

Ontario creating more francophone child care spaces in St. Catharines ^[1]

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ST. CATHARINES - As part of Ontario's commitment to increasing access to child care and giving parents more choice, the government is investing in new child care spaces to make life easier for francophone parents and families in St. Catharines.

The province is providing \$1.5 million to Conseil scolaire Viamonde to create three new child care rooms, with 49 new child care spaces, at École élémentaire l'Héritage.

"We want child care to meet the needs of parents and children," said Sam Oosterhoff, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Education. "That's why we're investing in new child care spaces for Francophone children and families in St. Catharines."

Oosterhoff made the announcement on Franco-Ontarian Day in St. Catharines, to recognize importance of the Francophone community in Ontario, and the vital role of French child care programs in developing children's language skills and proficiency.

"We are very pleased to receive this new funding. Our Francophone community in the Niagara Region will appreciate the addition of child care spaces," said Sylvie A. Landry, chair of the Conseil scolaire Viamonde. "With the financial support of the Government of Ontario, we will be able to pursue our objective of always striving to better serve the Francophones throughout our territory."

The province is also providing up to \$1 billion over the next five years to create up to 30,000 child care spaces in schools across Ontario - including up to 10,000 spaces in new schools.

As part of the 2019 Budget, the province also introduced the new Ontario Childcare Access and Relief from Expenses (CARE) tax credit which will provide about 300,000 families with up to 75 per cent of their eligible child care expenses.

"We are increasing choice and access for parents, while making life more affordable," said Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education. "Our plan puts parents, not government, at the centre of the child care decision-making process."

Quick Facts

- In 2019-20, the government will be investing more than \$2 billion in child care and early years programs.
- Up to \$1 billion in capital funding is being invested over five years to create up to 30,000 new child care spaces in schools.
- The CARE tax credit will support families with incomes of up to \$150,000.
- Ontario is also allocating \$208 million through Consolidated Municipal Service Managers (CMSMs) and District Social Services Administration Boards (DSSABs) to support wage enhancements for eligible child care professionals.
- The CARE tax credit will be available in addition to the Child Care Expense Deduction (CCED), which provides provincial and federal tax relief toward eligible child care expenses.

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