

What Does a Child Care Centre Offer?

Licensed child care centres offer care for infants and toddlers, as well as pre-school and school-aged children.

Child care centres can include nursery schools, full-day and extended hours care, and before-and-after-school programs. Staff members include professionals with training in early childhood education who plan programs to support your child's learning and development.

Child care centres operate in a variety of locations including workplaces, community centres, schools and places of worship.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR →

Ontario's Licensed Child Care decal shows that a centre is licensed.



How are child care centres monitored?

At least once a year, the Ministry of Education inspects child care centres to ensure they meet specific provincial health and safety standards.



What Does Home-Based Child Care Offer?

Parents considering home-based child care can choose licensed or unlicensed settings. Caregivers working in their own homes may care for children of different ages including infants, toddlers, pre-school and school-aged children. Children from the same family may be placed together. Home-based providers may also offer before- and after-school child care.

Two types of home child care:

Home-based providers can operate under contract with a **licensed** agency or in an **unlicensed** child care environment.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR →

Licensed Home Child Care Agencies will display Ontario's Licensed Child Care Agency decal.

Licensed home-based providers will have Ontario's Licensed Child Care display card. This shows that the Licensed Home Child Care Provider has contracted with a Licensed Home Child Care Agency.



Licensed home-based child care

Licensed home child care providers contract with a licensed agency and can care for:

- a maximum of six children including their own children under the age of six; and
- a maximum of two children under the age of two.

These limits apply regardless of the number of adults in the home.

How are licensed home child care providers monitored?

Individual child care providers are contracted by licensed home child care agencies. They are not licensed directly by the ministry. Home child care visitors who are employed by these agencies regularly visit and inspect providers of licensed home child care.

As a first step, the ministry inspects home child care agencies, and some of their home child care locations, to ensure they meet health and safety standards, at least once a year.

Home visitors oversee the programs and check that a home is safe before children are enrolled. They conduct routine inspections to ensure home child care providers are following government standards for health and safety as well as the agency's policies.

? Who should I talk to if I have concerns about my child's care?

If you have concerns about your child's care, talk to the staff or your caregiver. You should:

- be prepared and make notes ahead of time about your concerns
- ask the caregiver or staff member to clarify anything that you do not understand or makes you concerned during your talk, so that you are both clear about what was said
- arrange a follow-up meeting, if necessary.

? How do I make a complaint?

To report a complaint about a licensed child care centre or licensed home child care agency, please contact us:

Telephone: 1-877-510-5333

Email: information.met@ontario.ca

To report a complaint about unlicensed child care, please contact us:

Telephone: 1-844-516-6263

Email: information.met@ontario.ca

When making a complaint, please give as much information as you can. This will make it easier for the Ministry of Education to investigate.

➔ Visit ontario.ca/childcare for other helpful information and resources, such as:

- common questions to ask child care providers
- how to prepare your child for child care
- a search tool for licensed child care in your neighbourhood
- inspection information for licensed child care providers
- information on violations by unlicensed child care providers.



Your child's early years are important because they have a long-lasting impact on your child's future. High quality experiences in child care can do more than just keep your child healthy and safe. They can contribute to better learning and development. Child care providers can build a positive relationship with you and your child, and support your child's learning and development through exploration, play and inquiry.

A Parent's Guide to Child Care in Ontario

