

New educational and financial supports for Islanders^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Access online^[2]

EXCERPTED:

Today, the Province of Prince Edward Island announced supports for early learning centres, learning opportunities for Island students and financial relief for post-secondary provincial loans, as well as an update on aid programs for businesses and employees.

"This has been a week unlike any other, and I want to recognize the tremendous efforts of all Islanders to quickly respond to the impacts of COVID-19. As a government we hear the concerns being shared by Islanders and communities. We are listening and we are responding as quickly, responsibly and inclusively as we can. We are going to get through this, together."

- Premier Dennis King

To mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and ensure the health and safety of our Island children, the Chief Public Health Officer announced earlier this week the closure of provincially-licensed early childhood centres and public schools.

"Early learning and formal education are important to all Islanders, as is ensuring that their opportunities for this is lost during this unique and difficult time," said Education and Lifelong Minister Brad Trivers. "We've been working closely with the Early Childhood Development Association, school branches and staff to identify ways in which we can support Island student, families and educators during these trying times."

Today, Education and Lifelong Learning Minister Brad Trivers provided greater detail on how the province will support early childhood educators, child care operators, children and parents. New early learning and education supports announced today by the Province of Prince Edward Island include:

Establishing a fund of up to \$2 million to support early learning centres and their staff, maintain child care spaces and ensure parents do not pay fees during the period of closures;

Suspending repayments for provincial student loans for the next six months; and

Providing home learning activities for students for the duration of the confirmed school closures through the Public School Branch (PSB) and La Commission scolaire de langue française (CSLF) websites.

Beginning Monday, March 23, students, parents and guardians can access the home learning activities by visiting the Public Schools Branch or the Commission scolaire de la langue française websites.

This afternoon, Minister of Economic Growth, Tourism and Culture Matthew MacKay also provided more details on the Emergency Relief Worker Assistance Program. Employers will be filling out the application to help identify their workers who have experienced a significant reduction in their work hours.

"Originally, when the program was announced, it was \$200 per week, but we've increased that amount to \$250 per week as we've realized this income would be subject to payroll deductions," said Minister MacKay. "We want to keep our promise that \$200 will be going directly into Islander's pockets, so we made that increase to reflect the impact of payroll deductions."

Once the employer's application is approved, this temporary financial support will be provided directly to affected workers through their employers and their regular payroll process. More details and how to apply the Emergency Relief Worker Assistance Program will be available on the provincial government website on Monday.

Related link:

Region: Prince Edward Island^[3]

Source URL (modified on 30 Mar 2020): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/20/03/new-educational-and-financial-supports-islanders>
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