

'A game changer': Ottawa families react to new child-care deal ^[1]

Author: Larocque, Leah

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EXCERPTS

Parents in Ottawa are calling the new child-care deal between the provincial and federal government a “game changer.”

Mom Alana Powell is on maternity leave with her second daughter. She says she worries about the cost of sending two kids to a licenced daycare.

“In the next year, we are looking at having two children in daycare full-time and we didn’t know if that was possible. We didn’t know if I was supposed to take an extended mat leave, or pull my daughter out, and now we know we don’t have to.”

On Monday, the Ontario government signed a child-care deal with the federal government, a move that will see child-care fees cut in half by the end of the year and rebates retroactive to April 1 handed out to parents in May.

Powell says the cost of daycare weighs heavy on many families.

“For our family, it has been a huge financial burden,” Powell says. “It has been tough, we have relied on help from family to help. This child-care deal is a big game changer for our family and certainly for other families in Ontario.”

Ontario is the last province to ink the deal. The agreement is valued at \$13.2 billion over six years.

Powell says, “My first reaction is excitement, this is such a huge thing for families in Ontario,” But she says it comes too late. “It is really disappointing that it took so long to get here. In Ontario, we have been watching families across the country get fee relief, child-care costs cut in half for months. We have been just waiting. So, I am so pleased we could get a deal done, but I am frustrating it took so long.”

Natasha Boynton is mom to two-and-a-half-year-old Isabelle. “Last year we paid 12-thousand dollars for daycare for one child,” she says.

Boynton says this new deal gives families more financial freedom. “As two working parents and that’s our choice, this means, there is so much impact we can redirect those funds to extracurricular, or to enrich our child’s development in so many other ways.”

Boynton was worried the deal wasn’t going to happen.

“With the fiscal year coming to an end, I was worried. I tried not to refresh Google news that many times over the past couple of times. I am glad they were able to work together and get the job done.”

Region: Ontario ^[4]

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