

Celebrating the one-year anniversary of signing the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement with the Yukon ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

GATINEAU, QC, July 23, 2022 /CNW/ - Child care is not just a social policy—it is also an economic policy. Access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive child care will grow the economy, allow more women to enter the workforce and give children in Canada the best start in life. That is why the Government of Canada signed agreements with each province and territory to implement a Canada-wide early learning and child care system.

Today, the Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Karina Gould, and Yukon's Minister of Education, Jeanie McLean, celebrated the one-year anniversary of signing the Canada-Yukon Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

As part of the agreement with the Government of Yukon, the Government of Canada is providing nearly \$42 million over five years to help improve licensed early learning and child care for children under 6 years of age in the territory. The Government of Canada's investment builds on Yukon's successes to provide Yukon families with access to full-time licensed early learning and child care spaces at less than \$10 a day on average.

With support through the Canada-Yukon Canada-wide agreement, the Yukon has already surpassed its commitment to create 110 new licensed early learning and child care spaces within five years, to help provide Yukon families with access to early learning and child care. The territory focuses on supporting the creation of spaces in licensed non-profit, for-profit, family day home and First Nations government-operated centres.

The governments of Canada and Yukon have created an implementation committee to monitor progress on early learning and child care commitments in consultation with partners and stakeholders. The Government of Canada is represented on the committee by the Federal Secretariat on Early Learning and Child Care.

In addition, the Yukon supports:

- a strong and skilled workforce of early childhood educators, including through greater opportunities for professional development, increased funding for program operators to provide comprehensive insurance benefits, and one of the highest minimum wages in Canada for fully qualified early childhood educators at just over \$30 an hour;
- a universal child care system that is inclusive of children with differing abilities and children needing enhanced or individual supports and that ensures that all families have equitable access to high-quality, affordable care; and
- a clear commitment to continuing to work collaboratively with First Nations partners across the Yukon to ensure that families have access to affordable and high-quality early learning and child care that promotes Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.

Building a Canada-wide child care system that works for all families in every region of the country is a key part of the plan to make life more affordable for families while creating good jobs and growing the economy. Nearly all of Canada's provinces and territories have already seen reductions in child care fees. By the end of 2022, average fees for licensed early learning and child care spaces will be cut in half across the country. For jurisdictions such as the Yukon and Quebec which already have an affordable universal child care system in place, investments will support, among other things, the expansion of high-quality and inclusive child care spaces.

Quotes

"I'm thrilled about the great progress we've made in the past year since the signing of the Canada-wide agreement with Yukon. By working with the Government of Yukon, we are helping to make high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive child care a reality in the territory."

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

"The Government of Yukon is unwavering in our commitment to providing families with access to high-quality, inclusive and affordable licenced early learning and child care. In the Yukon's first year of universal child care more than 200 new spaces for children were created, the minimum wage for fully-qualified early childhood educators was increased to one of the highest in the country, and out-of-pocket parent fees were reduced to less than \$10 per day on average for full time spaces. With support from the Government of Canada, we continue to enhance early learning and child care for the benefit of families, early childhood educators, program operators and all Yukoners."

– Yukon's Minister of Education, Jeanie McLean

Quick Facts

- The Yukon signed its Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement on July 23, 2021.
- The Yukon achieved a universal child care system costing less than \$10-a-day on average in the spring of 2021, prior to signing the Canada-wide agreement. Federal investments will support the expansion of the system in the Yukon.
- 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 2023–2024, 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.
- Recognizing that early childhood educators are at the heart of a high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive child care system, wage grids and/or additional training supports for early childhood educators are part of all Canada-wide agreements with provinces and territories, with the exception of Quebec, which has an asymmetrical agreement.
- As part of Budget 2021, 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 with the provinces and territories. Combined with other investments, including investments 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.
- In total, the Government of Canada is aiming to create approximately 250,000 new child care spaces through Canada-wide agreements with provinces and territories, and has already achieved its goal of creating 40,000 more affordable child care spaces before 2020 through the 2017–2018 to 2019–2020 Early Learning and Child Care Agreements. These new licensed spaces will be created predominantly among not-for-profit, public and family-based child care providers.
- 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: Yukon Territory ^[3]

Tags: child care ^[4]

\$10 a day ^[5]

Canada-wide agreement ^[6]

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