit	22,476
For-profit	1,068
Total	23,544
% For-profit	4.5

FIGURE 1
Sponsorship of regulated centre-based spaces, Manitoba - 2008

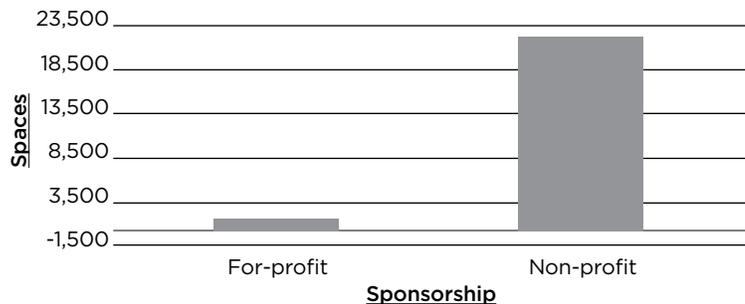
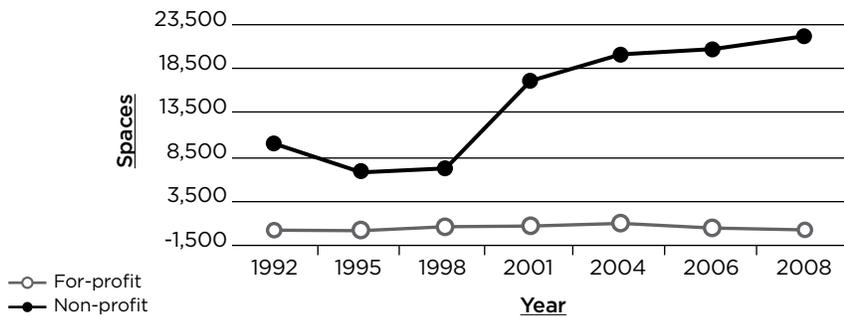


TABLE 2
Sponsorship of regulated spaces and proportion for-profit

Year	1992	1995	1998	2001	2004	2006	2008
Non-profit	10,223	7,271	7,752	17,614	19,678	20,559	22,476
For-profit	1,106	1,011	1,167	1,487	1,747	1,308	1,068
% For-profit	9.8	12.2	13.1	7.8	8.2	6.0	4.5



FIGURE 2
Sponsorship of regulated spaces, Manitoba - 1992-2008



Provincial policy

- Total 2008 provincial allocation for regulated child care: \$105,983,000.
- Both non-profit and for-profit centres and family child care homes may enrol children receiving subsidies. Non-profit centres receiving provincial operating grants are required to enrol subsidized children. Centres may surcharge subsidized parents up to \$2.00/day.
- Only non-profit child care services are eligible for annual per-space operating grants, inclusion support grants and start-up grants. However, for-profit centres licensed before April 1991 are eligible to receive a guaranteed payment on behalf of subsidized children of up to 25% of their licensed spaces.
- Capital funding is available only to non-profit centres through the Early Learning and Child Care Capital Fund. The fund was established to offset costs of constructing, expanding or revitalizing existing non-profit child care centres. Grants of up to \$400,000 are available to cover up to half the cost if the centre is located in a school, and up to a third of the cost if it is not.

History

1974

The Manitoba government set up the Provincial Child Day Care Program. It provided start-up and operating grants to non-profit centres and family day care homes only. Subsidies were available to eligible low-income families.

1986

The government introduced salary enhancement grants to eligible non-profit centres only.

1991

The government restructured funding, consolidating grants into one operating grant. The restructuring had the effect of providing a daily payment to existing for-profit centres on behalf of subsidized children in up to 25% of spaces.

1999

Following a regulatory review of child care, a new “unit funding” model was introduced with increased operating funds for non-profit programs. The supply of non-profit child care showed a substantial increase.

2001

Public consultation on a “vision” paper led to the first five-year child care plan.

2005

As part of the national Early Learning and Child Care program introduced by Paul Martin’s Liberal government, Manitoba released its second five-year action plan for child care. Among its objectives was the establishment of a Capital Funding Program, which would support the construction, renovation and furnishing of non-profit centres. When the Conservative government eliminated the federal funding in 2006, Manitoba continued to improve child care spending as the action plan had outlined.

2007

Operating funding was provided for an additional 500 non-profit spaces.

Who’s who in the for-profit sector?¹

The small for-profit sector is primarily made up of individual owner-operated centres.

Sigfusson Nursery Schools is a chain of five centres that have provided a mix of part-day, full-day and school-age programs in Winnipeg for many years. The owner is Joyce Sigfusson.

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¹ The content of this section was compiled using the best information that is publicly available. Using these sources, every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate and comprehensive. Ownership of two centres was not included as a “chain”.