

Licensed Child Care Questionnaire 2012 Results



The Ministry of Education launched an online questionnaire on July 31, 2012. The questionnaire was administered to all licensed child care centres and private-home day care agencies in Ontario. This report provides a provincial summary of the responses received from the questionnaire.

Purpose

The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather information about child care parent fees, program hours and days of operation, staff wages and finances. The information was collected under the *Day Nurseries Act*, which is the legislation governing licensed child care in Ontario. This information provides a valuable evidence-based province-wide overview of the licensed child care sector in order to help create a better understanding of child care and more effectively support licensed child care operators.

Data Collection

Data was collected over a 14 week period, from July 31, 2012 to November 9, 2012. The questionnaire data was collected through the online questionnaire as well as through paper-based submissions. Respondents were asked to provide information as of January 1, 2012.

The response rate was approximately 70% (representing 3,459 responses out of 5,054). 3,347 of the respondents indicated the program was centre-based and 112 were private-home day care agencies.

Methodology

Extensive data cleaning helped to address ineligible responses including data entry errors and missing values in order to create the summary statistics presented in this report. Where available, daily parent fees were validated against daily fees stated on corresponding licensed child care program websites. In addition, wages for which a range was not provided (i.e. only a minimum/lowest wage or maximum/highest wage) were excluded from the median wage ranges reported. Although data cleaning was extensive, outliers were not removed in order to minimize the loss of data.

Median values are reported for open-ended questions, including the number of days of operation, parent fees and wages. The median is the value of the middle item when the data is arranged from lowest to highest. It is the point at which exactly half of the data are above it and half below. In general, the median is an appropriate measure of central tendency in the presence of outliers, which is the case in the current dataset. Confidence intervals for the median fees and wages are also reported. The confidence intervals provide a measure of how accurately the median fees and wages provided in this report reflect the fees and wages in the licensed child care sector.

Percentages were calculated for all other questionnaire results and the associated number of useable responses is provided in parentheses.

Analysis below the provincial level is not presented in this report due to variability in data reporting and increasing concerns about the validity of the data subsets.

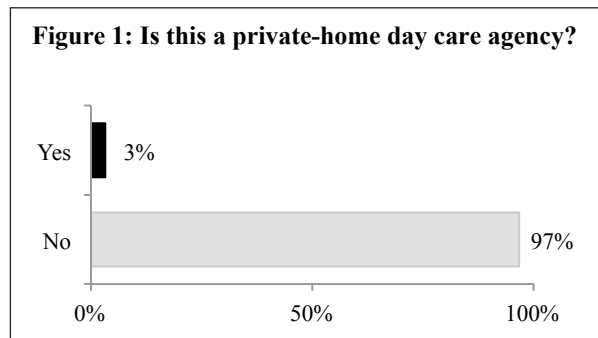
Program Operations

The following series of questions were asked about program operations, as of January 1, 2012. If the respondent answered “yes” to the first question (i.e. “Is this a private-home day care agency?”) the remaining questions about program operations did not require a response. The hours and days of operation for private-home day care programs are assumed to be flexible compared to centre-based programs. A summary of the results for each question is presented below.

Q1. *Is this a private-home day care agency?*

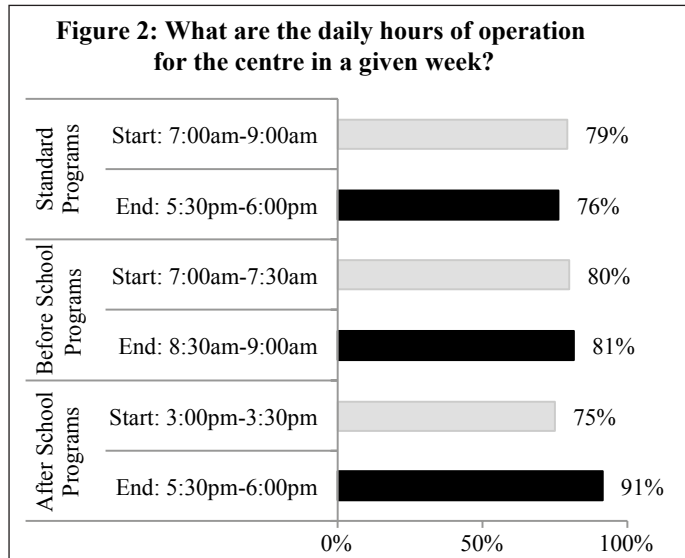
97% (3,347) of the respondents indicated the program was centre-based and 3% (112) were private-home day care agencies.

As of March 2012, there were a total of 4,922 licensed child care centre-based programs and 132 private-home day-care agencies in Ontario.



Q2. What are the daily hours of operation for the centre in a given week?

- For standard programs (including before/after school programs): 79% (2,137) start between 7:00 am and 9:00 am and 76% (2,055) end between 5:30 pm and 6:00 pm.
- For stand-alone before school programs, 80% (932) start between 7:00 am and 7:30 am and 81% (951) end between 8:30 am and 9:00 am.
- For stand-alone after school programs, 75% (938) start between 3:00 pm and 3:30 pm and 91% (1,145) end between 5:30 and 6:00 pm.



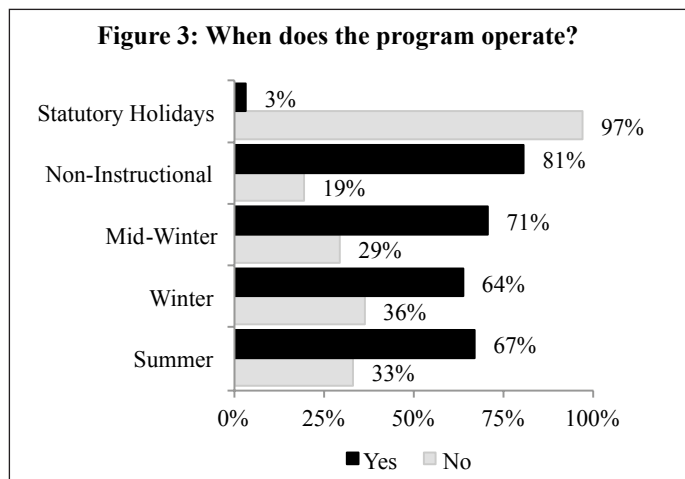
Q3. What is the total number of days the program will operate this year?

Based on 3,356 responses to this question, the median number of days of operation for centre-based programs is 249.

Q4. When does the program operate?

Based on the responses to this question:

- 97% (3,264) do not operate on statutory holidays
- 81% (2,714) operate on non-instructional days
- 71% (2,377) operate during the mid-winter break (March)
- 64% (2,146) operate during the winter break (December-January)
- 67% (2,254) operate during the summer (July-August)



Parent Fees

The questionnaire included questions about child care parent fees. Respondents were asked to indicate how much parents are charged for the provision of child care services based on program type and age group, as of January 1, 2012. The median daily parent fees presented in Table 1 were determined for each age group and by the relevant program type. The approximate 95% confidence interval (CI)⁵ for each median fee is also provided.

Table 1: Provincial Overview of Median¹ Daily Parent Fees, 2012

Program Type²	Infants	Toddlers	Preschool	JK	SK	School Age
Full Day³	\$50.00	\$42.30	\$38.00	\$37.00	\$37.00	
95% CI	\$49.50-\$50.93	\$41.68-\$42.85	\$37.47-\$38.02	\$36.78-\$37.52	\$36.60-\$37.41	
Half Day³	\$30.00	\$27.00	\$25.55	\$25.55	\$25.55	
95% CI	\$29.50-\$31.75	\$26.00-\$27.95	\$25.00-\$26.00	\$25.50-\$26.00	\$25.29-\$26.00	
Before & After School⁴				\$18.22	\$18.25	\$18.02
95% CI				\$18.00-\$18.62	\$18.00-\$19.00	\$18.00-\$18.39
Summer³				\$36.08	\$36.00	\$34.21
95% CI				\$36.00-\$36.58	\$35.68-\$36.57	\$34.00-\$35.00

Notes: (1) The median fees indicate the fee value at which half of the fees lie above it and half below (e.g., based on the responses received for the fee for a full day infant program, half of the fees lie above \$50 and half fall below). (2) The other program types that are not presented above include before school, after school and other programs (e.g. professional development days, statutory holidays and school breaks). (3) Fee includes lunch. (4) Fee does not include lunch. (5) The confidence interval provides a range within which the true median fee will lie if all licensed child care operators were represented. For example, we are 95% sure (confidence level) that the median fee for a full day infant program is between \$49.50 and \$50.93.



Wages

The respondents were asked to provide wage ranges for specific staff categories. The results for minimum and maximum hourly wages are presented in Table 2 using median values. The approximate 95% confidence interval (CI)⁴ for each median wage is also provided. The wage range includes all wage subsidy funding and excludes components such as benefits and vacation pay. The wages were requested for the period effective as of January 1, 2012.

Table 2: Provincial Overview of Median¹ Hourly Wages, 2012

Staff Category	Median Hourly Wages	
	Lowest	Highest
Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE)	\$15.67	\$19.19
95% CI	\$15.50-\$15.99	\$19.05-\$19.40
Non-RECE	\$13.05	\$15.25
95% CI	\$13.00-\$13.18	\$15.00-\$15.44
Supervisor²	\$20.00	\$25.00
95% CI	\$19.71-\$20.00	\$24.75-\$25.00
Administrator³	\$24.92	\$33.65
95% CI	\$24.08-\$24.92	\$32.18-\$35.00
Private Home Day Care Visitor	\$18.19	\$22.70
95% CI	\$17.35-\$19.92	\$20.87-\$23.67
Non-Program Staff	\$13.00	\$16.06
95% CI	\$12.94-\$13.18	\$16.00-\$16.36

Notes: (1) The median wage ranges indicate the wage value at which half the values lie above it and half below (e.g., based on the responses received for the minimum (lowest) wage for RECEs, half of the wages lie above the wage \$15.67 and half below). (2) A supervisor plans and directs the program and is in charge of the children, oversees the staff and is responsible to the operator. (3) An administrator is a senior employee who oversees/manages a licensed child care operation (e.g. he/she may be in charge of human resources, finances, communication and/or policies for the organization). In the case of multi-site child care operators, this person would be responsible for overseeing the organization as a whole, not individual child care centres. (4) The confidence interval provides a range within which the true median wage will lie if all licensed child care operators were represented. For example, we are 95% sure (confidence level) that the lowest median wage for an RECE is between \$15.50 and \$15.99.

Finances

The following section provides a summary of the responses to questions pertaining to reserve funds and whether or not the program has a purchase of service agreement with a child care service system manager (Consolidated Municipal Service Manager, District Social Services Administration Board). A purchase of service agreement is an agreement that a licensed child care operator has entered into with a child care service system manager through which the operator receives subsidy for wages and/or fees.

Q1. *Did your last financial statement include a reserve fund?*

54% (1,878) of licensed child care operators indicated that they have a reserve fund and 46% (1,581) do not. The reserve fund is money an operator has saved over time from its operating budget (e.g. owner's equity or retained earnings).

Q2. *What type of fund is it?*

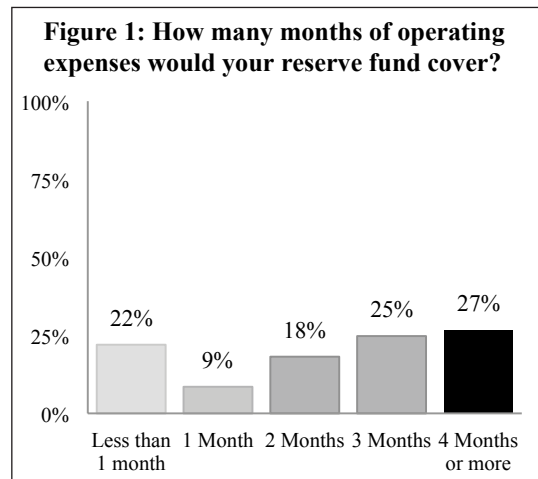
Of the respondents who reported having a reserve fund:

- 38% (717) have a restricted fund. A restricted reserve fund is a surplus or funds set aside for a specific purpose such as capital projects or other special purposes (e.g. paying off a debt, buying playground equipment).
- 46% (856) have an unrestricted reserve fund. An unrestricted reserve fund is a surplus or funds held for a named purpose, but not necessarily restricted to those purposes.
- 16% (305) have both a restricted and unrestricted reserve fund.

Q3. *How many months of operating expenses would your reserve fund cover?*

Of the respondents who reported having a reserve fund:

- 22% (413) have a reserve fund that will cover less than one month of operating expenses
- 9% (160) have a reserve fund that will cover 1 month of operating expenses
- 18% (341) have a reserve fund that will cover 2 months of operating expenses
- 25% (465) have a reserve fund that will cover 3 months of operating expenses
- 27% (499) have a reserve fund that will cover 4 months or more of operating expenses



Q4. *Do you have a purchase of service agreement with a CMSM or a DSSAB?*

80% (2,765) of the respondents indicated that they have a purchase of service agreement with a CMSM/DSSAB and 17% (581) do not. 3% (113) indicated they do not have a purchase of service agreement because the program is First Nation or municipally-operated.