

More N.L. families to qualify for child care subsidy ^[1]

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More families in Newfoundland and Labrador will get help with child care expenses, as the provincial government bumps up the income threshold for the first time in a decade.

Starting June 1, a family with an annual income of \$32,000 or less will qualify for a full or partial subsidy.

That compares with the previous threshold of \$27,500 which has been unchanged since 2007.

The subsidy is available to families with children in a licensed day care centre or a regulated home-based child care setting.

"More families with low to middle incomes will have access to crucial supports," said Dale Kirby, minister of education and early childhood development.

The change, which took effect Thursday, was announced in the 2017 provincial budget and will cost \$2 million.

"The previous administration did a reasonably good job of building spaces, building access if you will, but we're trying to do catch-up now in other areas like affordability," Kirby said.

He said the province has committed to increasing the wages paid to child care workers, and an agreement to be signed in July with the federal government will also provide more money for child care.

"We have a distance to go if we want to be a leader in the provision of early learning and care in Newfoundland and Labrador, but these new initiatives will help a lot."

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