

Provinces transition to publicly-funded child care with new agreements ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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EXCERPTS

Nearly all provinces and territories have signed on to new child care and early learning funding from the federal government, bringing the possibility of a national child care system closer to reality. Ontario, the only province that has not yet signed an agreement, is expected to do so in the coming days.

This increase in funding is a hard-fought win. The existing bilateral agreements commit to reducing child care fees to an average of \$10 per day, expanding the number of available child care spaces, and increasing wages to recruit and retain qualified early childhood educators.

However, not all the agreements maximize support for a universally accessible and publicly delivered child care system.

Prince Edward Island and Alberta have announced that licensed for-profit centres will be eligible for the new funding, although PEI's agreement promises to develop a strategy for expanding non-profit and public child care programs.

Other provinces have taken more concrete steps toward building an accessible, affordable, and inclusive child care system. British Columbia has announced it will limit funding eligibility to public and non-profit child care centres and Indigenous governments. Similarly, Nova Scotia will limit funding to non-profit service providers who reduce their fees and join a province-wide compensation framework for early childhood educators. For-profit operators can access this funding only if they transition to a non-profit structure.

CUPE has long advocated for public and non-profit child care. Public and non-profit child care centres consistently receive higher quality ratings than for-profit centres. They are more likely to hire better trained staff and be adequately staffed, have lower child-to-worker ratios, and promote working conditions that reduce staff turnover rates and increase morale. These conditions lead to a higher quality of care for children.

In contrast, for-profit child care centres prioritize the bottom line. Parent fees line private operators' pockets instead of going to the wages, benefits and working conditions necessary to retain qualified educators.

We need quality, affordable child care for all. CUPE, the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care (OCBCC), and the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Ontario (AECEO) call on Ontario Premier Doug Ford to immediately sign a bilateral child care agreement which includes a moratorium on the expansion of for-profit care.

Region: Canada ^[3]

Tags: Canada-wide agreements ^[4]

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Source URL (modified on 1 Feb 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/22/02/provinces-transition-publicly-funded-child-care-new-agreements>

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