

Another \$400K for child care in Happy Valley-Goose Bay ^[1]

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Source: CBC News

Format: Article

Publication Date: 24 Jun 2018

AVAILABILITY

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EXCERPTS

The provincial government is doubling the money it will spend on child-care spaces in central Labrador.

During a visit to Happy Valley-Goose Bay Monday, Premier Dwight Ball said his government is giving the Pumpkin House child-care centre nearly \$450,000 to create a new after-school program with room for 30 kids.

Last summer, he made a similar announcement, with \$450,000 for a new 58-space child-care centre for toddlers and preschoolers.

With a list of over 200 children waiting to get into Pumpkin House, and 60 kids wanting to be in the after-school program, Early Childhood Development Association vice president Colin O'Brien called the money a "huge milestone."

But those new after-school spaces depend on being able to hire more staff, which can be difficult in Labrador.

"We're going to have to look at additional staffing," O'Brien said. "That'll be a challenge in this environment. We're going to try to work through that."

Ground has already broken for construction of the new Pumpkin House building. O'Brien said it should take shape over the next few months, and open in Spring 2019.

Meanwhile, plans for a new town recreation centre run by the YMCA include another 60 child-care spaces.

O'Brien said he hopes they can work together.

"It's a skilled staff," he said. "These individuals have to go and do an early childhood education program, and we asked them to make a huge commitment to their professional development. So [we're] trying to identify not only our need, but what the pending need will be over the next two to three years."

This is the second year in a row Premier Ball has made major summer spending announcements in Labrador, and for the second year in a row they also include millions for work on the Trans-Labrador Highway.

Ball said the province will provide \$64.5 million to pave and widen the 126 kilometres between Cartwright Junction and Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

There's also \$900,000 for repairs to the EJ Broomfield Memorial Arena, and \$905,000 for waste water treatment in Hopedale.

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