

Liberal child care commitment will be made permanent ^[1]

Author: Liberal Party of Canada

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AVAILABILITY

See text and link below.

Press release in html ^[2]

Text of the press release:

The Liberal government will make its commitment to early learning and child care permanent, Prime Minister Paul Martin announced today during a visit to the YMCA childcare facility in St. John, New Brunswick.

"This is about making affordable child care a permanent addition to our social foundation. It's about making clear that this program is here to stay & because it's right for Canadian families, and it's what's right for our children," said the Prime Minister. "We are investing in the Canadians of tomorrow, in a progressive social policy that will help our children enter school ready to succeed."

To this end, a Liberal government will invest at least an additional \$6-billion to finance the program through to 2015, providing provinces and territories with the certainty they need to expand their investments. This means that, after the initial five-year funding agreement concludes, ongoing funding of \$1.2 billion per year will be provided to provinces and territories.

Furthermore, child care spaces will be made an eligible area of investment when the government renews pertinent infrastructure programs, such as the strategic infrastructure fund and the municipal rural infrastructure fund. This will provide the capital required to ensure our children have the child care they need.

This builds on the commitment we made as part of our 2004 election platform to invest \$5 billion over five years to establish a national early learning and child care system. All 10 provinces have now signed on to the Liberal government's plan, which is backed by a five-year, \$5-billion funding commitment announced in Budget 2005.

The Liberal child care plan will mean that Canadian children will benefit from safe, secure regulated facilities, licensed instructors, and an emphasis on learning and development.

The Liberal Early Learning and Child Care plan is already making a positive difference for Canadian families. For instance:

- In British Columbia subsidies are now being provided for the care of an additional 10,000 children;
- In Ontario, 25,000 new regulated child care spaces will be created by April 2008;
- Manitoba has committed to improving wages and training for early childhood educators and will ensure that children with disabilities have equal access to newly licensed child care spaces; and
- Alberta has implemented measures to make regulated child care more affordable for low- and middle-income families.

We are making progress on child care, but we must go further. The Liberal government will continue working to make high-quality, accessible child care into a national reality.

Related link: CRRU ISSUE FILE: Early learning and child care in the 2006 federal election ^[3]

Region: Canada ^[4]

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