

Historic agreement delivers over \$230 million for child care ^[1]

Safe restart agreement will support Ontario's plan to safely reopen child care and early years programs

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EXCERPTS

TORONTO — The Ontario government, in partnership with the federal government, is providing \$234.6 million in funding to keep children and staff safe in child care and early years settings. This funding will help support enhanced cleaning costs as well as health and safety requirements set out to support the reopening of licensed child care and early years programs. This funding is in addition to the Ontario government's continued commitment to stabilize the child care sector as many Ontarians return to work.

The announcement was made today by Premier Doug Ford, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, and Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education.

"My number one priority is the health and safety of our children. Thanks to our federal partners, we're putting over \$230 million on the table as part of the Safe Restart Agreement to help deliver our plan to reopen child care safely at full capacity in September," said Premier Ford. "With these additional supports in place, we have the best plan anywhere in the country, informed by the best medical advice and science available. Parents can have peace of mind knowing that every measure has been taken to keep their children and the staff who care for them safe."

The additional funding will help child care operators, EarlyON Child and Family Centres, and First Nations Child and Family Programs increase cleaning and infection control, ensure staff have access to personal protective equipment, promote physical distancing, purchase additional cleaning supplies, and support staffing needs.

"We are investing more in child care to ensure it is safe, accessible and affordable for working moms and dads," said Minister Lecce. "This agreement will ensure funding continues to flow so that child care remains available to parents as they return to work today and into the future."

"The availability of affordable and high-quality child care will be key to ensuring Canadian parents can return to work and our economy can recover from this crisis," said Ahmed Hussen, Canada's Minister of Families, Children and Social Development. "The Government of Canada is committed to supporting the child care sector to ensure all Canadian families will have access to the quality child care they need."

Quick Facts

- Funding is being provided to support enhanced cleaning costs and health and safety requirements set out to support the reopening of child care and early years programs, as well as the continued stabilization of the sector.
- The Government of Ontario will supply face coverings to licensed child care settings, EarlyON Child and Family Centres, and First Nations Child and Family Program locations.
- On July 30, 2020, the government announced child care centres, including before and after school programs, and early years programs across the province would be able to open at full capacity starting September 1, 2020. Guidance documents to support reopening child care and early years programs will be available shortly.
- Families whose children attended a licensed child care centre immediately before the emergency was declared must be given at least 14 days' notice to accept a placement available on or after September 1, 2020.
- Parents and guardians have until August 31, 2020 to apply for Support for Families. Under this program, parents or guardians of children between 0-12 years old, or up to 21 years old for children and youth with special needs, are eligible for a one-time payment per child to purchase educational materials to support learning at home.
- To date, over 1.6 million families have benefitted from the Support for Families program.

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