Who's in and who is out: CWELCC and equity

19th Annual Summer Institute on Early Childhood Development

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Nova Scotia is in Mi’kma’ki (MEEG-MA-GEE), the traditional and unceded territory of the Mi’kmaq people.

Population: 1 million people
- Founding cultures: Mi’kmaq, Acadians, African Nova Scotians, and Gaels
- 40% live in rural areas
- Rise in immigrant families

Births: ~8000 per year
- ~1 in 4 children live in poverty
NOVA SCOTIA EARLY LEARNING CONTEXT

- Market-based regulated child care system
  - Fee-for-service offered by private commercial and not-for-profit operators
  - Subsidized through provincial and federal funding (operational grants, capital loans, parent subsidy)

- Publicly delivered Pre-primary Program through the public education system (in or near schools)
  - Targeting children the year before school entry (4 years old)
  - Free to families for the school day with school bus transportation available
  - Before and after programs available in some schools (for a fee)
297 child care centres with infant, toddler, and preschool age groups (including 14 Family home agencies).

252 Pre-primary locations
A case example of child care gaps from a family living in Ingonish, Cape Breton (point A).

- Cape Breton-Canso has historically high rates of poverty

To access child care, travel is ~1.5 hrs to Cheticamp (point B) or ~1.2 hrs to Baddeck (point C)

To access Pre-primary, travel is ~25 minutes

*Please note this map does not include day home centres
Increased access through a publicly delivered program

- In 2020-21, over 6000 children were enrolled in the Pre-primary Program at 252 school locations, representing about 73% of eligible children (based on a projected cohort for Grade Primary in 2021-22).

Source: Early Childhood Education Report [http://ecereport.ca](http://ecereport.ca)
Source: One Chance to be a Child [https://www.onechancens.ca/](https://www.onechancens.ca/)
Nova Scotia Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (Announced Jan 2022)

• A new provincial organization to manage child care
• Prioritization of not-for-profit care
• Action plan focused on:
  ○ Affordability (lower parent fees)
  ○ Accessiblity (additional spaces)
  ○ Quality and Inclusion
  ○ Compensation of early childhood educators
Early response on CWELCC
## Current focus in highlighted goals

Affordability
Child care fees reduced, on average, by 50% by December 2022.
Pay $10 a day, on average, per child in child care by 2026.

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<th>Affordability</th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
<th>Workforce</th>
<th>Provincial organization</th>
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<td>9,500 new early learning and child care spaces will open by March 31, 2026.</td>
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<td>Enhanced before and after care options for 3-5-year-olds using schools and school resources.</td>
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https://childcarenovascotia.ca/#highlights
Achieving equity in the path ahead

- There is a need to critically examine and address the socioeconomic and geographical disparities to build an equitable early childhood system
  - Market-driven model creates inequitable access to child care for families
  - There is an opportunity to expand upon existing publicly funded systems to enhance access equity to early learning and child care