

Child care costs set to come down to \$10-per-day by 2025 for parents of young children: Here's what you need to know ^[1]

Janine Mitchell, manager of human services for the City of Kawartha Lakes, updated council during the committee of the whole meeting on June 7

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AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

EXCERPT

A Canada-wide initiative is underway to make early learning and child care more affordable while enhancing quality, increasing access and supporting inclusion. The Ontario government has set a goal of bringing licensed child care fees down to an average of \$10 a day by September 2025, a year ahead of the goal set nationally.

During the City of Kawartha Lakes committee of the whole meeting on June 7, manager of human services Janine Mitchell provided council an update on how the initiative is rolling out locally.

Here is what you need to know:

The goals

- Average parent fees of \$10 a day for children up to five years of age by September 2025 through phased reductions
- Protect child care wages through new minimums and ensure 60 per cent of child care workforce is made up of Registered Early Child Educators by 2026
- Create 86,000 new child care spaces, compared to 2019 levels, for children up to five years of age by the end of 2026
- Support low-income, vulnerable children and children from Francophone, indigenous and other diverse communities through accessible child care
- Support successful implementation through data and reporting

The role of the municipality

- Fee subsidy program
- Application process and agreements
- Early learning and care planning and supporting Early Years system, including licensed centre-based and home-based child care, authorized recreation/camps and EarlyON Child and Family Centres

What this means for parents

- Starting with a base fee set by the municipality, parents with children up to and including five years old will get a reduction of up to 25 per cent retroactive to April 1 from child care providers participating in the program, followed by a 50 per cent fee reduction effective Jan. 1, 2023. By September 2024, there will be a 75 per cent reduction, then a \$10 per day base fee in the fiscal year end for 2025.
- Fee subsidies will continue to be available to eligible children, with no base of \$12.
- The existing difficulty in getting child care spaces in Kawartha Lakes, where there is already a wait list of 600 for infant care according to Mitchell, may be exacerbated, as there is a shortage of qualified workers.

What this means for care providers

- All registered early childhood educators, supervisors and visitors will get an annual wage increase of \$1 per hour until 2026.
- Service providers will be responsible for providing detailed year-end reports and audited financial statements for the purposes of data collection and analysis.
- There is a cap on child care fees for providers serving children up to five years of age until the service provider notifies the municipality and parents that they are not participating in the program or they receive notice from the city as to the results of their application to take part in the program.

Region: Ontario ^[3]

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