



## Brief: A Profile of Child Care in Edmonton (2019)

*A Profile of Edmonton Child Care in Edmonton (2019)* was developed for the Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care (ECELC) to provide a shared foundation of knowledge about the current state of licensed, full-day, unparented child care programs for children who have not yet entered kindergarten in the city of Edmonton. Because newcomer communities and Indigenous Edmontonians face additional barriers to child care, two additional research projects were undertaken and are also available. Findings from these three projects should be considered jointly.

The ECELC is an organization composed of institutional and community partners tasked with improving early learning and care in the city, with a focus on vulnerable populations. It was established in response to Action #29 of the EndPovertyEdmonton Road Map in 2016.

### Accessibility

	<b>2016</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>%increase</b>
Number of child care programs	290	372	28.3
Number of child care spaces	16,787	21,334	27.1
(Note: Not all programs operate at full capacity, though still have waiting lists.)			
Population of children (0-4 years) in Edmonton	60,070	66,620 (est)	10.9

In 2019, there are just under 3 spaces for every 10 children (0-4 years) in Edmonton. This rate likely varies across the city but no data exist to help us understand this variation. Between half and two-thirds of programs appear to have waitlists, suggesting unmet demand within Edmonton.

### Affordability

Median Monthly Day Care Fees 2018	
<b>Pre-K</b>	<b>\$835/mo</b>
<b>Toddler</b>	<b>\$870/mo</b>
<b>Infant</b>	<b>\$975/mo</b>

Variation in cost based on city location is unavailable.

Edmonton families with young children can spend as much as, or more than, their monthly rent for child care. For low income families, child care can be prohibitively expensive, even with provincial subsidies.

Since 2014, costs for child care in Edmonton have outpaced inflation.

The provincial \$25/day Early Learning and Child Care program provides some Edmonton families with more affordable, high-quality care, but there is no indication about whether this program will continue beyond March 2021.

## Quality

Provincial licensing and accreditation programs provide a baseline of child care quality. Accreditation provides additional funding and supports for programs that meet standards beyond those of licensing. As of March 2019, 80% of Edmonton's day care programs were accredited, as well as all 7 day home agencies. Edmonton has no additional quality requirements for child care and little information is available to help us understand quality or variations in quality across the city.

Edmonton child care workers appear to be somewhat more educated and more diverse than in the rest of Alberta.

## Flexibility and Inclusiveness

There is no source of comprehensive information available about flexibility in child care, such as the number of programs with extended hours. There are many programs to assist children with disabilities and their families, but no information exists to determine whether existing programs meet the need for inclusive child care in Edmonton.

## Recommendations

We do not yet have all the information needed to guide planning and management of child care in Edmonton. To fill the gaps, the ECELC should:

- A. Request additional information from existing sources, such as Alberta Children's Services and Statistics Canada,
- B. Conduct additional surveys and original research with operators, parents, the workforce, and others to further understand the accessibility, affordability, quality, flexibility, and inclusiveness of early learning and care in Edmonton.
- C. Establish a permanent subcommittee within the ECELC devoted to creating, interpreting, and sharing knowledge about child care in Edmonton.

*Additional briefs and full reports are available at [endpovertyedmonton.ca/ecelc](http://endpovertyedmonton.ca/ecelc)*