

Governments support benefits for early childhood educators ^[1]

Early childhood educators working in licensed Yukon early learning and child care (ELCC) programs will have significantly more access to comprehensive insurance benefits, it was announced Wednesday.

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EXCERPTS

Early childhood educators working in licensed Yukon early learning and child care (ELCC) programs will have significantly more access to comprehensive insurance benefits, it was announced Wednesday.

It's thanks to the launch of the Early Learning and Child Care Benefits Funding program.

The program provides compensation for up to eight per cent of staff wages for employers to select and offer a comprehensive benefits package that meets the needs of their employees from a registered Canadian insurance provider.

A combined total of \$800,000 in funding from the Yukon and federal governments is available to every licensed ELCC program in the Yukon, including operators currently offering benefits for employees.

Those operators can also receive retroactive funding for providing their employees with benefits from April 1, 2021.

As of April 1, 2022, providing benefits for early childhood educators will be an integral part of the Yukon's universal child care program, the two governments said in a statement.

Benefits for educators will be considered a standard part of the Yukon ELCC Funding Program.

"Following a child-centred approach, the Governments of Canada and Yukon are committed to supporting access to early learning and child care that is high-quality, affordable, inclusive and flexible," the statement said.

"The Government of Canada is making a transformative investment to build a Canada-wide early learning and child care system in partnership with provincial, territorial and Indigenous partners.

"This includes a historic federal investment of nearly \$42 million in child care for Yukon."

The goal is to support the Yukon's efforts to ensure that all families have access to regulated child care for \$10 a day.

"Early childhood educators are at the heart of a high-quality child care system," said Karina Gould, the federal minister of Families, Children and Social Development.

"I applaud the Government of Yukon's initiative to support early childhood educators by providing them with increased access to benefits, and supporting the growth of a quality child care system in the Yukon. We recognize the valuable work of early childhood educators to ensure every child has the best possible start in life."

Licensed ELCC programs currently offering comprehensive benefits to employees from a registered Canadian insurance provider can submit an application to the ELCC Unit before Jan. 1, 2022, and the funding may cover the period from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

Licensed ELCC programs not yet offering comprehensive benefits to employees can register in a program with a registered Canadian insurance provider, including a group benefits plan offered by their local chamber of commerce, then submit an application to the ELCC Unit before Feb. 15, 2022.

The Yukon government, through the Department of Education's Early Learning and Child Care Unit, has committed \$400,000 toward supporting benefits programs for early childhood educators.

In addition, the extension of the Canada-Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, signed with the federal government last August included a federal one-time investment of nearly \$2.5 million in 2021-11 to support the Yukon's early childhood workforce.

As part of this investment, \$400,000 was identified to support comprehensive benefits programs for early childhood educators.

"Early childhood educators play an essential role in providing high-quality programs to the Yukon's earliest learners," said Education Minister Jeanie McLean.

“Recognizing the value of educators comes hand-in-hand with providing reasonable compensation, including access to comprehensive insurance benefits.

“By committing to support our early childhood educators, we are fostering greater consistency in our learning programs and will see positive impacts on the social, emotional and cognitive development of Yukon children.”

Region: Yukon Territory ^[3]

Tags: workforce ^[4]

federal agreement ^[5]

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