

Military Family Services  
National Capital Region



Choosing Childcare in Gatineau

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## OVERVIEW OF THE CHILD CARE SYSTEM IN GATINEAU AND AREA

There are five types of child care:

1. Licensed or unlicensed facility
2. Part time care such as a preschool or nursery school
3. Have a caregiver come into your home
4. Drop your child off to a child care provider
5. Before and/or after school care.

### Reduced-fee centers (1)

These are usually non-profit and Commercial full-fee centers are for-profit. With reduced fee centres, wait lists can be up to two years. Commercial full-fee centers are usually faster to get a spot. All centers are subsidized either directly through the child care with reduced-fees or indirectly through the provincial refundable Tax Credit for Childcare Expenses | Revenu Québec ([revenuquebec.ca](http://revenuquebec.ca)) Non-parental informal care can also get tax credits with the appropriate receipts. Informal care can also get tax credits with the appropriate receipts.

### Preschools and nursery schools (2)

offer part time care and can prepare your children to enter the school system. They teach various skills such as socialization and early literacy.

### Homecare Provider (3 & 4)

To search for a homecare provider whether it's to have a provider enter your home or bring your children to a provider's home, go to: [Ma Garderie - Services de garde - Québec, Montréal, Laval, etc.](#)

### Before and after school care (5)

Some schools (through a third party provider), City of Ottawa community centres as well as homecare providers offer before and after school care. To search for a City of Ottawa community centre to inquire if they have before and after school care, go to: [Place listing | City of Ottawa](#)

To search for a school to see if they have before and after school care offered by a third party provider, families can search on the school board sites for the school they are enrolling their child in to inquire if they offer care.

- French public school board: <https://cepeo.on.ca>
- French catholic school board: [Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est \(CECCE\) \(ecolecatholique.ca\)](http://Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est (CECCE) (ecolecatholique.ca))
- Western Quebec English school board: [Western Québec School Board - Home \(westernquebec.ca\)](http://Western Québec School Board - Home (westernquebec.ca))

*The ultimate child care centre will be safe, inspiring, and fun. It will teach kids the basics of life, turning them into confident and intelligent individuals. It is crucial that parents and childcare providers are on the same page, to guarantee expectations can be met.*

*Please contact us at [mfsncr@cfmws.com](mailto:mfsncr@cfmws.com) for more information or if you have any questions.*

## Step 1 - Things to Consider

### Budgeting

#### Affordability

Will you be able to pay for the full child care tuition yourselves and apply for a tax rebate at the end of the year or do you need reduced contribution regulation?

#### Reduced Contribution Regulation

Reduced Contribution Regulation is a program you can apply for to receive child care from \$8.35- \$20 a day depending on your family's income.

### Types of Curriculum

Every child care facility offers a certain type of curriculum that will follow their philosophy. Finding the best curriculum for your family and your child's needs is important as it will promote maximum learning and ensure the best education.

#### Montessori

A form of education for young children that seeks to develop natural interests and activities, rather than use formal teaching methods.

#### Universal

A play-based learning system, essentially, to learn while at play.

#### Reggio-Emilia

Student-centered and constructivist pedagogy that uses self-directed, experiential learning in relationship-driven environments.

#### Waldorf

Allowing children to learn by example, and opportunities for imaginative play.

#### Forest

Allows learners the time and space to develop their interests, skills, and understanding through practical, hands-on experiences in an outdoor setting.

## Location and Timing Preferences

- Location: Are you seeking child care close to home or work?
- Hours: Which centres open early, close late, overnight, part-time, full-time or weekends?

## Step 2 - Finding Child Care and Registering for Waitlists

### Resources to Find Child Care in Gatineau

- Home-based child care search: [Ma Garderie - Services de garde - Québec, Montréal, Laval, etc.](#)
- Child care Establishment Locator: [Childcare Establishment Locator \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#)
- Reduced Contribution Program: [Reduced Contribution Program \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#)

### Tips

1. To receive the reduced contribution for child care, you must fill out the application to ensure you are eligible.
2. There are some for-profit centres that are not part of the reduced contribution program; a rebate from the Quebec government is available to parents using these centres.
3. Parents with children attending non-subsidized child care are entitled to a refundable tax credit for all child care expenses that can reimburse between 26% - 75% of the eligible child care expenses paid, depending on your family income.

## Step 3 - Visiting Child Care Centres

### Questions to Ask About the Child Care Centre/Provider

- What is your transition process when a child starts child care for the first time, between routines as well as when transitioning age groups?
- Do you follow a curriculum plan?
- What does your daily schedule look like?
- Do you do any kind of progress reports and if so, how often are they completed/updated?
- How do you keep the parents informed about the child's day?
- What is your educator to child ratio? (The Ministry of the Family states that the maximum ECE to child ratios are 0-17m 1:5, 18m-4yrs 1:8, 4yrs-5yrs 1:10, 5yrs+ 1:20.)
- What is your turnover rate with staff?
- Are all your educators registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators?
- Would my child and I be able to stay for a little while to get a sense of how they interact with the space/staff?
- What does your cleaning schedule look like? (Regular and frequent cleaning is a must. If you drop by unannounced, you will get a good sense of how strict that routine is.)
- Do the staff have appropriate and up to date first aid and CPR training?
- What is your immunization protocol?
- Do you have posted emergency and lockdown plans?
- What is included in the monthly fees?
- 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 experienced during the day? (ex: daily communication book, Hi Mama, Storypark)
- What is your policy on communicating any observations and concerns about a child's development with parents?
- Do you assist with referrals to service providers and/or specialists in the community?
- 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?

## Questions to Ask About Transition to School

- What supports are offered to help my child transition from child care to the school system and environment?
- Do you assist parents with developing and implementing a transition plan from child care to school?

## To Be Noted

- Are there working smoke detectors? Are the emergency exits?
- Do they use safety gates? Are the outlets covered?
- Did you feel welcome and invited into the environment?
- Did you feel that the staff have positive attitudes towards you and your child? Was the classroom fun and welcoming?
- Do they have natural light? (Natural light can do wonders for a child's mood.)
- Were documents or art on the walls recent and/or up to date?
- Were children happy and engaged in the program?
- Did you leave feeling confident that your child would be well cared for at this facility?

## Additional Information to Consider When Choosing Child Care for a Child with Complex Needs

### General Questions to Ask About the Child Care Centre/Provider

- Does the child care centre/provider have an inclusion policy?
- Do any of the staff have specific education, training, qualifications or previous work experience in providing child care to a child with complex needs?
- Is the child care centre/provider willing to obtain additional training or education and/or support and resources to appropriately care for my child?
- What additional resources and support are available to the child care centre/provider in providing support to a child with complex needs?
- What accommodations are available for my child at the child care centre/provider that will ensure individualized care specific to my child's needs?
- Does the child care 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?

*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.*

## 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 his/her therapies (such as SLP, OT, and ABA therapy) at the child care centre/provider location? Can my child's therapist provide his/her individualized therapy within the child care environment?
- What specialized equipment and/or items is the child care centre/provider currently equipped with (ex: toileting, feeding, seating, sensory-related etc.)?
- Can I provide the childcare/provider with my child's own specific equipment and/or items to be used within the child care environment that will remain solely for use by my child?

## 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 his/her own snacks and lunch?
- My child is non-verbal. What communication tools and strategies do you use that encourage and help develop communication abilities to support children who are non-verbal?
- My child has a history of wandering/eloping. What safety measures are in place to ensure my child's safety (both in indoor and outdoor spaces)?
- My child has behavioural challenges. How do you support children who have behavioural needs? What support or strategies are provided/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 administer/provide the medication/treatment?
- 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?

## FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT AND SERVICES

### 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) episode in child care settings for children aged between 2 and 5 with an intellectual disability.

Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI) episode in child care settings for children aged between 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 has a page on their website regarding 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. [CFMWS | MFS | NCR | CFMWS](#)



NOTES: