



Military Family Services  
National Capital Region

Childcare in Québec

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## Overview of the childcare system in Québec

### Types of Childcare

- **Centre de la petite enfance (CPE)** – A licensed non-profit daycare centre. CPEs have government funding and offer subsidized places. Governed by a **Board of Directors** composed of parents, educators, and community members, ensuring a community-focused approach to childcare. **Early Childhood Centres (CPEs) and subsidized daycares** use an automated referral system to assign childcare spaces. Referrals are prioritized by the date care is required, not by the date of portal registry.
- **Garderie subventionnée** – A licensed private or community daycare that receives government subsidizes. These also charge the same low daily fee (\$9–10) based on family income.
- **Garderie non subventionnée** – A licensed private daycare with little/no subsidy (fees can be \$25–\$60/day).
- **Milieu familial (garderie en milieu familial)** – A licensed or unlicensed home-based daycare (often in the educator’s home) that may be subsidized.
- **Private Caregivers** may offer their services independently, or work through an agency. Many advertise their services within community or neighborhood Facebook groups.

**Non-subsidized daycares and home-based childcare providers** manage their own waitlists and may choose which children they admit. You can therefore contact them directly to check availability or respond to their advertisements outside of the portal. However, please note that **your child must still be registered on the Childcare Registration Portal in order to be admitted.**

- **Before and after school care.** Some schools offer before and after school care.

## Step 1 - Considerations

### Budget and affordability

- All centers are subsidized either directly or indirectly through the provincial refundable [Tax Credit for Childcare Expenses | Revenu Québec \(revenuquebec.ca\)](#). Informal care can also garner tax credits with the appropriate receipts.
- Reduced Contribution Regulation  
Directly subsidized care takes place through the Reduced Contribution Regulation program which enables families to access child care from \$8.35- \$20 a day depending on your family's income.
- Parents with children attending non-subsidized child care are entitled to a refundable tax credit for all child care expenses between 26% - 75% of the eligible child care expenses paid, depending on your family income.

### Types of Curriculum

Every childcare facility offers a certain type of curriculum. Look for curriculums that align with your family values and your child's needs and interests. For military families, it can be helpful to choose a program that promotes emotional stability, adaptability to change, and the development of confidence.

**Montessori:** emphasizes independence, hands-on learning, and a child-centered environment to foster holistic development.

**Universal:** A play-based learning system that focuses on inclusivity.

**Reggio-Emilia:** rooted in child-centered, inquiry-based learning with a focus on nurturing learning environments and community involvement.

**Waldorf:** focused on imagination, creativity, and balanced development of the head, heart, and hands (thinking, feeling, and doing).

**Forest:** focused on learning through practical, hands-on experiences in an outdoor setting.

## Location Preferences

- Consider if childcare would be most advantageous close to home or close to work. Look into options that will ease commute times and family schedules.
- If your younger child has an older sibling, is there childcare available in or near the school they attend?

## Hours Required

- Be sure to check the opening and closing hours of childcare options you are considering. Many centres will fine parents who are late to pick up.
- If you have a more unpredictable work schedule, seek out care providers who may offer some flexibility.
- If you are planning to grow your family, it may be worth asking providers if they will prioritize siblings of children in care in the future.
- Check your school board's and school's daily schedule as many vary by small increments which can affect your ability to drop your child off on time, or align with other commitments. Pending these schedules you may need to seek out before or after care.

## Step 2 - Finding Childcare and Registering for Waitlists

- Childcare services locator:

[Carte interactive des services de garde](#)

- Search for home-based childcare:

[Ma Garderie - Services de garde - Québec, Montréal, Laval, etc.](#)

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- All childcare spaces must be secured through the Childcare Services Portal:  
[Access the New Registration Portal for Parents | Gouvernement du Québec](#)
  - To access the portal, you must first authenticate your identity.

[Government Authentication Service | Gouvernement du Québec](#)

To authenticate and gain access to the portal, you will need:

- A Québec health insurance card, valid or expired
- A notice of assessment or a valid mailing address to which a confidential code can be sent by mail
- A valid driver's license and social insurance number

**\*It is possible to authenticate in person at a SAAQ service centre with a Québec health insurance card, valid or expired, and two of the following documents:**

- A valid passport
- Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) identity card
- Birth certificate

**\*\*If you do not have the required authentication documents, call the number below to be added to Childcare Services Portal waitlists in one particular neighborhood of interest.**

**• 1-855-336-8568**

Have ready:

- Scanned copies of your children’s birth certificates
- A list of preferred childcare centres or a postal code
- The address of your military posting
- Your desired childcare start date

### Steps:

1. Call and request **“the telephone pathway to open a family file on the portal.”**
2. If challenged, explain that Service Québec advised you to register by phone because you’re currently ineligible for Government ID. You may also note your military affiliation and that this option was recommended.
3. Provide the required information and your verbal consent.

### Important notes:

- This process adds your children to the list but does not provide access to the online portal.
- Children must be born to be registered.
- Without portal access, you must contact an agent to:
  - Follow up on your request
  - Check your status (rank indicator)
  - Update information or childcare needs
  - Declare a new birth

### Next steps:

Once settled, register for Government Authentication through Service Québec. After gaining access to the online portal, call an agent to merge your telephone file with your online account.

## Private Caregivers :

[Trusted Babysitter and Nanny services in Canada | CanadianNanny.ca](#)  
[Babysitters, Nannies, Childcare and Home Care - Care.com](#)

## Before and After School Care:

[Western Quebec English school board \(westernquebec.ca\)](#)

[Centre de services scolaire des Draveurs \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#)

[Centre de services scolaire au Cœur-des-Vallées \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#)

[Centre de services scolaire des Hauts-Bois-de-l'Outaouais \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#)

[Centre de services scolaire des Portages-de-l'Outaouais \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#)

## Step 3 - Visiting Childcare Centres

Questions to ask about the childcare centre/provider:

\*Many centres will provide an introductory manual that may answer many of the questions below.

- What is your transition process when a child starts child care for the first time? How do you transition children into different age groups?
- Do you follow a curriculum? What does your daily schedule look like?
- What is your educator to child ratio? (Early Childhood Educator to child ratios are 0-17m 1:5, 18m-4yrs 1:8, 4yrs-5yrs 1:10, 5yrs+ 1:20.)
- Are all your educators registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators? Do the staff have appropriate and up to date first aid and CPR training?
- What does your cleaning schedule look like? (If you drop by unannounced, you will get a good sense of how strict that routine is.)

- What is your immunization protocol?
- What is included in the monthly fees? What is not included?
- What happens when the child care provider is sick?
- What is the policy and procedure if my child is sick?

**Questions to ask about parent/provider communication:**

- How will you communicate with me regarding my child's successes and/or challenges during the day? (ex: daily communication book)
- What is your policy and procedure regarding escalation of concerns/issues (by either the parent or the child care centre/provider)?
- What is your policy or procedure should I decide to withdraw my child from the child care centre/provider?
- Under what circumstances or criteria would you no longer be able to support my child in attending the child care centre/provider? What is your policy?

**To Note:**

- Are there working smoke detectors? Are there emergency exits? Are recent emergency and lockdown plans posted?
- Do they use safety gates? Are the outlets covered?
- Did you feel welcome and invited into the environment?
- Is there natural light in the space? (This can do wonders for a child's mood.)
- Were children happy and engaged in the program?
- Did you leave feeling confident that your child would be well cared for at this facility?

Parents and Caregivers of a child with complex needs have additional factors to consider when finding suitable and appropriate care for their child(ren).

You may wish to consider writing an “All About Me” or “One-Page Profile” about your child to provide to the child care centre/provider. This document usually includes information about your child’s qualities and strengths; his/her likes and dislikes, what is important to your child and how best to support your child. It is important to be positive and realistic about your child’s care needs.

## Additional Information to Consider When Seeking Care for a Child With Complex Needs

General questions to ask about the childcare centre/provider:

- Does the childcare centre/provider have an inclusion policy?
- Do any of the staff have specific education, training, qualifications or previous work experience related to children with complex needs?
- What additional resources or partnerships are available to the childcare centre/provider in order to support a child with complex needs?
- What accommodations are possible to ensure individualized care specific to my child’s needs?
- Does the childcare centre/provider incorporate any particular models of practice or evidence-based approaches within their curriculum and learning environment?
- Does the center allow a transition period for integration?

### Questions to ask about specialist services:

- My child is currently undergoing a specialist assessment. Can the specialist observe my child within the child care environment for the purposes of the assessment?
- Can my child access their therapies (such as SLP, OT, ABA therapy) at the childcare centre/provider location? Can my child's therapist provide individualized therapy within the child care environment?
- What specialized equipment and/or items is the childcare centre/provider currently equipped with (ex: toileting, feeding, seating, sensory-related etc.)?
- Can I provide the childcare centre/provider with my child's own specific equipment and/or items to be used within the child care environment that will remain solely for my child's use?
- Do you currently work with Children's Inclusion Support Services (CISS)?

### Questions to ask about your child's needs:

- My child has food-related sensory aversions/intolerances or follows a special diet. Can I provide my child with their own snacks and lunch?
- My child is non-verbal. What communication tools and strategies do you use that encourage and help develop communication skills?
- My child has a history of wandering. What safety measures are in place to ensure my child's safety, both indoors and outdoors?

- My child has behavioural challenges. How do you support children who have behavioural needs? What strategies are implemented if my child's behavioural challenges escalate?
- My child requires specific medication/treatment. Are you able to administer this medication/treatment? What education or training would be required for staff to be able to do so?
- My child has difficulty in engaging with peers and needs help with socialization. How do you encourage socialization? What strategies or approaches do you implement?

## Specialized Services

- The CISSSO (Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux de l'Outaouais) offers two intervention programs for children with an autism spectrum disorder or intellectual disability within the daycare setting:
  - Intensive Early Intervention (IEI) in child care settings for children between ages 2 and 5 with an intellectual disability.
  - Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI) in child care settings for children between ages 2 and 5 with an autism spectrum disorder.[Liste des installations - CISSS de l'Outaouais \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#)
- **Daycare Services for Children with Complex Needs** - Connexions Resource Centre is a not-for-profit community organization serving the English-speaking population of the Outaouais.  
[Special Needs | Connexions Resource Centre \(centreconnexions.org\)](#)
- **Childcare Services Accessible to Disabled Children** – Ministère de la Famille (Québec): [Childcare services accessible to disabled children \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#)
- **Military Family Services (MFS NCR)**– MFS NCR has various supports and resources for families related to complex needs such as a sensory lending library, partnerships with community specialists, and navigation of potential financial supports. [CFMWS | MFS | NCR | CFMWS](#)

