



*Professional.*

*Licensed.*

# PEI Early Childhood Development



*Certified.*



Early  
Childhood  
Development  
ASSOCIATION of PEI

A not-for profit organization



## *Professional.*

**EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT** is a critical function on Prince Edward Island, recently given added recognition through the renaming of the Provincial Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.



## *Certified.*

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS** on Prince Edward Island are members of a highly regarded profession requiring substantial educational certification, ranging from an Early Childhood Educator Diploma (Holland College) to a Bachelor of Child and Family Studies (University of Prince Edward Island).



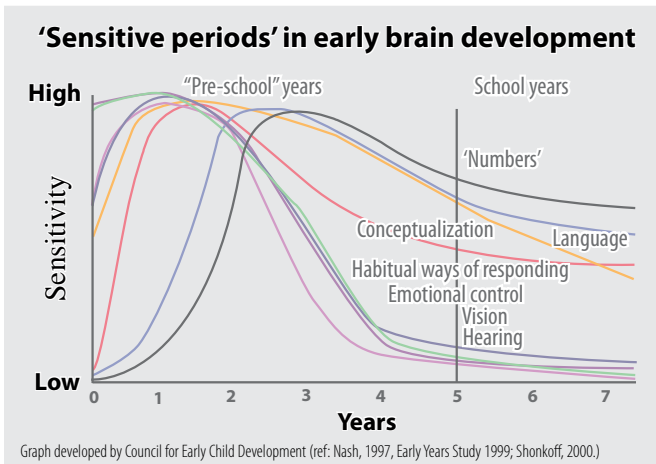
## *Licensed.*

**EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTRES** on Prince Edward Island are those that are monitored and regulated by the *PEI Childcare Facilities Act and Regulations*. The Child Care Facilities Board undertakes regular inspections of these facilities to ensure the guidelines for health and safety are being met.



## Parents Know

If you are a parent on Prince Edward Island, you know how important the early years are to your child's development. This graph helps us understand how the groundwork is laid from birth to age 5. During these "Pre-school years", essential life skills like emotion control, ways of responding, conceptualization and peer social skills are all embedded.



Parents know that our children will learn these things first at home and then with others in an early childhood education environment. Selecting the place where your child can learn the most is important. This publication is designed to help families make that decision.

## Help Wanted!

Research conducted for the Province of PEI's *Take 30 for the Family* program showed that 80% of households with children aged from newborn to 8 years have used or plan to use childcare services outside the home. And almost 60% of these parents said that finding convenient quality childcare services was **dif** cult (31%) or very **dif** cult (28%). We're here to tell you that help is available and it starts right here.

*The sooner you start your search –  
the greater your choice.*

## **Before You Start Looking**

Start your search early for a quality early education program. Ask yourself these questions:

- Home care or early childhood educational development centre?
- Is it important to you that the early childhood educator is professional, certified, and the centre licensed?
- Are you looking for a variety of programs?
- What is a suitable location, close to your home or workplace?
- What is the cost?
- What are the hours of operation and how does this work with my schedule?
- Are the centre's goals compatible with my views in terms of early childhood development and education?

## Licensed Centers

*Licensed centers* are monitored and regulated by the PEI Child Care Facilities Act and Regulations. The Child Care Facilities Board's function is to license child care facilities, and to enforce the Regulations to the Child Care Facilities Act. Licensing requirements deal with such areas as staffing requirements, health, safety, fire, emergency, daily program schedule, nutrition, and administration. If you have a concern about these areas and have addressed them to the staff of the centre, you may also call the Board at **902-368-6518** or **902-569-7526**.

**Early Childhood Development Centre** is a facility whose primary objective, in the judgment of the Board, is to provide an early childhood development program emphasizing age-appropriate activities.

**Day Care Home** is a facility in a private residence whose primary objective, in the judgment of the Board, is to provide a relatively informal care emphasizing family-oriented activities for children.

*Note: Usually offers a full day program for children in mixed age groups.*

**School-Age Child Care Centre** is a facility that operates outside of school hours and in the judgment of the Board provides a relatively unstructured program emphasizing supervision and recreation for school-aged children.

## Unlicensed Daycare Homes

A daycare home can operate without a license if there is:

- a maximum of 3 children if all 3 are younger than 2 years of age, or
- a maximum of 5 preschool children if no more than 2 are younger than 2 years of age, or
- a maximum of 6 children of mixed ages up to 10 years old (with no more than 2 younger than 2 years of age.)

*The above numbers include the caregiver's own preschool children in the maximum allowed. Preschool is defined as less than 6 years of age.*





## **Hours of Operation**

Typical hours of operation are 6:30–7:00 am opening to 5:30–6:00 pm closing.

Programs offered can be half-day, full-day, full week or a part week basis.

Be aware of the program's policy regarding dates the facility is closed, rates for service, child's sick day, storm days, and vacation day policy. It is wise to have a back up plan in place to address days the program is closed or your child is sick.

## **Age of Entry Plans**

In the 2008 school year, children must be five years old by October 31 to enter kindergarten programs and six years old by October 31 to begin school.

In September 2009, the cutoff date for kindergarten entry will move to December 31 while the cutoff date for school entry will remain at October 31.

In September 2010, the cutoff date for both kindergarten and school entry will move to December 31.

## Choose a Quality Centre

After considering your family's needs; it is a good idea to visit a number of early childhood development centres in your area. We suggest calling to make an appointment with the supervisor to visit the facility either with or without your child. You should allow about 30 minutes for the visit.





## Here is a check list of what you can expect in a quality early childhood development centre:

- A clean, safe, and inviting facility,
- Indoor and outdoor play areas accessible to **all** children,
- Adequate equipment and space for **all** children,
- Toys for children to play with indoors and outdoors,
- Private space like a locker or cubby provided for each child,
- If the centre is licensed the current license should be posted. This license will state the total number of children allowed in the centre at one time.

## Professional Early Childhood Educators

To help you to determine whether the facility has professional early childhood educators here is a list to keep in mind:

- Certification of early childhood educators should be posted,
- Early Childhood Educators have post secondary training specializing in child development,
- Early Childhood Educators are affectionate and responsive to the children,
- The supervisor has time away from care giving for part of each day,
- There is an attitude that parents are welcome to drop in anytime.



## Early Learning and Child Care Check List

Here is a guide to take with you on your visit to child care centres outlining important areas to guide your search.

<b>Health and Safety</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Is the facility clean and in good repair?		
Are there locks on the medicine cabinets?		
Are the stairs secured by a gate?		
Are cleaning supplies kept out of reach?		
Is the yard fenced?		
Is the menu posted?		
Does the menu offer healthy food choices?		
Do the meal routines offer children the opportunity to serve themselves?		
Was the policy regarding sick children discussed with you?		
Are there small numbers of children with each staff person?		
Do you see children and staff washing their hands often?		
Does the staff have current training in first aid and CPR?		
Does the program collect criminal record checks on all volunteers & employees?		

<b>Learning Centres and Equipment</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Are there several areas (learning centres) available for children to explore?		
Is there lots of time to play in the areas several times each day?		
Is there time in the schedule for lots of indoor and outdoor play?		
Are the toys and equipment in good repair?		
Are their age appropriate materials and equipment being used?		
Are the toys easy to reach, and are they on labeled shelves or spaces?		
Are the daily routines schedule posted and followed daily?		
Does there seem to be time for children to pick activities, and time for educators to pick activities?		
Is there a display of children's work?		
<b>Communication</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
How do the educators related to the children? Is it warm and understanding?		
Are educators sitting with children to play?		
Are children respectful to other children and adults?		
Are the staff and supervisor trained in early childhood development?		
Is communication with parents promoted and welcomed?		
Are the rules for the children simple and clear?		
Do the educators encourage the children to follow the rules?		
Does the facility feel welcoming?		





## **Why it is important to have Early Childhood Educators [ECE]?**

Early Childhood Educators are the cornerstone to early childhood development and education. They are trained in early childhood education, are specialized in child development, and program planning/implementation.

An effective ECE will:

- ensure that the physical environment and daily practices of care giving promote the health, safety and well-being of children in their care;
- establish a working partnership with parents which supports their relationship to their children;
- develop and maintain responsive communication with each child and with the children as a group;
- plan and provide daily learning opportunities, routines and activities which promote positive child development;
- observe and respond to children's activity and behavior;
- act in a manner consistent with principles of fairness, equity and diversity to support the development and learning of individual children within the context of family, culture and society; and
- work in partnership with other community members to support the well-being of families.

*Adapted from "Our Child Care Work Force, From Recognition to Remuneration" page 4.*

## Children's Programs/Services

A guide for the types of programs/services offered.

- Programs that promote healthy child development and challenge each child individually and all the children as a group.
- There is a balance of interesting activities and time for creative play and movement, including quiet play, reading and stories.
- There are accurate schedules posted and being followed, policies and planning information should be available for parents.
- Nutritious meals and snacks offered, making allowances for allergies.
- There are regular communication opportunities with parents/guardians in the form of newsletters or other communications.

## Number of Staff

It is important for parents or guardians to ask "how many caregivers are with each group of children in the program?" The Child Care Facilities Act and Regulations says that,

- Infants must be in separate groups from children of mixed ages for 75% of the day, and
- There can be no more than 6 infants in a group.

## Healthy Child Development

Children learn at different rates but you should be aware of child development milestones. If you have a concern with your child's development please call your doctor or public health.

Visit [www.earlychildhooddevelopment.ca](http://www.earlychildhooddevelopment.ca)



## **Your Involvement in Early Childhood Development and Education**

Stay involved with the program and your child's learning. You and your child's early childhood educator are working together for your child's healthy development.

### **Here are some ways to participate:**

- 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, journal or telephone your child's educator;
- Ask your child what he/she did today;
- Share big events with your child's educators, such as family visits, vacation events, or a change to your family.
- Try to feel comfortable about sharing any of your concerns, and always remember to express your appreciation.

### **Ready to Sign up**

Many early childhood development 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 be familiar with and follow the agreement.





## Financial Help

The Child Care Subsidy Program is administered by the offices of the Department of Social Services & Seniors in order to help parents with the cost of licensed child care. Full or partial subsidy is available.

Subsidies are used to pay tuition costs for early childhood programs licensed by the Child Care Facilities Board. This includes day care centres, nursery programs, family day care homes, and before and after school programs.

Any Island family needing child care may apply. Reasons for placement include: parents working or in training programs; special needs of the child; children at risk; emergency medical needs of parents; school readiness and parents waiting for English as a second language program.

The amount of subsidy, however, depends on the net monthly family income, and is determined by a Sliding Scale Income Test based on family size.



## Childcare Subsidy Program Contacts

Charlottetown **(902) 368-6470**

Montague **(902) 838-0700**

O'Leary **(902) 859-8800**

Souris **(902) 687-7000**

Summerside **(902) 888-8122 or (902) 888-8245**

## Contacts

- Early Childhood Development Association **(902) 368-1866** or visit **[www.earlychildhooddevelopment.pe.ca](http://www.earlychildhooddevelopment.pe.ca)**

We offer a listing of available child care spaces in Licensed Island Child Care Programs across PEI.

## We can also answer your questions.

- Department of Education and Early Childhood Development **(902) 569-7628** or **(902) 368-6513** for general inquiries.
- PEI Child Care Facilities Board **(902) 368-6518**.





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*Helping PEI families make the early years count.*

Visit us at

[www.earlychildhooddevelopment.ca](http://www.earlychildhooddevelopment.ca)

or call **1 888 368-1866** to learn amount the true value  
of licensed early childhood education.