

Early Years and Child Care Annual Report **2017**



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Une publication équivalente est disponible en français sous le titre suivant : *Rapport annuel de 2017 sur le système de la petite enfance et des services de garde d'enfants.*

This publication is available on the Ministry of Education's website, at www.ontario.ca/edu.



Overview of Ontario's Early Years and Child Care System

In Ontario, the province funds municipal service system managers for child care and early years programs and services. These 47 local service system managers, known as Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs), have the authority to determine funding priorities within their local early years and child care system, provided they comply with provincial legislation, policies, and guidelines. The province also funds 74 First Nations and three transfer payment agencies to support child care on reserve.

Licensed child care is provided in centres and homes, and is delivered by a mix of non-profit, for-profit, and municipally-operated programs. Child care programs are also operated directly by First Nations.

The provincial government sets overall policy, legislation, and regulation for the child care and early years sector. The Ministry of Education licenses child care centres and home child care agencies that contract with home child care providers, conducts inspections, and investigates complaints about licensed and unlicensed child care. On August 31, 2015, new legislation and accompanying regulations were put into place with the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* replacing the former *Day Nurseries Act*.

The ministry also funds early years programs known as child and family centres that are delivered by over 150 lead agencies, school boards, CMSMs/DSSABs, and First Nations. In 2018, all provincially-funded child and family programs will be part of an integrated system of services and supports for children ages 0-6 and their families, guided by a provincial framework and a new funding approach.



Ontario's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework

In the fall and winter of 2016-17, the ministry engaged with thousands of people and stakeholders across Ontario to find out what they expect from the province's early years and child care system. Feedback received during this consultation informed [Ontario's Renewed Early Years and Child Care Policy Framework \(2017\)](#). This blueprint will support an integrated system of early years experiences focused on affordability, accessibility, responsiveness, and quality. The framework includes seven key areas of commitment:

- 1. Increasing access to early years and child care programs and services** so that families will find it easier to access high quality early years programs and licensed child care spaces in homes, schools and communities.
- 2. Ensuring a more affordable early years and licensed child care system** so that child care will be more affordable for families.
- 3. Establishing an Early Years Workforce Strategy** so that families will continue to benefit from high quality child care and early years programming delivered by engaged and knowledgeable educators.
- 4. Determining a provincial definition of quality in the early years** so that children and families will continue to benefit from a consistent approach to quality across early years settings that support a continuum of learning.
- 5. Developing an approach to inclusion in early years and child care settings** so that families will find it easier to navigate services and receive support for all children, including those with special needs.

6. **Creating an outcomes and measurement strategy** so that families will have increased confidence in how Ontario's early years system is working as government decisions become more transparent and evidence-based.
7. **Increasing public awareness of Ontario's early years and child care system** so that families will have easily accessible information about the full range of early years and child care programs and services that are available to them.





Investments in the Early Years and Child Care System

The province has increased total funding for child care from \$1.24 billion in 2016 to over \$1.44 billion in 2017, an increase of 16.7%. Both the 2016 and 2017 funding include \$188 million for wage enhancement. The 2017 funding also includes new investments of \$120 million for the child care expansion plan and \$75 million under the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

The province has committed to support 100,000 more children 0-4 years old to access licensed child care over five years, beginning in 2017. As part of this commitment, the province is investing \$1.6 billion dollars in capital funding to support the creation of 45,000 new spaces in schools, other public spaces and communities over the next five years.

The 2017 Ontario budget announced a \$200 million investment to support access to licensed child care for 24,000 more children aged 0-4, including 16,000 new spaces. The province also allocated \$27.9 million for child care in First Nations communities and \$2.9 million for the wage enhancement program for First Nations in 2017-18.

Beginning in 2017-18, funding for child and family centres amounts to \$141 million, which includes \$100 million in provincial funding and \$40 million through the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

Wage Enhancement

In January 2015, the ministry implemented a wage enhancement/home child care enhancement grant for child care professionals who work in licensed child care centres and licensed home child care agencies. The wage enhancement/home child care enhancement grant supports the ability to retain Registered Early Childhood Educators and other child care program staff, closes the wage gap between Registered Early Childhood Educators working in the provincially funded education system and those in the child care sector, and supports greater employment and income security.

The wage enhancement supports a wage increase of up to \$2 per hour, plus 17.5% benefits for eligible centre-based staff and home visitors. The home child care enhancement grant supports an increase of up to \$20 per day for eligible home child care providers. In 2016 and 2018, the ministry funded \$188 million to 47 municipalities and municipal boards to support the wage enhancement and home child care enhancement grant.

The Journey Together

To support Ontario's reconciliation efforts, the Ministry of Education is investing new funding for its early years commitments in [*The Journey Together: Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples*](#) which include:

- On reserve funding – up to \$23.5 million over the next two years for new and enhanced child and family programs delivered by First Nations, with up to \$12 million in ongoing annual operating funding beginning in 2019-20.
- Off reserve funding – up to \$70 million over the next two years (including capital investments) for child care and early years programs delivered by Indigenous-led organizations, with ongoing annual operating funding of up to \$30 million beginning in 2019-20.

Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement

The 2017 federal budget committed \$7 billion over 10 years, starting in 2018-19, to support and create more high quality and affordable child care spaces across the country. The creation of a Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework supports the broad long term goals for early learning and child care systems that are focused on high quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility and inclusivity.

The proposed investments under Ontario's action plan build on existing provincial investments in early learning and child care, and are for programs that are regulated by the ministry. The action plan supports both centre-based and home-based licensed child care, as well as early learning programs.

On June 16, 2017, Ontario was pleased to be the first province to sign a three-year bilateral agreement under the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework. The Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement will allocate \$435 million over the three year agreement. Annual investments include:

- \$100 million to support system access for children and families to affordable, high quality child care;
- \$40 million to support Ontario Early Years Child and Family Centres; and
- \$5 million to support innovative approaches that provide access to high quality training and professional development opportunities for the early years and child care workforce.





Measures of Progress

The ministry is working on a five year outcomes strategy to help ensure that its decisions on the early years and child care are well-informed and based in evidence. The strategy includes developing key outcome measures and performance indicators for child care and early years programs that measure progress and are also aligned with indicators required under the Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

To help measure the short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes for children who participate in different streams of early years programs, a new province-wide data collection of children's early years experiences will take place at kindergarten registration. The child care data presented in this report informs the ministry's policy-making, program development, and monitoring activities.





Key Facts: Licensed Child Care Spaces, Centres, and Homes

- As of March 31, 2017, the total number of licensed child care spaces in Ontario was 406,395.
 - 28,623 spaces were in centres that provide services in French.
 - 4,694 spaces were in centres that provide bilingual services.
 - 3,175 spaces were in centres in First Nations on reserve.
- There were 124 home child care agencies and 7,579 approved homes providing licensed home child care in 2016-17.
- In 2016-17, the number of licensed child care spaces increased by 4% from the previous year.
- Since 2003:
 - the number of licensed child care centres increased by 38%, from 3,874 to 5,351.
 - licensed child care spaces have more than doubled from 187,131 to 406,395.

Auspice

- 76% of the licensed child care centres are operated by non-profit corporations and First Nations.
- 79% of licensed child care spaces were in non-profit centres in 2016-17.

Child Care in Publicly Funded Schools¹

- Since the introduction of full-day kindergarten in 2010-11, the number of licensed child care centres in publicly funded schools has increased by 661, or 30%, from 2,180 to 2,841.
- Since the introduction of full-day kindergarten, licensed child care spaces have increased by more than 142,194 – a 54% increase.
 - 86% of the increase is non-profit and 94% of the increase is in publicly funded schools.
 - The increase is primarily driven by kindergarten spaces (218%), followed by school age spaces (63%) and toddler spaces (45%).
- Since the introduction of full-day kindergarten in 2010-11 the number of before and/or after school spaces increased by 93% from 116,103 to 224,069.

Child Care Expansion Plan

- The 2017 Budget reaffirmed the government's commitment to help 100,000 more children access affordable, quality licensed child care and we are starting this plan immediately.
- In 2017-18, the \$200 million announced in the 2017 Budget will support access to licensed child care for 24,000 more children 0-4 years old. This commitment will support new child care fee subsidies, expand access to affordable licensed child care spaces, and reduce fee subsidy waitlists to help parents access quality child care.



¹ Child care in publicly funded schools includes First Nations schools on reserve.



Licensed Child Care System

Figure 1: Licensed Child Care Spaces Growth Trend, 2010-17

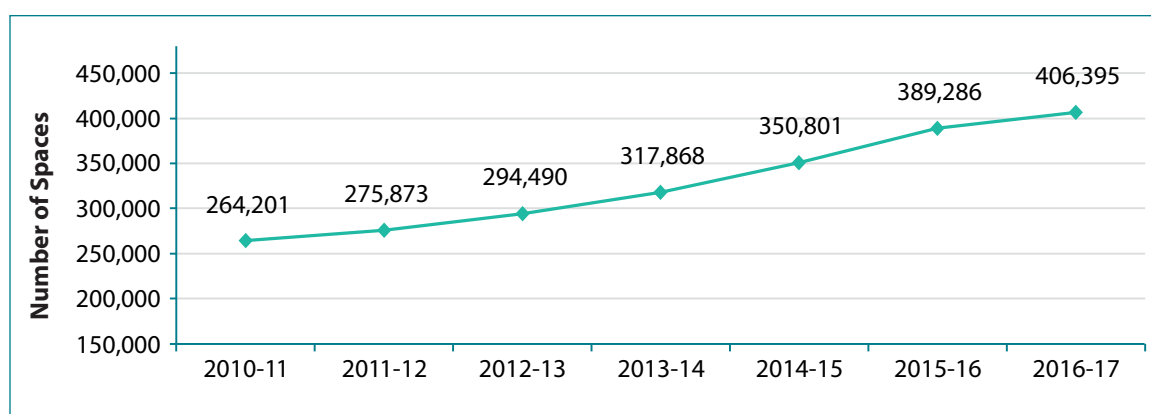


Table 1: Centres and Spaces in Licensed Child Care, 2010-17

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	% Increase in 2016-17	
								Since 2010-11	Since 2015-16
Number of Centres in Licensed Child Care	4,796	4,922	5,050	5,069	5,144	5,276	5,351	12%	1%
Not for Profit	3,643	3,733	3,859	3,847	3,942	4,007	4,053	11%	1%
For Profit	1,153	1,189	1,191	1,222	1,202	1,269	1,298	13%	2%
Number of Spaces in Licensed Child Care	264,201	275,873	294,490	317,868	350,801	389,286	406,395	54%	4%
Not for Profit	196,708	205,777	222,851	240,881	272,899	305,317	319,608	62%	5%
For Profit	67,493	70,096	71,639	76,987	77,902	83,969	86,787	29%	3%

Figure 2: Licensed Child Care Centres, 2010-17

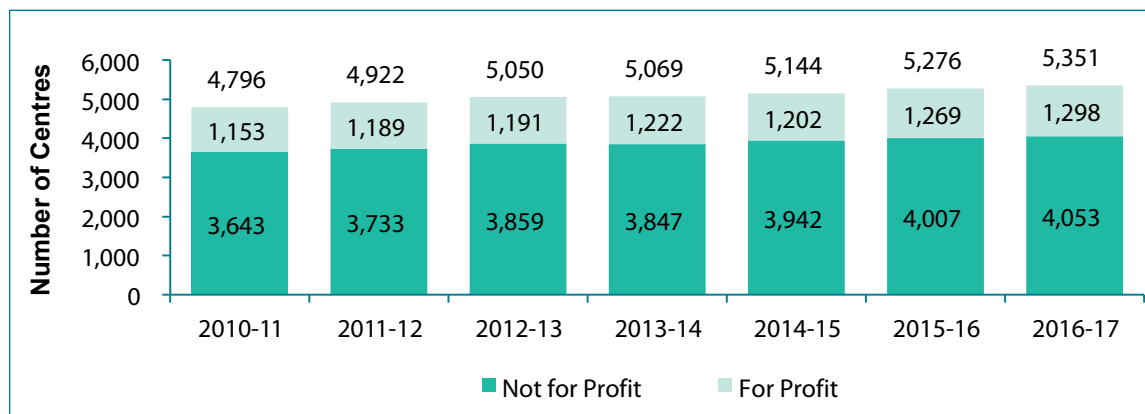


Figure 3: Spaces in Licensed Child Care Centres, 2010-17

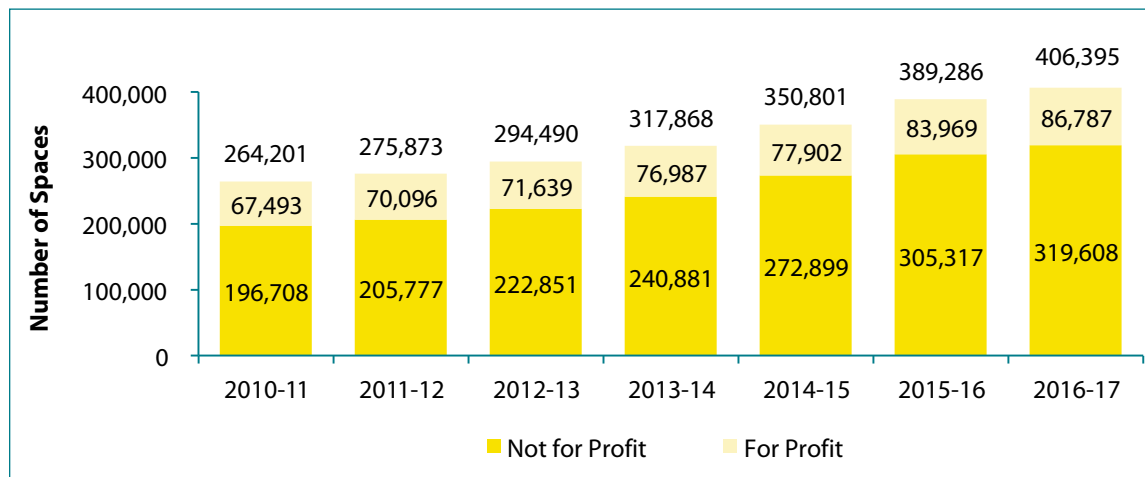
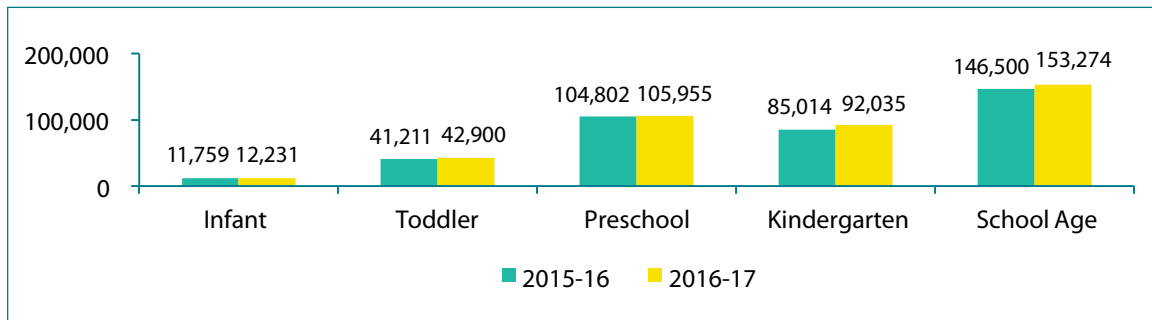


Table 2: Spaces in Licensed Child Care by Age Group, 2010-17

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	% Increase in 2016-17	
								Since 2010-11	Since 2015-16
Total Spaces	264,201	275,873	294,490	317,868	350,801	389,286	406,395	54%	4%
Infant	8,874	9,269	9,634	10,250	11,025	11,759	12,231	38%	4%
Toddler	29,534	30,867	32,578	34,772	37,833	41,211	42,900	45%	4%
Preschool	103,048	103,474	102,731	102,133	102,380	104,802	105,955	3%	1%
Kindergarten	28,944	32,547	40,796	52,168	64,340	85,014	92,035	218%	8%
School Age	93,839	99,743	108,795	118,545	135,223	146,500	153,274	63%	5%

Figure 4: Spaces in Licensed Child Care Centres by Age Group, 2015-17





Licensed Child Care Centres – Openings and Closures

- In 2016-17, 246 child care centres opened while 171 closed, for a net increase of 75 new centres. There were 555 more child care centres in operation than in 2010-11 when full-day kindergarten was introduced.
- Since 2010-11, the number of child care centres has grown by slightly more than 6% annually. It is typical that the sector also sees about 4.4% of child centres close each year.

Table 3: Licensed Child Care Centre Closures and Openings, 2010-17

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Number of Centres	4,796	4,922	5,050	5,069	5,144	5,276	5,351
Number of Centres Opened	211	328	377	305	350	318	246
Number of Centres Closed	218	202	249	286	275	186	171
Number of Net Change	-7	126	128	19	75	132	75
% of Centres Opened	4.4%	6.7%	7.5%	6.0%	6.8%	6.0%	4.6%
% of Centres Closed	4.5%	4.1%	4.9%	5.6%	5.3%	3.5%	3.2%
% of Net Change	-0.1%	2.6%	2.5%	0.4%	1.5%	2.5%	1.4%



Licensed Child Care Centre Spaces in Publicly Funded Schools

- In 2016-17, the number of licensed spaces in publicly funded schools increased by 6% since the previous year.
- In 2016-17, 62% of the licensed child care spaces were located in publicly funded schools, compared to 44% in 2010-11.
- From 2010-11 to 2016-17, the number of licensed spaces in publicly funded schools has more than doubled. The 115% increase is significantly impacted by growth in the number of kindergarten, toddler, and school age spaces.

Table 4: Centres and Spaces Located in Publicly Funded Schools, 2010-17

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	% Increase in 2016-17	
								Since 2010-11	Since 2015-16
Number of Centres	2,180	2,290	2,422	2,529	2,700	2,782	2,841	30%	2%
Infant	1,122	1,148	1,191	1,343	1,569	1,831	1,970	76%	8%
Toddler	4,213	4,495	5,144	6,342	8,290	9,345	10,024	138%	7%
Preschool	24,655	25,223	24,741	24,870	26,662	26,557	26,906	9%	1%
Kindergarten	15,228	18,275	26,600	38,713	53,407	73,528	79,610	423%	8%
School Age	71,324	76,231	84,069	94,334	113,229	125,570	131,754	85%	5%
Total Spaces	116,545	125,372	141,715	165,602	203,157	236,831	250,264	115%	6%



Licensed Child Care Centre Spaces in Communities²

- In 2016-17, the number of licensed spaces in communities increased by 2% since the previous year.
- In 2016-17, 38% of the licensed child care spaces were located in communities.

Table 5: Centres and Spaces Located in Communities, 2010-17

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	% Increase in 2016-17	
								Since 2010-11	Since 2015-16
Number of Centres	2,616	2,632	2,628	2,540	2,444	2,494	2,510	-4%	1%
Infant	7,752	8,121	8,443	8,907	9,456	9,928	10,261	32%	3%
Toddler	25,321	26,372	27,434	28,430	29,543	31,866	32,876	30%	3%
Preschool	78,393	78,251	77,990	77,263	75,718	78,245	79,049	1%	1%
Kindergarten	13,716	14,272	14,196	13,455	10,933	11,486	12,425	-9%	8%
School Age	22,515	23,512	24,726	24,211	21,994	20,930	21,520	-4%	3%
Total Spaces	147,656	150,501	152,775	152,266	147,644	152,455	156,131	6%	2%

² Licensed spaces in “communities” are defined as those that are not located in publicly funded schools.



Centres and Spaces in Publicly Funded Schools and in Communities

Figure 5: Number of Licensed Child Care Centres, 2010-17

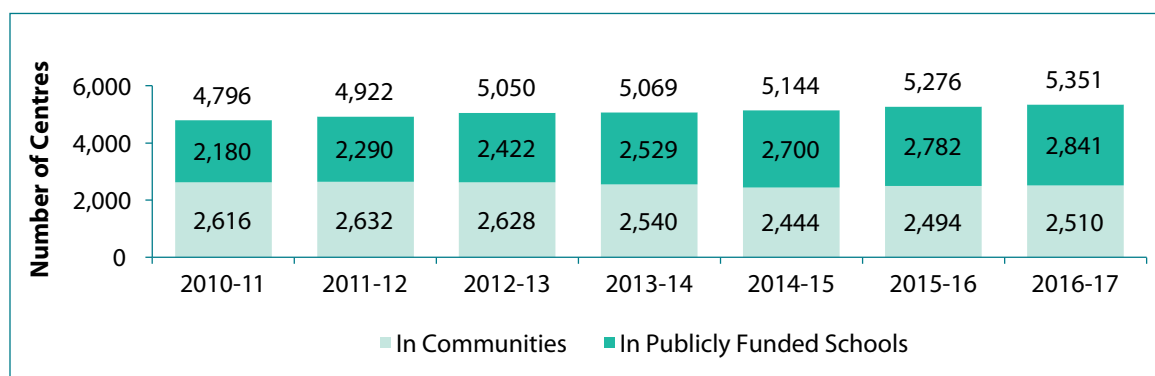
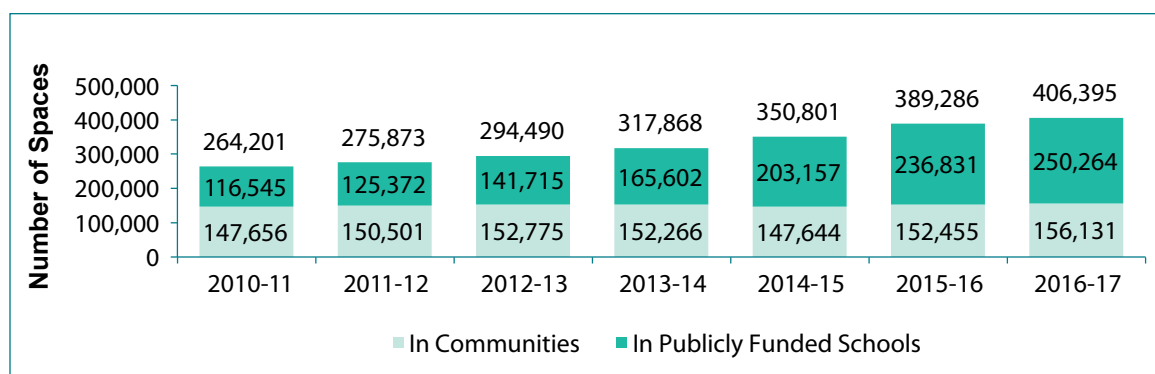


Figure 6: Spaces in Licensed Child Care Centres, 2010-17





First Nations Child Care

- There are 76 licensed child care centres and two licensed home child care agencies located in 57 First Nations communities on reserve.
- The total number of licensed spaces on reserve increased slightly from 3,169 in 2015-16 to 3,175 in 2016-17.

Table 6: First Nations Child Care, 2010-17

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Number of Centres	78	76	76	74	75	76	76
Infant	227	223	232	254	270	296	290
Toddler	662	682	692	702	727	727	727
Preschool	1,613	1,602	1,624	1,620	1,568	1,541	1,553
Kindergarten	279	197	205	172	177	192	192
School Age	391	439	458	443	398	413	413
Total Spaces	3,172	3,143	3,211	3,191	3,140	3,169	3,175



French and Bilingual Child Care

- Of the 5,351 licensed child care centres in the province, 294 offer daily programs in French and 65 offer bilingual programs.
- Of the 406,395 licensed child care spaces in the province:
 - 28,623, or 7%, offer daily programs in French.
 - 4,694, or 1%, offer daily bilingual programs.

Figure 7: Licensed Child Care Spaces With French Programs, 2016-17

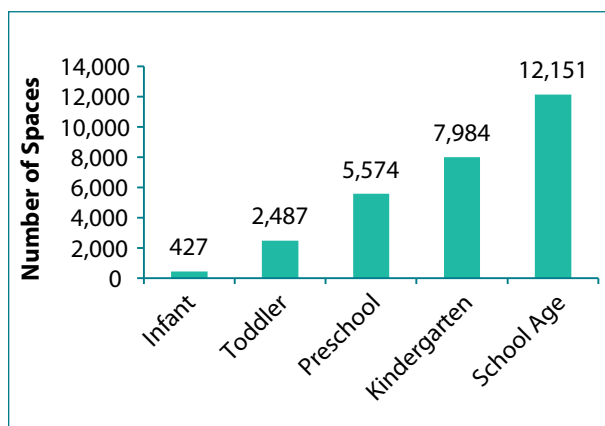
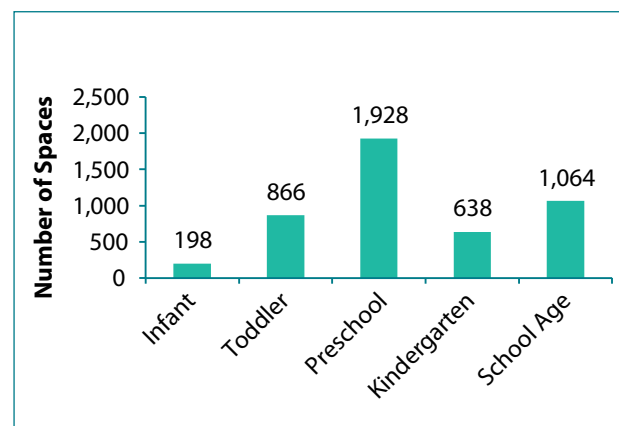


Figure 8: Licensed Child Care Spaces With Bilingual Programs, 2016-17





Licensed Home Child Care

- In 2016-17, the number of homes offering licensed child care services increased by 75, or 1%, from 7,504 to 7,579.
- From 2010-11 to 2016-17, about 89% of the licensed home child care agencies were non-profit.

Table 7: Home Child Care Agencies and Homes Contracted with a Licensed Agency, 2010-17

	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Number of Home Child Care Agencies	135	132	127	126	124	122	124
Non-Profit	121	118	116	113	111	108	109
For-Profit	14	14	11	13	13	14	15
Number of Home Child Care Premises	6,832	6,142	5,960	5,765	6,962	7,504	7,579
Non-Profit Agency	6,398	5,812	5,640	5,403	6,500	6,992	7,017
For-Profit Agency	434	330	320	362	462	512	562

Figure 9: Number of Licensed Home Child Care Agencies, 2010-17

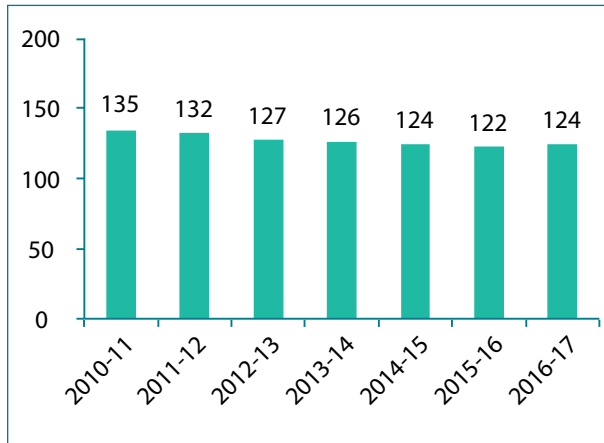
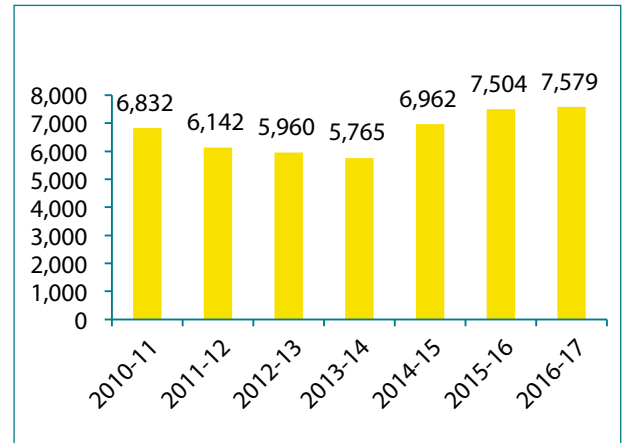


Figure 10: Number of Homes Contracted with a Licensed Agency, 2010-17





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