

Families in Canada to benefit from innovative early learning and child care ^[1]

Author: Employment and Social Development Canada

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EXCERPTS

VANCOUVER, BC, July 11, 2022 /CNW/ - 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 will improve early learning and child care for the benefit of children and families in Canada.

Today, the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Karina Gould, was in Vancouver to announce funding for two projects through the Early Learning and Child Care Innovation Program.

The University of British Columbia is receiving a total of \$1,294,439 in federal funding over 24 months, starting in April 2022, for their project titled PROMoting Early Childhood Outside (PRO-ECO). In partnership with 10 early learning and child care sites in Greater Vancouver, the University of British Columbia will research the effectiveness of outdoor play intervention. This project aims to create a locally guided and sustainable method for enhancing outdoor play environments that will be scalable to other early learning and child care centres across Canada.

The Mothers Matter Centre is receiving a total of \$2,374,455 in federal funding over 24 months, starting in April 2022, for their project titled Safe-space for Early Learning Foundation (SELF). This project will focus on training staff and adapting programs with the aim to provide high-quality early learning services to vulnerable and isolated children living with their mothers in second-stage transitional shelters in Saskatchewan, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, and British Columbia. This project will ensure that vulnerable and isolated children have the care they deserve so they can grow and learn in an environment that is healthy for them.

The Government of Canada is committed to supporting the improvement of early learning and child care service delivery for all families in Canada and their children. These projects will help transform child care in Canada, to better support children and parents now, and for generations to come.. The results achieved 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.

Since 2015, the Government of Canada has delivered real improvements to make life more affordable coast to coast to coast, including making a historic investment of up to \$27 billion over five years to build a Canada-wide early learning and child care system in collaboration with provincial, territorial and Indigenous partners. This investment allows governments to work together toward achieving an average parent fee of \$10-a-day by March 2026 for licensed child care spaces, starting with a 50% fee reduction on average for licensed early learning and child care spaces by the end of 2022.

Quotes

"Innovative practices can help develop solutions that better meet the needs of children across Canada. These projects will strengthen high-quality child care and programming so every child has the best possible start in life and has a fair chance to succeed."

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

"We know how important outdoor play is for children. Some children aren't able to have as many outdoor play opportunities as others, making child care a very important venue to help even this gap. The PRO-ECO study supported by this funding is focusing on how we can support more outdoor play in early learning and child care centres and develop clear recommendations for other centres to follow."

– Dr. Mariana Brussoni, Associate Professor at the University of British Columbia, Investigator at the BC Children's Hospital Research Institute and Director of the Human Early Learning Partnership

"We believe access to high-quality early learning opportunities is a fundamental right of all Canadian children. This is not the reality of the many children living in emergency and second-stage housing. Thanks to the generous support from Employment and Social Development Canada, the Mothers Matter Centre and their four Social Purpose Organization (SPO) partners are pleased to participate in the Safe-space for Early Learning Foundation (SELF) innovation. The project will ensure that mothers in second-stage transitional housing have the skills and support they need to prepare their children under six years old for school and life."

– Debbie Bell, President and Chief Executive Officer of Mothers Matter Centre

Quick Facts

- The Early Learning and Child Care Innovation Program supports the exploration, testing and development of innovative approaches to support access for children and families to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive early learning and child care programs and services across the country.
- The call for proposals for these early learning and child care innovation projects ran from October 20, 2020, to January 7, 2021.
- In recognition of Quebec's leadership role in early learning and child care, the Government of Canada is working toward an agreement with the province to ensure that early learning and child care innovation funding is available for Quebec-based projects.
- 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 the Early Learning and Child Care Innovation Program.
- Investments in early learning and 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: British Columbia ^[3]

Tags: child care ^[4]

funding ^[5]

outdoor play ^[6]

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