

Province provides stable funding to child-care centres, additional one-time grant ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

EXCERPTS

Child-care providers across the province will receive additional financial supports as part of their annual funding agreement with the Province this year.

Announced today, February 18, the additional funding will offset the 25 per cent fee reductions for parents. It also includes a one-time grant to support the freeze on parent fees.

The new agreement will be offered to all child-care providers, including licensed centres that were previously unfunded or partially funded. By accepting the new agreement, centres will have access to the additional supports from the Province. The government's total investment in the one-time grant is \$1 million.

The fee reductions have led to increased interest from families in child care, and the new agreement contains a commitment from operators to accept children where they can.

"We've heard from many operators, early childhood educators and families," said Becky Druhan, Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development. "Together, we will provide Nova Scotian families with affordable child care of the highest quality. We will work with our operators to build a system that cares for all Nova Scotians – children, families, ECEs, operators."

To ensure voices in the sector are heard, the Province is creating a table to advise the Minister on the transformation of child care. More details will be released in the coming weeks.

As announced in January, through the Nova Scotia Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, families in Nova Scotia will see a 25 per cent reduction, on average, in child-care fees as of April 1, 2022, retroactive to January 1, 2022, for children in regulated child-care spaces. This reduction means a savings, on average, of \$200 per month for parents with a toddler in child care. This is an initial step in reducing child-care fees for Nova Scotian families by 50 per cent, on average, by the end of 2022, and in achieving an average of \$10-a-day care by March 31, 2026.

Work continues on Nova Scotia's Excellence in Early Childhood Education workforce strategy, which will result in higher wages and benefits for early childhood educators by fall 2022.

Quick Facts:

licensed operators will be asked to sign the new funding agreement by April 1, 2022; the agreement is largely reflective of previous funding agreements, with additional funding to offset parent-fee reductions and the one-time grant to support rising operational costs

the initial decrease in parent fees of 25 per cent, on average, will be retroactive to January 1, 2022; parents will continue to pay their current rate until April 1, when they will then pay the reduced rate and choose whether to receive a cheque from their centre reflecting the reduction from January to March, or a credit

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 \$605 million for Nova Scotia from 2021-2022 to 2025-2026, in addition to a one-time investment of about \$10.9 million in 2021-2022 to support Nova Scotia's early childhood workforce

Nova Scotia invests \$132.6 million in early learning and child care annually, including \$54 million for pre-primary and over \$75 million for the child care sector

there are 330 licensed child-care centres in Nova Scotia and 14 licensed Family Home Child Care Agencies

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