

A new \$1,200 Choice in Child Care Allowance for pre-school kids ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

See text and link below.

[Press release in html](#) ^[2]

Text of the press release:

Conservative leader Stephen Harper today announced that a Conservative government will introduce a new \$1,200 per year Choice in Child Care Allowance for children under six, and a \$250 million Community Childcare Investment Program for capital assistance for new childcare spaces. The Choice in Child Care Allowance will apply to an estimated 2 million children of pre-school age.

"The Liberal plan sends money to provincial governments. The total cost of our plan will be \$10.9 billion over five years, which is \$4.7 billion more than the Liberals are planning," said Harper. "Our plan provides money directly to parents. You can spend that money the way you see fit. You can choose the child care option that best suits your family's needs."

The plan will help parents to choose the decision that best suits their families &em; whether it means formal child care, informal care through neighbours or relatives, or a parent staying at home.

The new Conservative plan has two components. First a Choice in Childcare Allowance will provide \$1,200 per year for each pre-school child. Second, an annual \$250 million Community Childcare Investment Program will provide capital assistance to help employers and communities create childcare spaces in the workplace, or through cooperative or community associations.

While Harper's young children are no longer pre-school age, he said he understands the pressures that parents face. "Laureen and I know first hand the challenge of striking the right balance between work and family life," he said. "Before Benjamin and Rachel started school full time, Laureen and I used a number of different methods of child care."

The new Choice in Child Care Allowance will be in addition to the current Canada Child Tax Benefit, National Child Benefit Supplement and the Child Care Expenses Deduction. The Conservatives will honour the government's existing one-year bilateral commitments to provinces for institutional childcare. The new Choice in Child Care Allowance will not be clawed back from middle-income families. Instead, it will be taxed in the hands of the lower-income spouse.

In addition, the Conservatives will initiate a Community Childcare Investment Program will help employers and communities create child care spaces in the workplace or through cooperative or community associations by establishing a tax credit that will create an estimated 125,000 new child care spaces over five years.

"The Conservatives will give parents a Choice in Child Care Allowance parents can see," Harper said. "A monthly payment parents can count on. A new Allowance that no politician will ever be able to take away without you noticing."

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