

The Government of Canada and the Government of Prince Edward Island sign a bilateral agreement on early learning and child care ^[1]

New supports for infants, pre-schoolers, children whose parents work seasonally or non-standard hours

Author: Newswire

Source: Newswire

Format: Article

Publication Date: 28 Aug 2017

AVAILABILITY

Read online ^[2]

EXCERPTS

CHARLOTTETOWN, PEI, Aug. 29, 2017 /CNW/ - The Government of Canada is making significant investments in early learning and child care systems to improve the lives of Canadian children and their families. Today, the Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, and the Honourable Doug Currie, Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture for Prince Edward Island, reached a three-year bilateral agreement that reaffirms their commitment and support of the unique early learning and child care needs of Prince Edward Island.

The agreement allocates \$10.5 million, over three years, to Prince Edward Island for early learning and child care investments. The Island's funding focus will be on early learning and child care access for vulnerable children such as infants, pre-schoolers, children whose parents work seasonally or non-standard hours, and under-served populations including Newcomer families and Acadian and French speaking communities. Funding will also be directed towards professional training for early learning and care educators with the aim of improving the quality and richness of experiences for children.

This announcement follows a historic agreement made on June 12 by Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers Responsible for Early Learning and Child Care on a Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework. The Framework sets the foundation for governments to work towards a shared long-term vision where all children across Canada can experience the enriching environment of quality early learning and child care. The Framework principles include increasing the quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility and inclusivity of early learning and child care, with consideration for families that need child care the most.

The bilateral agreement is another step to help ensure that Prince Edward Island's children get the best start in life and have the opportunity to reach their full potential. It is supported by long-term Government of Canada investments in early learning and child care announced in Budgets 2016 and 2017, totalling \$7.5 billion over 11 years.

Quotes

"The development of early learning and child care systems is one of the best investments our government is making to strengthen Canadian families, society and the economy. Our combined efforts with the Government of Prince Edward Island will demonstrate concrete and progressive results for the children who need it most." ^[3]

- The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development

"Prince Edward Island's early learning and child care system is a world leader in part because of our high standards, access, certified early childhood educators and provincial curriculum. When we invest in our 0-4 year olds and their families, we are making essential investments in the future of our whole province." ^[4]

- The Honourable Doug Currie, Minister of Education, Early Learning and Culture for Prince Edward Island

Quick Facts

- Federal Budgets 2016 and 2017 proposed to invest \$7.5 billion over 11 years, starting in 2017-2018, to support and create more high-quality, affordable child care spaces across the country, particularly for families more in need. Of this investment:
 - \$95 million will go towards closing data gaps to better understand what child care looks like in Canada and track progress;
 - \$100 million will go towards early learning and child care innovation; and
 - a portion will be dedicated to strengthening culturally appropriate early learning and child care for Indigenous children.
- The federal government will work with each province and territory to enter into three-year bilateral agreements that will address the

early learning and child care needs unique to its jurisdiction and funding allocation.

- Through the bilateral agreements, the Government of Canada will provide provinces and territories with \$1.2 billion over the next three years for early learning and child care programs. Governments will report annually on progress made in relation to the Framework and bilateral agreements.
- Bilateral investments in Prince Edward Island will support significant investments in the next generation of Islanders, including:
 - expanded spaces, particularly infant spaces;
 - support for children with unique needs and vulnerable families who can benefit the most from high quality learning and child care; and
 - responding to the longstanding needs of Island families who have seasonal jobs or work shiftwork.
- The Government of Prince Edward Island currently invests \$11.4 million in early childhood programs and services and \$1.5 million in Early Years Autism Services, funding 45 designated Early Years Centres.
- There are currently 139 licensed programs in PEI, including 45 Early Years Centres, 26 early childhood centres, nine preschool centres, one family home centre and 58 school-age centres.

Associated Links

Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework ^[3]

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Backgrounder - CANADA-PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE AGREEMENT

On June 12, 2017, Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers Responsible for Early Learning and Child Care signed a Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework. This is a significant milestone in which governments agree to work together to address some of the key early learning and child care issues across the country.

Governments will work towards achieving the shared long-term vision of the Framework where all children across Canada can experience the enriching environment of quality early learning and child care. They have committed to increase the quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility and inclusivity of early learning and child care with consideration for families that need child care the most.

The implementation of this framework, and a separate Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework to be co-developed with Indigenous peoples, is supported by federal investments announced in Budgets 2016 and 2017, totaling \$7.5 billion over 11 years. Through bilateral agreements, the Government of Canada will provide provinces and territories with \$1.2 billion over three years that outline the unique early learning and child care needs that will be addressed and funding allocation for each jurisdiction.

The Governments of Canada and Prince Edward Island have signed an early learning and child care bilateral agreement. Through this three-year bilateral agreement, the Government of Prince Edward Island will receive \$10.5 million for investments towards expanding spaces (particularly infant spaces), supporting children with unique needs and vulnerable families who can benefit the most from high-quality learning and care and responding to the longstanding needs of Island families who have seasonal jobs or work shiftwork.

By the end of the three-year agreement, this funding will:

- increase access for under-served children and children who are more vulnerable, including infants, preschoolers, children whose parents work non-standard hours and/or seasonally and children in newcomer families;
- increase early learning and child care supports for the more vulnerable children, including children with unique abilities and children in Acadian and Francophone communities; and
- increase the quality of early learning and child care experiences provided to children from staff by offering training supports to early learning and child care staff.

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Related link: Ottawa boosts P.E.I.'s child care budget ^[5]

Region: Prince Edward Island ^[6]

Tags: federalism ^[7]

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