

# New non-profit to advocate for early childhood education <sup>[1]</sup>

A new non-profit society in the Northwest Territories is aiming to advocate for an improved early learning and childcare system in the North.

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## AVAILABILITY

Access online <sup>[2]</sup>

## EXCERPTS

According to a Friday news release, the NWT Early Childcare Association was incorporated under the territory's Societies Act on January 29. It plans to establish professional standards in the sector – including salaries and qualifications – and provide supportive resources.

“An early childhood association in the NWT is a long-awaited support for practitioners and families,” Patricia Davison, executive director of the Children First Society in Inuvik, said in a statement. “The association validates the importance of early childhood and the essential work of practitioners.”

Gloria Francis, a second year student in the early learning and childcare program at Aurora College, added the association is “much needed and long overdue in the North.”

The society said its goals include providing resources and services to members across the territory, advocating for the sector to all levels of government, and educating the public about early learning and childcare. It said it will do so by providing networking opportunities within the territory and nationally, establishing an information hub, providing training, and conducting research.

During a forum on early childhood education in the NWT last October, participants said the high cost of early learning and childcare in the territory can be prohibitive for some parents, while many early childhood educators have to take second jobs to make a living. Poor wages and burnout were identified as factors in high staff turnover.

In some NWT communities, there aren't enough childcare spaces. Others don't have any licensed early learning or childcare programs but, in some places, informal programming is being facilitated by community members.

The NWT government signed an agreement with the Canadian government in December to cut childcare costs, increase the number of childcare spaces, and support early childhood educators across the territory over the next five years.

**Region:** Northwest Territories <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** non-profit <sup>[4]</sup>

universal child care system <sup>[5]</sup>

Canada-wide agreement <sup>[6]</sup>

child care workforce <sup>[7]</sup>

advocacy <sup>[8]</sup>

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