

PEI Early Learning
& Child Care Registry

Your
LINK to Quality
Child Care



Guide to Quality Child Care



Education and
Lifelong Learning



Canada

Professional

Early Childhood Educators on Prince Edward Island are certified professionals who establish the foundation for life-long learning.

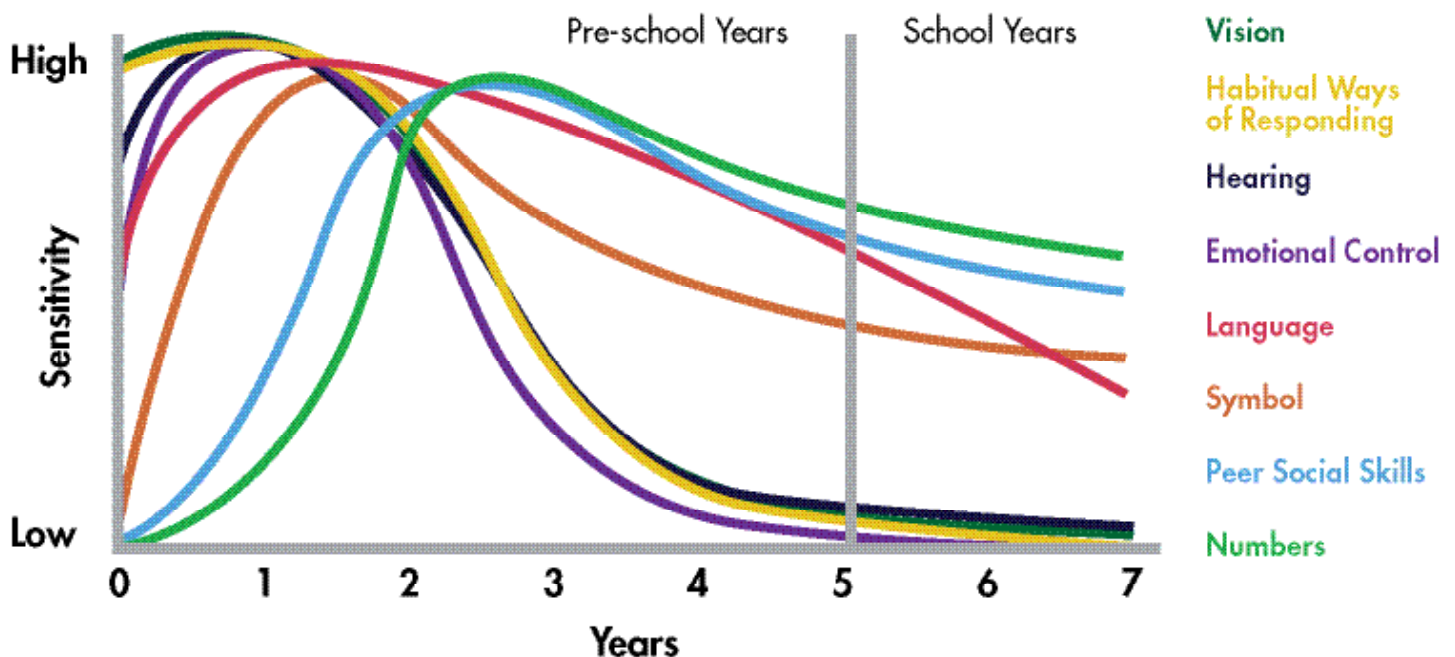
Qualified

Certified Early Childhood Educators on Prince Edward Island are members of a highly regarded profession that requires considerable training. Certification levels include ECE 1, 2, or 3, Supervisor, Director, Inclusion Support Assistant, Family Home Child Care, and School Age Child Care Provider. Each certification level requires specific post-secondary education.

Licensed

Early Childhood Centres on Prince Edward Island are monitored and regulated by the PEI Early Learning and Child Care Board. The Board regularly inspects licensed facilities to ensure they meet health and safety guidelines, basic program delivery requirements, certification levels of staff, and administrative requirements.

Brain Development



Graph developed by Council for Early Child Development (ref: Nash, 1997; Early years study 1999; Shonkoff, 2000.)



Early Years

The early years are very important to your child's development. The graph on page one demonstrates children's growth and development from birth to age five. During these years, your child will develop important skills such as emotion control, ways of responding, and conceptualization.

You are your child's first teacher. Your child will develop important skills first with you and then with others in an early learning and child care environment. It's important to select a centre where your child can learn and grow. This handbook is designed to help you make that decision.

There are many things to think about when choosing a licensed early learning and child care provider such as the type of child care that meets your family's needs, the hours that your family will need child care, and how your family feels during your first visit with the centre.

The sooner you begin your search for child care, the more options you will have.

Finding the Best Child Care

Before you start looking for an early learning and child care centre for your child, ask yourself these questions:

- Do you prefer home care or centre-based early learning and child care?
- Are you looking for part-day or full-day care, on a part-time or full-time basis?
- Do you prefer care that is close to your home or close to your workplace?
- What is the cost of care?
- What hours of child care centres work for your family's needs?
- Do you prefer an early childhood educator who is professional and certified by the Early Learning and Child Care Board?
- Do you prefer a centre that is licensed by the PEI Early Learning and Child Care Board?
- Are the centre's goals compatible with your views regarding early childhood development and early education?

Licensed Child Care

Licensed child care centres are governed by the PEI Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulations and monitored by the PEI Early Learning and Child Care Board. Licensing requirements regulate such areas as health and safety, emergency protocols, daily program schedule, staffing requirements, and administration. If you have a concern about these areas and have already addressed them to the staff of the centre, you may also call the PEI Early Learning and Child Care Board at 902-368-6518 or 902-368-6513.

License Types

An **Early Childhood Centre** is a licensed centre where the operator is authorized to provide services to infants, preschool children, and school-aged children.

A **Family Home Centre** is a licensed centre located in a private residence, where the operator is authorized to provide services to infants, preschool children, and school-aged children, including their own children.

A **Preschool Centre** is a licensed centre where the operator is authorized to provide services for less than four (4) consecutive hours per day to children who are three (3) years of age or over but not yet attending school.

A **School-Age Centre** is a licensed centre where the operator is authorized to provide services to school-age children on weekdays during one or more of the following periods:

- Before or after regular school hours
- School lunch period
- Regular school hours when schools close for the day

Please note that **Early Years Designation** refers to an Early Childhood Centre that receives a government of PEI designation, which shows that they agree to follow program quality and delivery requirements as determined and regulated by the Minister of Education and Lifelong Learning.

To apply for a child care license, [click here](#).

Unlicensed Daycare

A person who does not hold a license may operate a program and is allowed to provide services to a maximum of:

- Five (5) children, including infants, provided that the group does not have more than two (2) infants
- Six (6) children where the group has only preschool children or a combination of preschool and school-age children
- Seven (7) children where the group has only school-age children

The caregiver's own children are included in the maximum number of children allowed. Please note that for this purpose, a child means a person who is 10 years of age or under.



Educator Certification

The PEI Early Learning and Child Care Board provides certification to people who meet the education and experience required for certification. Each level of certification has different educational requirements. Certified early childhood educators in PEI are required to complete forty-five (45) hours of professional development training every three (3) years to maintain their certification. Ask your child's educator which of the following certifications they have:

- Early Childhood Educator 1 Certificate
- Early Childhood Educator 2 Certificate
- Early Childhood Educator 3 Certificate
- Early Childhood Supervisor Certificate
- Early Childhood Director Certificate
- Inclusion Support Assistant Certificate
- Family Home Child Care Provider Certificate
- School-Age Child Care Provider Certificate

Child Care Centre Hours of Operation

Child care centres typically operate from 6:30am to 5:30pm or 7:00am to 6:00pm. Programs can be offered on a half-day, full-day, full-week, or part-week basis. Check the Hours of Operation on each centre's ELCC Registry profile as more centres now provide extended hours and seasonal services. During your first visit to the centre, ask the supervisor if they offer extended or seasonal hours.

Be aware of the centre's policy regarding dates the facility is closed, rates for service, sick days, storm days, and vacation days. It is recommended to have a backup plan for days when the centre is closed or when your child is sick.

When Your Child Can Go to School

Your child must be five (5) years of age by December 31 of the year they are starting school.

Early Learning and Child Care Registry

The Early Learning and Child Care Registry (ELCC Registry) can help you access the waiting lists for early learning and child care centres across PEI. Using the ELCC Registry's search tool, you can find a list of licensed centres near your home or work, brief centre descriptions, links to their website, and their contact information. The ELCC Registry allows you sign up for the waiting lists of as many centres as you want. Visit www.peichildcareregistry.com

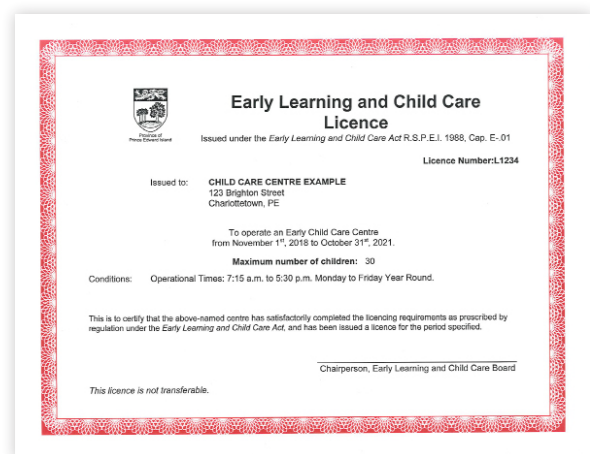
After signing up with the ELCC Registry and thinking about your family's needs, it is a good idea to visit the early learning and child care centres that you are interested in. You can call to make an appointment with the centre's supervisor to tour the facility with or without your child. A visit should take about 30-45 minutes.

It's important to remember to log-in and check your ELCC Registry account monthly to keep it active. Your account will no longer be active if you don't log in for 90 days. Checking your account also allows you to add or remove any centres from your list as your family's needs change.

What to Look for in a Centre

Here is what you can expect in a quality early learning and child care centre:

- A clean, safe, and welcoming environment
- Indoor and outdoor play areas that are accessible to all children
- Adequate equipment and space for all children
- Natural play materials and age appropriate equipment for children to play with both indoors and outdoors
- Personal space such as lockers or cubbies for each child
- The current license will be posted if the centre is licensed. This license will state the total number of children allowed in the centre at one time.



Professional Early Childhood Educators

Early Childhood Educators have post-secondary education specializing in child development, guiding children's behaviour, and early learning practices. Below is a checklist that will help you find out what the professional level of the centre's early childhood educators is:

- Certification of early childhood educators are publicly displayed
- Early Childhood Educators create learning opportunities with play
- The supervisor has time each day to provide leadership to the educators
- Parents and guardians are welcome to drop in anytime and are invited to be involved in the program in ways such as being a part of the parent advisory committee or reading stories to children

Children's Programs and Services

Here is what you can expect from quality programs and services:

- Children are supported individually as well as in a group to promote healthy growth and development
- The program has activities that are both educator-led and child-chosen. The program has engaging activities both indoor and outdoor, with time for creative play and movement, quiet play and reading
- Centre policies and program planning information is available for parents and guardians
- Healthy meals and snacks are prepared and served by certified staff with allergies and dietary restrictions in mind
- Staff practice healthy nutrition policies to respond to children that refuse to eat
- Parents and guardians have regular communication with the centre such as newsletters and family-educator meetings



Early Learning and Child Care Check List

Bring this guide with you on your visit to early learning and child care centres. The checklist outlines essential areas to guide your search.

Centre Name _____
Phone Number _____ License Number _____
Tour Guide _____

Are the certification credentials of the Early Childhood Educators displayed? Yes No

Health and Safety **Yes No**

Is the facility clean and in good condition?

Is the outdoor play space fenced in?

Are there locks on the medicine cabinets?

Are the stairs secured with gates?

Are cleaning supplies kept out of reach?

Is the menu posted?

Does the menu offer healthy food choices?

Can children serve themselves during their meals?

Was the policy regarding sick children discussed with you?

Did the centre tell you about their sick child policy?

Does the centre follow proper child/staff ratio?

Does the centre have a hand washing policy?

Do staff members have current training in first-aid and CPR?

Does the centre have current criminal record checks for all staff
and volunteers?

Services and Equipment

Yes No

Were you introduced to the PEI Early Learning and Child Care Framework?

If the centre does not use the PEI ELCC Framework, were you introduced to their own learning framework?

Is the schedule posted and followed daily?

Is there time for children and educators to pick activities?

Is there time in the schedule for indoor and outdoor play?

Are there lots of play areas available for children to explore?

Is there a lot of time to play in these areas each day?

Are materials and equipment age-appropriate?

Are the materials and equipment in good condition?

Are the materials easy for the children to reach and stored on labelled shelves or spaces?

Is children's work displayed where they can see it?

Communication

Yes No

Does the centre feel welcoming?

Are the educators playing with children?

How do the educators engage with the children? Are they warm and caring?

Do the educators model appropriate behaviour?

Are children and adults respectful to other children and adults?

Are all staff trained in early childhood development?

Do staff communicate well with parents and guardians?

Are the rules and expectations for the children simple and clear?

Notes:

Why is it important to have Early Childhood Educators?

Early Childhood Educators, also called ECEs, are important to early childhood development and early education. They have specialized training in early learning and child care and are specialized in child development, guiding child behaviour, and early learning and child care programming.

An effective Early Childhood Educator will:

- Ensure the physical environment and daily activities promote the health, safety, and well-being of children in their care
- Establish a good working relationship with parents and guardians
- Develop and maintain good communication with each child and with the children as a group
- Plan and provide daily learning opportunities, routines, and activities that promote positive child development that includes healthy social and emotional skills
- Observe, document, and respond to children's interests, activities, and behaviours
- Inspire learning and foster children's development
- Act in a manner that supports fairness, equity, and diversity to support the development of children within their family, culture, and society
- Work in partnership with other community members to support the wellbeing of families

Adapted, in part, from “Our Child Care Work Force, From Recognition to Remuneration” page 4.



Number of Staff

It is important for you to ask, “How many caregivers are with each group of children in the program?” Under the Early Learning and Child Care Act and Regulations, centres must follow regulated child-staff ratios. Please discuss this with the supervisor of the centre. If you have any questions, please contact the Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture at 902-438-4130 or 902-368-6513.

Healthy Child Development

Although children learn and grow at different rates, it is important to be aware of child development milestones. If you have questions about your child’s development, feel free to talk with their early childhood educator. You can also download free resources on the Early Childhood Development Association’s website (www.ecdaofpei.ca). However, if you have an immediate concern about your child’s development, please call your doctor or public health office.

Your Involvement with the Centre

It’s important to stay involved with the centre and your child’s learning. You and your child’s early childhood educator can work together for the healthy development of your child.

Here are some ways to participate:

- Ask the centre if there is a parent advisory committee
- Volunteer for a special event or celebration at the centre
- Join the group on your child’s birthday
- Volunteer to read a story or do an activity with the group
- Talk with your child’s educator regularly either in person or through email
- Ask your child about their day
- Share information about special events with your child’s educators, such as family visits, family vacations, or a change in your family
- Be comfortable in sharing your thoughts, suggestions or concerns

Ready to Sign up

Many early learning and child care centres require each family to sign an agreement. The agreement covers areas such as the fees for care, the hours of operation, and holiday time. It is important to understand and follow the agreement. Keep a copy of the agreement for yourself and ask the Supervisor questions if there are parts of the agreement that you don't understand.

Financial Support

The Child Care Subsidy Program is administered by the Department of Family and Human Services to assist parents and guardians with the cost of child care. Full or partial subsidies are available, for families who may qualify, to pay fees for child care costs. Any Island family requiring child care may apply.

Subsidies are provided for:

- Parents and guardians who work full-time or part-time
- Parents and guardians who attend education and training programs who cannot receive child care funding through their education program
- Medical needs of parents and guardians
- Diagnosed special needs of children
- Improved access for support of children whose parent or guardian is at home

The amount of subsidy a family may be eligible for depends on the net monthly family income and family size. A calculator is available on the PEI Early Learning and Child Care Registry which can assist you in determining what amount of subsidy may be available to you.

You can visit www.peichildcareregistry.com to find out if your family is eligible for child care subsidy or call the Child Care Subsidy Program office nearest to you.

Contacts

PEI Early Learning and Child Care Registry

The Province of Prince Edward Island offers an online registry of available child care spaces in licensed early learning and child care centres across PEI. To search the registry, visit www.peichildcareregistry.com.

Child Care Subsidy Program

For information and instructions on how to apply for the Child Care Subsidy Program, please contact the Department of Family and Human Services at 1-877-569-0546.

Early Childhood Development Association of PEI

General inquires: 902-368-1866 or info@ecdaofpei.ca

Department of Education and Lifelong Learning

902- 438-4130 or DeptELL@gov.pe.ca

PEI Early Learning and Child Care Board

902-368-5509 or 902-368-6518