



A GREAT PLACE TO GROW PUBLIC CHILD CARE

Public child care profile: Vibank, Saskatchewan

The village of Vibank, Saskatchewan operates one of four publicly-operated child care centres in the province. The centre was the only one of its kind in Saskatchewan until 2007. Vibank, less than 50 kilometres from Regina, is set in a farming area.

Saskatchewan context

Almost all regulated child care centres in Saskatchewan operate as private non-profit organizations. All forms of funding from the government (e.g., fee subsidies, recurring and capital funding) are available only to not-for-profit child care centres and family child care homes. Saskatchewan is the only province in Canada that provides public funds solely to not-for-profit child care.

There are four municipalities that operate public child care in the province: Vibank, Bengough, Carnduff and Pittville No.169. (A fifth centre is under development in Pangman.) The four municipalities have no mandated role in child care delivery but have voluntarily assumed the responsibility for operating centres.

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.

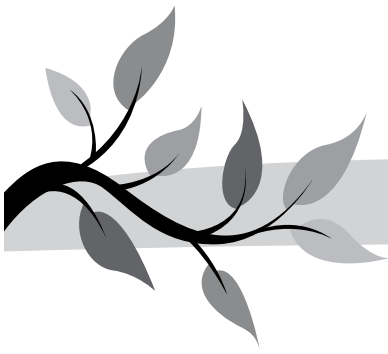
Here's what well-designed public systems can deliver:

- 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.



Municipal child care in Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan's publicly-operated child care centres are in small, rural communities.

Vibank

- Total population: 365
- Child population: 85
- Child care spaces: 49

Bengough

- Total population: 335
- Child population: 40
- Child care spaces: 13

Carnduff

- Total population: 1,015
- Child population: 185
- Child care spaces: 31

Pittville No. 169

- Total population: 215
- Child population: 35
- Child care spaces: 17

Vibank, Saskatchewan's Primary Day Care Centre

The village of Vibank is located 48 kilometres southeast of Regina. It has a total population of 365, and an employment rate of 60% (72% men, 55.2% women). There are 85 children aged zero to 14 years.

The municipality of Vibank holds the license for the Primary Day Care Centre located in the village. The centre, with a licensed capacity of 49 spaces, serves more than 69 children aged six weeks to 12 years drawn from its own and surrounding communities. Children with special needs are included. The centre, which operates from 5:45 a.m. to 6:15 p.m., is located within a former convent owned by the village. The facility also includes other public services such as the post office, village offices and the library as well as several private businesses.

Operating costs are divided between the village of Vibank and the child care centre's budget. The municipality pays hydro, water and building repair costs. The centre budget is responsible for wages and other expenses. Parent fees account for 46.5% of the centre's income, provincial funding makes up 40%, and the remaining revenue is obtained through fundraising.

Primary Day Care Centre has 10 staff members who work with the children, eight of whom have higher education including ECE diplomas, certificates or university degrees. Staff are required to attend at least two (paid) professional development events yearly. There is also an on-site cook and maintenance person. Staff turnover is reported to be low.

Management of Primary Day Care Centre

The director of Primary Day Care Centre is responsible for program delivery and is directly accountable to the village council. The director works closely with the village administrator and together they form the "operating management team". They are accountable to five elected members who comprise the Vibank council. The council and operating management team meet when necessary, approximately three times per year.

The centre is a hub of attraction in the village, in part because of its physical environment, which features large bright spaces with art and various elements of nature incorporated into the facility.

Reference

Costigliola, B. (2008). *Employer models in Canada's early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector. Supporting employers in Canada's ECEC sector*. Ottawa, Ontario: Child Care Human Resources Sector Council. Retrieved from: <http://www.ccsc-cssge.ca/english/pdf/featured/CCHRSC-EmployeeProfileV5.pdf>

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