



# Childcare in Québec, Featuring Dr. Sophie Mathieu

## Video Transcript

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### **[Words on the screen: Dr. Sophie Mathieu]**

Now that the Canadian government really wants to create its childcare network, what are some of the lessons that should be drawn from the Québec experience? Well, the first lesson is really that nonprofit centers offer the highest quality of care.

The second lesson is that the demand will increase very rapidly if you offer affordable childcare and this is what happened in Québec—the supply has never been able to meet the demand.<sup>1</sup> Although we have a high proportion of children within childcare centers, parents are still struggling to find a childcare space.

### **Affordability**

Québec has a system; it has a network of childcare services. It's highly affordable. It only costs \$8.70 per day for two snacks, 10 hours of care, and a lunch.

### **[Words on the screen: \$8.70]**

A few years after the Québec childcare network was implemented, it was estimated that an additional 70,000 mothers joined the labor market, because they could rely on childcare services.<sup>2</sup>

### **Quality**

#### **[Words on the screen: 1. Non-profit CPE]**

All childcare centers are not equal, however, and some offer higher quality of service.<sup>3</sup> CPEs—CPE means Centres de la petite enfance (CPE) — are the childcare centers that offer the highest quality of care.

#### **[Words on the screen: 2. Subsidized, for-profit garderies]**

The services that are provided by for-profit centers are the same as the CPE—offered at the same cost—but the quality of care is typically not as good. For instance, in for-profit

garderie, the ratio of trained childcare workers is not as high as the ratio that we find in the CPE.

### **[Words on the screen: 3. Unsubsidized, for-profit garderies]**

And then the third type of childcare is the un-subsidized garderie, and the price for a childcare space in an un-subsidized garderie, that is also for-profit, can range anywhere between \$30 to \$40, \$50, \$60 per day. Some parents have to rely on non-subsidized, for-profit garderie because they're unable to find a childcare space that is offered at \$8.70 per day. They're entitled to a tax return that they can rely on to help them pay for their childcare expense.

## **Accessibility**

Currently, there are at least 51,000 children that are waiting to have access to a childcare space.<sup>4</sup> Since 2003, there has been a high increase in the number of childcare spaces that are provided by un-subsidized childcare centers that are for-profit.<sup>5</sup> There are only 33% of children in Québec that have the opportunity to attend a CPE that offers the highest quality of care.<sup>6</sup>

It's good to be a parent in Québec. We have great parental benefits and, for many of us, once our parental benefits are finished, we have a childcare space.

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<sup>1</sup> Cleveland, G., Mathieu, S., & Japel, C. (2021, February 18). *What is "the Quebec model" of early learning and child care?* Policy Options. <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/february-2021/what-is-the-quebec-model-of-early-learning-and-child-care/>

<sup>2</sup> Fortin, P., Godbout, L., & St-Cerny, S. (2022). L'impact des services de garde à contribution réduite du Québec sur le taux d'activité féminin, le revenu intérieur et les budgets gouvernementaux [The Impact of Quebec's Low-Cost Child Care on Women's Participation Rates, Domestic Income and Government Budgets]. *Interventions économiques / Papers in Political Economy*. <https://journals.openedition.org/interventionseconomiques/>

<sup>3</sup> Japel, C., Tremblay, R. & Côté, S. (13 December, 2022). Quality Counts!: Assessing the Quality of Daycare Services Based on the Quebec Longitudinal Study of Child Development. *IIRP Choices*, 11(5). <https://irpp.org/research-studies/quality-counts/>

<sup>4</sup> Ministère de la Famille (2021). *Major initiative for families : action plan to complete the educational childcare services network*. Gouvernement du Québec. <https://numerique.banq.gc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/4462426>

<sup>5</sup> Cleveland, G., Mathieu, S. & Japel, C. (2021, February 18). *What is "the Quebec model" of early learning and child care?* Policy Options. <https://policyoptions.irpp.org/magazines/february-2021/what-is-the-quebec-model-of-early-learning-and-child-care/>

<sup>6</sup> Whitehurst, G. (9 March, 2017). Why the federal government should subsidize childcare and how to pay for it. *Economic Studies at Brookings*, 2(11). [https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/es\\_20170309\\_whitehurst\\_evidence\\_speaks3.pdf](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/es_20170309_whitehurst_evidence_speaks3.pdf)

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