

Fees are dropping! See how much less child care could cost in your city ^[1]

The federal government made a commitment to significantly reduce child care fees by the end of 2022. Here's how much you can expect to save.

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EXCERPTS

Last year, when the federal government announced its plans for an ambitious Canada-wide child care plan, parents were cautiously optimistic. Could this crucial and long-overdue dream finally become a reality? The plan's big promises included halving average child care fees by the end of 2022 and an eventual target of \$10 per day child care by 2025. And now we're getting a taste of what these savings could look like.

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) has pulled together the projected childcare costs for cities across the country in 2022 and they look promising. Canada is among the countries with the most expensive child care in the world, so these savings will make a huge difference in parents' lives.

This year, parents in Ontario, home to 38 per cent of Canada's child care-aged population, will finally start to see the fruits of these promised savings—especially in infant care, the most expensive age group across the country. In Toronto, which had the highest fees in 2021, families should see a 50 per cent decrease, going from \$1,948 per month in 2021 to \$974 in 2022. Cities like Mississauga, Brampton, London and Hamilton will see similar reductions to well under \$1000 per month, each costing parents with infants half of what they paid on average in 2021 (though still falling short of their 2022 federal targets). Markham and Kitchener are set to exceed their targets, down to \$738 and \$627 respectively.

And the savings don't stop there. Parents in Calgary are projected to pay \$770 per month, rather than \$1,400, while those in Halifax could pay \$540 instead of \$996. Yellowknife, St. John's and Whitehorse are on track to exceed their targets significantly, costing out at \$517, \$326 and \$240 respectively.

Similarly, parents across Canada can look forward to big projected savings when it comes to toddler care. In the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), families could save around \$7,100 or more this year with Torontonians pocketing a whopping \$9,696. Markham moms and dads should be especially happy if all goes according to plan, as they're the only GTA city expected to exceed its federal target of \$663 per month, costing parents \$651 to send their toddlers and setting the city up for a good start to meet the \$10-a-day target.

Like with infant care, Toronto would still be the most expensive city for toddlers, but Calgary comes in at a close second with projected fees of \$785 (down from 2021's \$1,295)—a saving that is still \$235 short of the city's 2022 target. Winnipeg is also projected to miss their mark by a couple hundred dollars per month, while Whitehorse could save parents an extra \$225 monthly by exceeding the target. Yellowknife, Moncton, St. John's and Regina are all set to come very close to meeting their targets of reducing costs by 50 per cent.

As far as preschoolers are concerned, Calgary may actually overtake Toronto as the most expensive city for child care—though still offering major savings for parents. Whereas they paid \$1,150 in 2021, fees could be reduced to \$700 by the end of this year. Toronto parents are projected to have their \$1,300 bills slashed to \$650.

Yellowknife, Moncton, St. John's and Regina are all set to come very close to meeting their targets, while Whitehorse is once again projected to exceed its goal by hundreds of dollars per family each month.

According to the Ontario government's projections, Ontario parents will be saving up to \$1.1 billion in child care costs in 2022 alone. As part of its agreement with the federal government, Ontario also plans to open 86,000 new licensed daycares for children five years of age or younger to address increasing demand in the province.

Despite the progress Ontario is making in lowering child care fees, the province was actually the last to reach a deal with the federal government on this matter. Parents in Quebec were already paying as little as \$8.50 a day for child care. Thus, the new funding Quebec is receiving as part of the national plan will go towards creating 37,000 new childcare spaces instead. Other Canadian provinces and territories, (except for Nunavut, where a deal was just reached in January), signed their agreements with Ottawa last year, making

commitments to reach \$10-a-day child care fees between 2024-2027.

There are many variables that can affect how much of an impact the new national child care plan will have on families, such as place of residence, number of children and how strictly the different provinces and territories adhere to their targets. Nonetheless, we're staying positive. This might actually be happening, folks!

Region: Canada ^[3]

Tags: \$10-a-day child care ^[4]

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