

# Press Release: Government of Canada and Government of Nova Scotia are making early learning and child care more accessible and affordable for Nova Scotian families <sup>[1]</sup>

Governments sign a bilateral agreement

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## AVAILABILITY

Read online <sup>[2]</sup>

## EXCERPTS

The governments of Canada and Nova Scotia are making significant investments in early learning and child care systems so that each and every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential. Today, the Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, the Honourable Stephen McNeil, Premier of Nova Scotia, and the Honourable Zach Churchill, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development for Nova Scotia, announced a bilateral agreement. The agreement reaffirms their commitment to children's development, helping parents with the rising costs of raising children, and addressing the unique early learning and child care needs of Nova Scotian families, including Acadian and Francophone families.

The agreement allocates just over \$35 million, over three years, towards quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility and inclusivity of early learning and child care, with consideration for families that need child care the most. This includes investments in:

- Making child care more accessible and affordable for Nova Scotian families
- Supporting quality through workforce development
- Imbedding inclusion in early learning and child care environments

This announcement follows a historic agreement, made on June 12, 2017 by the 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 bilateral agreement is another step to help ensure that Nova Scotian children get the best start in life and 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. Through the agreement signed with the Government of Nova Scotia, we will be able to better support parents, families and communities in their efforts to build a high-quality, inclusive and affordable early learning and child care."*

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

*"We want to strengthen our child care system so that children in Nova Scotia can access the high-quality care we know can make a difference in their lives. This funding agreement allows us to strengthen our workforce, expand access to child care—especially to underserved communities—and increase supports toward building more inclusive child care environments."*

– The Honourable Stephen McNeil, Premier of Nova Scotia

## Quick Facts

- Federal Budgets 2016 and 2017 proposed to invest \$7.5 billion over 11 years, starting in 2017–18, to support and create more high-quality, affordable child care across the country, particularly for families more in need. Of this investment:

- \$95 million will go towards closing data gaps to better understand child care challenges and needs 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 is working 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.
- The action plan identifies key priority areas for investment, over three years, aligning with the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework. They are:
  - Making child care more accessible for Nova Scotian families. Targets for the creation of new child care spaces include but are not limited to:
    - 15 new regulated child care centres in communities that demonstrate need;
    - 500 new regulated spaces; half to be in rural and/or vulnerable communities;
    - 35 percent increase in the number of family home day care sites, with 50 percent of those spaces designated for infant care.
  - Making child care more affordable by reducing costs for 1,600 children, saving Nova Scotian families approximately \$5 million annually.
  - Supporting quality early learning and child care through workforce development.
  - Strengthening early learning and child care facilities to provide support for all children, regardless of their abilities, to participate actively within their community.

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#### Related link:

**Region:** Nova Scotia <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** inclusion <sup>[4]</sup>

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