



A GREAT PLACE TO GROW PUBLIC CHILD CARE

Newfoundland and Labrador profile

Public child care and early childhood education

Newfoundland and Labrador has no publicly delivered child care; all child care centres are private for-profit or private non-profit. There is no local government role in child care delivery, administration or funding. There is, however, one form of publicly delivered early childhood education: part-time kindergarten is available for all five-year-olds as part of the public school system.

Who provides child care?

The for-profit sector has long dominated child care in Newfoundland and Labrador, and accounts for 70% of total spaces in the province (2008). The presence of for-profits declined slightly in the 1990s, but their proportion has risen again, especially in 2006 and 2008.

In contrast, the non-profit sector has seen almost no increase in spaces. The gap between the two sectors is growing: between 2006 and 2008, only seven out of 181 new spaces were added to the non-profit sector.

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.



For-profit care in Newfoundland and Labrador makes up 84% of full-time child care spaces—the area where the most money can be made. The non-profit sector is more balanced, providing the majority of the province’s small number of school-age and part-time programs.

Public funding

Until 1992, public funding for regulated child care in Newfoundland and Labrador was less than \$2 million annually. The next 16 years (1992-2008) saw a 12-fold growth in funding, a rate considerably higher than most other provinces. The bulk of public funding comes in the form of fee subsidies to parents. The province has historically provided very little capital money for child care and has had no strategic plan for expansion.

TABLE 1
Sponsorship of centre-based child care spaces by type
Newfoundland and Labrador - 2008

	Full-time spaces	Part-time spaces	School-age spaces	Total centre spaces
Non-profit	686	437	560	1,683
For-profit	3,535	185	175	3,892
% For-profit	84	29	24	70

FIGURE 1
Full-time, part-time and school-age spaces in child care centres
Newfoundland and Labrador - 2008

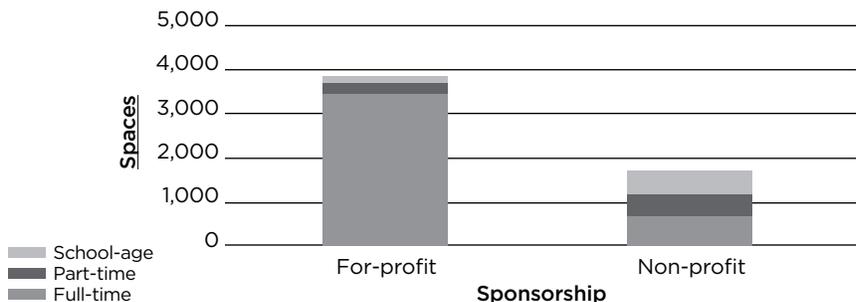
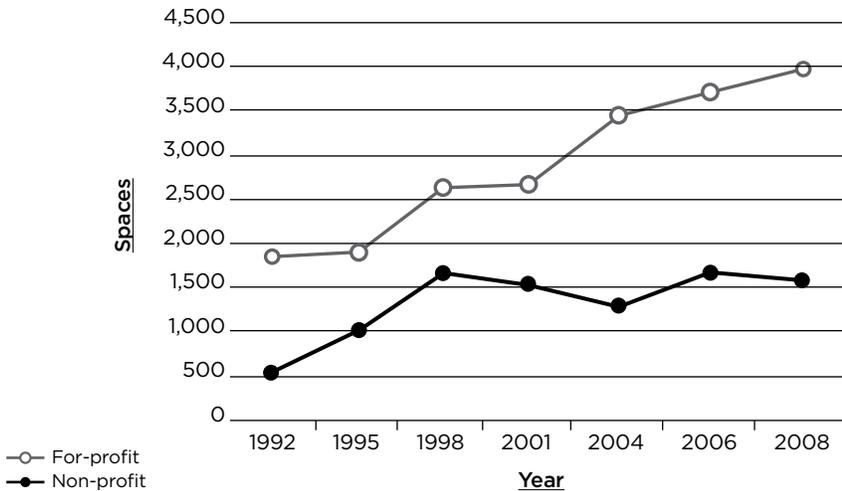


TABLE 2
Sponsorship of regulated centre-based spaces and proportion for-profit

Year	1992	1995	1998	2001	2004	2006	2008
Non-profit	561	1,002	1,665	1,523	1,242	1,676	1,683
For-profit	1,889	1,944	2,610	2,703	3,439	3,718	3,892
% For-profit	78	66	61	64	73	69	70



FIGURE 2
Sponsorship of regulated centre-based spaces
Newfoundland and Labrador - 1992-2008



Provincial funding policy

- Total provincial budget for regulated child care (2007/2008): \$19,844,115.
- All funds are available to for-profit and non-profit centres (regulated family child care agencies and family resource centres must be non-profit).
- Any licensed non-profit or for-profit child care program is eligible to enroll children receiving subsidies. Fee subsidies are paid directly to non-profit and for-profit service providers on behalf of eligible parents. Programs may charge subsidized parents above the maximum subsidy rates.
- Non-profit and for-profit programs may receive other recurring funding, such as operating funding, equipment and inclusion grants, wage grants and quality enhancement funding.

Of historical note

1975

The Day Care and Homemaker Services Act first allowed public funds to be used for fee subsidies. Child care regulations were implemented in 1982.

1996

The Childcare Owners and Operators Association succeeded in getting the provincial government to direct employer-supported centres to stop enrolling children whose parents do not work at that location. The rationale: in-kind funding (for occupancy costs) interferes with competition in the for-profit sector's marketplace. This directive is still in effect today and applies to demonstration centres at colleges as well.

Relevant quality research

There are statistically significant differences in quality between for-profit and non-profit child care in the Atlantic provinces. *The Atlantic Day Care Study* (Lyon and Canning, 1995) found that non-profit centres consistently scored higher on the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) than for-profit centres across all four Atlantic provinces. The findings were significant for all provinces. In Newfoundland and Labrador:

- The average ECERS score (non-profit and for-profit) was 4.17.
- The mean for the for-profit sample was 3.81; for the non-profit sample it was 4.72. (In the ECERS, a score of 3= minimal, 5=good, and 7=excellent.)



Who's who in the for-profit sector

The for-profit sector in Newfoundland and Labrador is made up of individual centres and local chains. There are no corporate (publicly-traded) centres. The largest chain is Rainbow Day Care Centres, with ten locations. The for-profit sector is represented by the Provincial Association of Childcare Administrator's Licentiate (PACAL), formerly known as the Childcare Owners and Operators Association.

Chains (ownership of multiple programs in the for-profit sector)¹

Larger chains (six or more locations)

Kidcorp Learning Centres

Owner: Rosalyn Bennett
Five locations (In St. John's and Mount Pearl)

Open seven days a week,
6:30 a.m.-8:15 p.m.

Age range: 0-12 years

<http://www.kidcorp.ca/>

Note: Owner Rosalyn Bennett is the President of the Provincial Association of Childcare Administrator's Licentiate (PACAL)

Little People's Workshop and Dr. A.T. Brace Children's Centre

Owner: Beverley Brace
Eight locations (St. John's)
Age range: 0-12 years

Rainbow Day Care Centres

Owners: Debbie Collins; Elaine Reid
Eight locations
Age range: 2-12 years

Smaller chains (five or fewer locations)

New Fun Land

Owner: Gaye Roberts
Five locations (Glenwood, Springdale, Lewisporte, two in Gander)
Age range: 2-12 years

Reference

Lyon, M. and Canning, P. (1995).
The Atlantic Day Care Study. Halifax:
Mount Saint Vincent University.

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".