

# Government of Canada invests in accessible and disability inclusive early learning and child care system across Canada <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

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## EXCERPTS:

Building a barrier-free country is a key priority for the Government of Canada. That is why it is working closely with provincial, territorial and Indigenous partners to create an early learning and child care system that is high quality, affordable, accessible and inclusive. These efforts will help ensure that all families in Canada – including those with children with disabilities – have access to child care that is adapted to their needs, and inclusive from the start.

Today, Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Carla Qualtrough, joined with Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Karina Gould, to announce \$12.5 million in funding support for 225 regulated and/or licensed early learning and child care centres across Canada through the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) small projects component of the Enabling Accessibility Fund (EAF).

Minister Qualtrough and Minister Gould made the announcement at the Centre d'appui et de prévention in Ottawa, Ontario. The centre is receiving \$37,009 under the ELCC-EAF to provide its educational centre with specialized equipment for children with special needs including the creation of a sensory room, which will enable children with disabilities to thrive in a stimulating environment that is safe and respects their needs.

The Government of Canada made a transformative investment of more than \$27 billion over five years to build a Canada-wide early learning and child care system in partnership with provincial, territorial and Indigenous partners. Combined with other investments, including in Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care, up to \$30 billion over five years will be provided in support of early learning and child care.

Agreements reached with every province and territory to create a Canada-wide \$10-a-day Early Learning and Child Care system will ensure every child, including children with disabilities, Indigenous children, and official language minorities, have access to affordable, high quality child care.

Building an affordable child care system that is accessible and inclusive to all Canadians in every region of the country is key to the Government's efforts to support families while also creating good jobs and growing the economy.

## Quotes

"We're proud to invest in organizations that understand the importance and value of disability inclusion. This is about creating community spaces where every child and family is welcome. It's about doing better for persons with disabilities."

– Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion, Carla Qualtrough

"Families with children with disabilities continue to face unique challenges to find accessible child care spaces that meet their needs. These projects in child care centres across the country will support our work to build a child care system that is designed from the start as inclusive, giving every Canadian child the best possible start in life."

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

"When families and caregivers of children with disabilities can access meaningful resources and services like accessible childcare options, it means our Government is committed to support families from coast to coast to coast, where children and parents have an equal chance to be included in all aspects of Canadian society."

– President of the Treasury Board, minister Mona Fortier

## Quick facts

The 2017 Canada Survey on Disability found that one in five Canadians aged 15 and over—or about 6.2 million persons—report as having a disability.

The Enabling Accessibility Fund (EAF) is a federal grants and contributions program that supports infrastructure projects across Canada that improve the accessibility, safety and inclusion of persons with disabilities in communities and the labour market. Over 6,000 projects have been funded under the EAF since its launch in 2007, helping thousands of Canadians gain access to programs, services and employment opportunities in their communities.

Budget 2021 provided new investments totalling up to \$30 billion over five years to build a high-quality, affordable, flexible, and inclusive early learning and child care system across Canada. As part of that investment, Budget 2021 included \$25 million under the EAF over two years, to make immediate progress for children with disabilities by helping child care centres to install the infrastructure and information and communication technology upgrades needed to improve the accessibility of their facilities.

The funding announced today under the ELCC-EAF small projects component, was provided under Budget 2021 and distributed to projects through a call for proposals process that ran from December 3, 2021 to February 14, 2022.

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.

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

**Tags:** accessibility <sup>[4]</sup>

children with disabilities <sup>[5]</sup>

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

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[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/22/06/government-canada-invests-accessible-and-disability-inclusive-early> [2]

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/news/2022/06/government-of-canada-invests-in-accessible-and-disability-inclusive-early-learning-and-child-care-system-across-canada.html> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [4]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/accessibility> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9262> [6]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/9140>