

\$10 a day child care for families in Saskatchewan^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Access provincial news release online ^[2]

Access federal news release online ^[3]

EXCERPTS

News release - Canada and Saskatchewan

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Every child deserves the best possible start in life and all parents should have the ability to build both a family and career. Yet, too many families across Canada lack access to affordable, inclusive, and high-quality child care. The global COVID-19 pandemic has also made it clear that without access to child care, too many parents—especially women—cannot fully participate in the workforce.

In the recent federal budget, the Government of Canada laid out a transformative plan to build a Canada-wide, community-based system of high-quality early learning and child care that provides parents in Canada with, on average, \$10 a day regulated child care spaces for children under the age of six. This will make life more affordable for families, create new jobs, get parents back into the workforce, and grow the middle class, while giving every child an equal start in life.

Today, the Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, the Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, and the Honourable Dustin Duncan, Saskatchewan Minister of Education, announced an agreement that will support an average of \$10 a day early learning and child care for Saskatchewan families by the end of 2025-26. By the end of 2022, Saskatchewan families will see a 50 per cent reduction in average parent fees for children under age six in regulated child care.

In addition to significantly reducing the cost of child care, federal funding of close to \$1.1 billion over the next five years will lead to the creation of 28,000 new regulated early learning and child care spaces to help ensure Saskatchewan families with children under six years old can access child care spaces that meet their needs. Federal funding will support the expansion of these new child care spaces in not-for-profit child care centres, small child care facilities, and home-based child care.

The agreement will also fund critical services and attract, retain and grow a strong and skilled workforce of early childhood educators, including through the creation of a wage grid that will ensure early child educators are well paid for their work. The agreement also supports future early childhood educators with their studies and provides them with professional development opportunities.

The agreement includes a clear commitment to continue to work collaboratively with Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis Nation communities to ensure Indigenous children have access to affordable, high-quality and culturally appropriate early learning and child care.

It also supports an early learning and child care system that is fully inclusive of children with disabilities and children needing enhanced or individual supports, and ensures all families have equitable access to high-quality, affordable early learning and child care.

Along with today's landmark agreement, the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan have also reached an agreement to extend the Canada-Saskatchewan Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. The Government of Canada will provide over \$68.5 million over the next four years to increase access to affordable, inclusive and high-quality child care spaces. In addition, the Government of Canada will provide Saskatchewan with a one-time investment of over \$17 million in 2021-2022 to support the early childhood workforce.

The Government of Canada will continue to work with provinces, territories, and Indigenous partners across the country to make life more affordable for families, grow the middle class, create jobs, help parents—especially mothers—return to the workforce, and give each and every child the same head start.

Quotes

“Ensuring that all Canadians have access to high-quality and affordable early learning and child care makes sense. Not only does it give our children the best possible start in life, it ensures that parents — especially mothers — can work, and it creates good, well-paying jobs for educators. Today’s

announcement with the Government of Saskatchewan is another important step in making this a reality for families everywhere in Canada. It is part of the government's plan to make sure that Canada's recovery from the COVID-19 recession leaves no one behind."

— *The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance*

"Every child deserves the best possible start in life. Our vision for early learning and child care is big and ambitious, but if we tell our own kids to dream big, we need to lead by example. Today's historic agreement with Saskatchewan is another important step on the path to ensuring all families have access to high-quality, affordable, and inclusive child care."

— *The Honourable Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development*

"Today is a historic day for Saskatchewan. No longer will parents have to choose between child care and returning to the workforce because of the costs of child care. The social and economic potential this unlocks cannot be overstated. I am pleased we are partnering with another province that sees the value of a strong and affordable early learning and child care program."

— *The Honourable Jim Carr, Minister and Special Representative for the Prairies*

"The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to investing in affordable, accessible and quality early learning and child care options that provide flexibility and choice to Saskatchewan families. We are pleased that this deal creates 28,000 new regulated spaces, makes life more affordable for Saskatchewan families and enhances the wages of Early Childhood Educators who support children across our province."

— *The Honourable Dustin Duncan, Saskatchewan Minister of Education*

Quick facts

- Saskatchewan is the eighth jurisdiction to reach a Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement with the federal government, bringing Canada another step closer to a coast-to-coast-to-coast early learning and child care system.
 - These eight agreements represent an investment of \$12.5 billion; they cover nearly half of Canadian children under six and will create 125,000 new child care spaces across the country.
 - Most of these agreements have committed to \$10 a day child care well in advance of the original five-year target set in April.
- The governments of Canada and Saskatchewan will create an Implementation Committee that will monitor progress on early learning and child care commitments in consultation with stakeholders. The Government of Canada will be represented on this committee by the Federal Secretariat on Early Learning and Child Care.
- Budget 2021 provides new investments to build a high-quality, affordable, flexible, and inclusive early learning and child care system across Canada. These investments total up to \$30 billion over the next five years, and combined with previous investments announced since 2015, \$9.2 billion every year thereafter, permanently.
- Through previous investments in early learning and child care, the Government of Canada helped to create over 40,000 more affordable child care spaces across the country prior to the pandemic, including over 1,800 in Saskatchewan.
- In addition to these investments, the Government of Canada is directly supporting parents, no matter how they choose to care for their children, through the Canada Child Benefit (CCB). For over five years, the CCB has provided almost \$25 billion in tax-free support per year to about 3.5 million families, and is now providing families with \$350 more per child than when the program began.
- In 2021, the Government of Canada is providing additional temporary support for families with children under the age of six through the Canada Child Benefit young child supplement. This helps families across Canada who are struggling with a range of unpredictable expenses during the pandemic.
- Investments in child care will benefit all Canadians. Studies show that for every dollar invested in early childhood education, the broader economy receives between \$1.50 and \$2.80 in return.
- To promote greater gender equality at home and in the workplace, the Government of Canada has also introduced the Parental Sharing Benefit. This measure provides an additional five weeks of Employment Insurance parental benefits when parents—including adoptive and same-sex parents—agree to share parental benefits.

- The Canada-Saskatchewan Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, initially signed in 2017, outlines Saskatchewan's unique child care needs and priorities. It ensures funding continues to be available to support child care programs and services for Saskatchewan families.

Region: Saskatchewan ^[4]

Tags: federal budget ^[5]

universal system ^[6]

child care workforce ^[7]

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