

Ontario Taking Action to Improve Child Care

Provincial reports highlight government's progress to improve the system

October 2, 2020

[Education](#)

TORONTO — Today, Ontario is releasing two child care reports: [Strengthening Early Years and Child Care in Ontario](#) and the [Early Years and Child Care Annual Report 2020](#).

The [Strengthening Early Years and Child Care in Ontario](#) report details how Ontario is helping to provide more child care and before and after school spaces for parents, as well as increasing opportunities for home child care providers. The report was developed with input from families and sector partners. These same groups provided input into the review of the [Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014](#).

"Our government recognizes the integral role that child care plays, both in the learning and development of children and also in supporting families by allowing parents to return to work," said Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education. "Ensuring that we have a strong, accessible and affordable child care system is vital to our economy recovery and future prosperity."

The government is acting based on feedback, outlined in the report, by:

- Supporting consistent quality programs in child care and early years settings by developing a provincial definition of "quality child care" that will provide parents and the child care sector with clear, consistent high-quality programming across the province.
- Creating more options for families and providers through increased choice in-home child care settings.
- Increasing access to before and after school programs by allowing authorized recreation programs to provide both before and after programs, rather than just one.
- Supporting workforce recruitment and retention.
- Clarifying program guidelines related to Special Needs Resourcing by working with other ministries to identify opportunities for providing health and rehabilitation services to children with medical needs in licensed child care, children's recreation programs and day camp programs.
- Supporting Indigenous-led and culturally relevant programming including examining current programs to promote better alignment with Indigenous history and culture.
- Reducing administrative burdens and addressing technical issues and gaps.

The government has also posted the [Early Years and Child Care Annual Report 2020](#), which provides an annual overview and year-over-year trends of Ontario's early years and child care sector. It is clear that Ontario's child care system continues to grow. In 2019-20, the total number of licensed child care spaces in Ontario grew by 16,206 spaces, almost 4 per cent, from 446,596 in 2018-19 to 462,802 spaces in 2019-20. As of September 30, 2020, 5,158 licensed child care centres and 131 licensed home child care agencies have reopened following the emergency closures resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak. This represents 93 per cent of the 5,565 child care centres and 131 home child care agencies that were licensed as of March 31, 2020.

"Together, these actions support our government's goals of creating more choice and flexibility for children and parents and improving quality in child care," said Minister Lecce. "We remain steadfast in building a system that is accessible, affordable, and inclusive for all Ontario families."

Quick Facts

- The [Child Care and Early Years Act](#), 2014 came into effect on August 31, 2015. The Act mandates that a review must be completed within five years of the legislation coming into force.
 - Licensed child care centres were permitted to operate at full capacity beginning September 1, 2020. [More information about reopening protocols and guidelines](#).
 - Ontario will commit up to \$1.0 billion over five years to create up to 30,000 child care spaces in schools, including up to 10,000 spaces in new schools.
 - The [Early Years and Child Care Annual Report 2020](#) supports Ontario's commitment under the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement to publish progress in the sector.
 - As of September 30, 2020, 5,158 licensed child care centres and 131 licensed home child care agencies have reopened following the emergency closures resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak.
-

Additional Resources

- [Strengthening Early Years and Child Care in Ontario](#)
 - [Child Care Early Years Act, 2014](#)
 - [Early Years and Child Care Annual Report 2020](#)
-

Related Topics

Education and Training

Learn about Ontario's early years, education and training systems. Includes information on child care, elementary schools, secondary schools, colleges, universities, skills training and financial aid. [Learn more](#)

Media Contacts

Caitlin Clark

Minister's Office

Caitlin.Clark@ontario.ca

Ingrid Anderson

Communications Branch

Ingrid.E.Anderson@ontario.ca

[437-225-0321](tel:437-225-0321)
