

## The Early Childhood Development Initiative

The Early Childhood Development Initiative (ECDI) is a federal, provincial and territorial agreement to improve and expand supports and services for children and families.

Nova Scotia's Early Childhood Development Initiative brings together a range of services delivered to children in the early years, from birth to age five. ECDI programs and services fall under four main pillars of support:

- **Promote healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy**
- **Improve parenting and family supports**
- **Strengthen early child development, learning and care**
- **Strengthen community supports**

Funding for early childhood development programs is provided by the Early Childhood Development Initiative, the Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care and the Province of Nova Scotia.

For more information about Nova Scotia's early childhood development programs, visit [www.gov.ns.ca](http://www.gov.ns.ca).

Quality child care offers a happy and safe environment, nutritious food, and an abundance of opportunities for active learning and play.



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# Quality & Inclusive Child Care

Your Child's Gateway to Healthy Growth and Development



*Building strong, healthy communities together*

Our Children...Today's Investment, Tomorrow's Promise

## Quality & Inclusive Child Care

The care that a child receives in the early years can positively affect their development and success in later life.

Quality child care supports the development of physical, language, social, emotional and intellectual skills of children, while assisting the family in its child rearing role.

Inclusive child care encourages the participation of children with special needs in their community child care program. Children with special needs are able to interact with their peer group and receive the supports that will encourage successful early learning experiences.

Within a quality program, children develop confidence, creativity, coordination, problem-solving abilities and healthy relationships with others by actively exploring their environment through play.

## Types of Care Available

Nova Scotia regulates child care facilities under the authority of the Day Care Act and Regulations. The Day Care Act and Regulations follow standards for health, safety and programming from birth to age 12. The following child care options may be available to families in Nova Scotia:

### • Licensed/Regulated Child Care

Child care centres are licensed to care for children from birth to age 12. These programs can be licensed for either full- or part-time care.

### • Family Child Care

Family Child Care services are licensed to ensure affiliate homes meet standards.

### • Unlicensed/Unregulated Child Care

Individuals can provide care in their home for a maximum of six children of any age or a maximum of eight children of school age without being licensed under the Day Care Act and Regulations. Day Care Act Regulations may be found at <http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/dayregs.htm>.

## What to look for when choosing Quality & Inclusive Child Care:

Parents will want to consider a number of elements of a quality child care program.

### Developmentally Appropriate Program

- ✓ activities that are age appropriate and planned with the interests of the individual child and the group in mind
- ✓ materials and equipment that are age appropriate

### Qualified Early Childhood Educators

- ✓ educators have experience, knowledge and expertise in the area of early childhood development

### Responsive Adult/Child Interactions

- ✓ educators who provide a warm, respectful environment for children

### Educator Consistency

- ✓ low staff turnover that ensures program stability

### Adult-Child Ratios

- ✓ the number of educators providing care and learning opportunities are adequate to respond to the needs of the group at all times

### Appropriate Group Size

- ✓ Group size is maintained according to requirements of the Day Care Act and Regulations

### Family Involvement

- ✓ programs welcome and encourage the family to participate in the child's early education and care

### Bias Free

- ✓ programs recognize and respect the diverse needs and value systems of children and their families

### Full Participation

- ✓ regardless of their ability children fully participate in all program activities

## Nova Scotia Supports Quality & Inclusive Child Care

Quality and inclusive child care is supported through the Early Childhood Development Initiative, the Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care and funding from the Province of Nova Scotia.

## Contact Information for Provincial Regional District Offices:

### EASTERN REGION

Sydney District Office. . . . . (902) 563-3300

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### NORTHERN REGION

Truro District Office. . . . . (902) 893-5950

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### CENTRAL REGION

Halifax District Office . . . . . (902) 424-6679

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### WESTERN REGION

Yarmouth District Office . . . . . (902) 742-0722

Lunenburg District Office . . . . . (902) 543-5527

Kings District Office. . . . . (902) 678-6176

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