

P.E.I. encouraging child-care centres to apply for Early Years designation ^[1]

'There's definitely some benefits for families and for centres in becoming designated'

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EXCERPT

Licensed child-care centres on P.E.I. are being encouraged to apply for Early Years Centre designation by the provincial government.

Designated Early Years Centres receive operational funding from government to follow a provincial framework for curriculum and are staffed by trained early childhood educators. Early Years Centres also have government-regulated fees for parents — which will be reduced to \$25 per day starting Jan. 2022.

The 2021-22 operating budget includes \$1.4 million to designate up to eight additional centres in the province.

Minister of Education Natalie Jameson said licensed centres that are not designated provide excellent education for young children, and that the designation will raise that bar for them.

"Our Early Years Centres, they must meet ... a higher standard of quality, they follow a provincial curriculum framework, the staff must be paid on a wage grid," she said. "There's definitely some benefits for families and for centres in becoming designated."

She added that the funding is precisely what the sector was asking for.

"There's many centres out there that would love to become designated for a variety of reasons," Jameson said. "So this announcement today, the sector has been waiting for it, they've been asking for it and we're really looking forward to seeing what applications come forward."

7 applied last year

Jameson said they'll likely fill all eight slots for the Early Years Centre designation.

If there are more than eight centres applying the province "will reassess." There are 79 early childhood centres on P.E.I. Of those, 54 are designated and 25 are not.

Last year the province received seven applications from centres looking for the designation. Of the seven, two were denied.

Jameson said the province is willing to work with all childhood centres wanting to become Early Years Centres, including helping those that have had their applications denied for any reason.

"We have incredible early childhood coaches that are working with individual centres to get them to that point and we will absolutely continue to do so," she said.

"There will always be supports in place and we look forward to working with them."

Region: Prince Edward Island ^[3]

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Source URL (modified on 14 Jun 2021): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/21/06/pei-encouraging-child-care-centres-apply-early-years-designation>

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