

# Helping families in Canada to benefit from innovative early learning and child care practices <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

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

Excerpted from news release:

The early learning and child care sector is evolving in increasingly complex and challenging environments. Identifying innovative practices and solutions that better meet the needs of children and families is necessary to improving early learning and child care for the benefit of families in Canada.

Today, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development Karina Gould, announced funding to the Getting Ready for Inclusion Today (The GRIT Program) Society of Edmonton for their Connecting Canada: Impacting Early Learning and Child Care Environments through Sustainable Leadership Development project, which is being funded through the Early Learning and Child Care Innovation Program.

This project is receiving a total of \$2,594,903 in federal funding over 36 months, starting in March 2022 and will aim to improve the quality of inclusive early learning and child care programs and services for children with diverse learning needs across Canada. More specifically, it will support 12 early learning and child care service providers in various provinces and territories to adapt its established Access, Support and Participation (ASaP) program.

The Minister also participated in a roundtable with early childhood educators to talk about Budget 2022 investments and the important work they do in nurturing children. They are the heart of the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care system and key to ensuring that all families in Canada have access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive early learning and child care, no matter where they live.

Making life more affordable is one of the government's primary goals in Budget 2022. Since 2015, the Government of Canada has delivered real improvements to make life more affordable coast to coast to coast, including making an historic investment of \$30 billion over five years to build a Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care system in collaboration with provincial, territorial, and Indigenous partners. By the end of 2022, child care fees will have been reduced by an average of 50 per cent, and by 2025-26, the average child care fee for all regulated child care spaces across Canada will be \$10-a-day.

## Quotes

"Innovative practices can help develop solutions that better meet the needs of children with diverse learning needs and their families while supporting their integration. We are working towards making child care fully inclusive so all children have the best possible start in life."

– Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Karina Gould

"GRIT is grateful for this opportunity to share our knowledge about inclusive early learning and care. Today, with the support of the federal government, our vision to strengthen the skills and confidence of early childhood educators across Canada took a leap forward. This will provide educators with new strategies to respond to children's diverse learning needs, helping them to grow socially and emotionally."

– Barb Reid, M.Ed, Executive Director, The GRIT Program

## Quick facts

The Early Learning and Child Care Innovation Program supports the exploration, testing and development of innovative approaches to support children and families' access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive early learning and child care programs and services across the country.

The results of this project will contribute to a pool of knowledge and expertise, such as best practices, tools, models and approaches that will have the potential to be replicated, scaled and adapted in other communities and regions across Canada.

Budgets 2016 and 2017 provided funding of \$7.5 billion over 11 years for early learning and child care. Of this amount, \$100 million is being dedicated to early learning and child care innovation.

In response to requests from provinces and territories, and to support the implementation of the Canada-wide early learning and child care system, Budget 2022 proposes to provide \$625 million over four years, beginning in 2023-24, for an Early Learning and Child Care Infrastructure Fund. This funding will enable provinces and territories to make additional child care investments, including the building of new facilities.

Investments in child care will benefit everyone across Canada. Studies show that for every dollar invested in early childhood education, the broader economy receives between \$1.50 and \$2.80 in return.

**Region:** Alberta <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** child care expansion <sup>[4]</sup>

inclusion <sup>[5]</sup>

federal funding <sup>[6]</sup>

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<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2022/04/helping-families-in-canada-to-benefit-from-innovative-early-learning-and-child-care-practices.html> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7859> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9210> [5]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/8952> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9108>