

# Celebrating the one-year anniversary of the signing of the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement with Manitoba <sup>[1]</sup>

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## EXCERPTS:

GATINEAU, QC, Aug. 9, 2022 /CNW/ - In Budget 2021, the Government of Canada announced its ambitious plan for an average \$10-a-day early learning and child care system across the country. Now that the Government of Canada has signed agreements with each province and territory to implement a Canada-wide early learning and child care system, great progress is being made in this regard across the country.

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

As part of the agreement with the Government of Manitoba, the Government of Canada is providing more than \$1.2 billion over five years to help improve regulated early learning and child care for children under 7 years of age in the province. Through these investments, the governments of Canada and Manitoba are working together to improve access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive early learning and child care programs and services, with the goal of ensuring that Manitoba families have access to regulated child care for an out-of-pocket average of \$10-a-day by the end of March 2023.

Through the Agreement and its investments, Manitoba increased its net annual household income threshold for the Child Care Subsidy Program, which is expected to support an additional 12,000 children, particularly in low- and middle-income families, and reduce child care fees by an average of 30%. Of the 12,000 children supported, approximately 8,000 children under 7 will be supported through federal investments. The increased eligibility for the subsidy is an important step to lowering parent fees and supporting the goal of achieving a \$10-a-day out-of-pocket average parent fee per child by the end of March 2023.

To increase the supply of early learning and child care spaces, the province created more than 815 new expansion child care spaces for infants and children under age 7. Manitoba also committed to creating 23,000 new full-time regulated child care spaces exclusively among not-for-profit, public child care providers/operations, as well as family-based child care providers, by the end of fiscal year 2025–2026.

To support early childhood educators, Manitoba implemented a new wage grid to support wage equity for early childhood educators in funded child care facilities. The new wage grid will allow non-profit child care boards to develop fair, consistent and competitive wage scales across the province and will help the early learning and child care sector retain qualified, experienced staff and boost recruitment efforts.

The governments of Canada and Manitoba are creating an Implementation Committee that will monitor progress on early learning and child care commitments in consultation with stakeholders. The Government of Canada will be represented on this committee by the Federal Secretariat on Early Learning and Child Care.

Building an early learning and 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, including Manitoba, have already seen reductions in child care fees, and, by the end of 2022, average fees for regulated early learning and child care spaces will be cut in half across the country.

## Quotes

"Manitoba has already made tremendous progress in supporting early childhood educators, to creating new spaces and to saving families hundreds of dollars each month. I look forward to continuing to work with the Government of Manitoba to make high-quality, affordable, flexible, and inclusive early learning and child care a reality in the province."

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

"Manitoba negotiated the Canada-Manitoba Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement - 2021 to 2026 to focus on the specific needs and circumstances of Manitoba working families. We are committed to making child care more accessible by creating spaces needed for children in Manitoba and by making them more affordable for parents, particularly low-income and middle-income households."

– Manitoba's Minister of Education and Early Childhood Learning, Wayne Ewasko

#### Quick Facts

Manitoba signed its Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement on August 9, 2021.

Estimated average fees for regulated early learning and child care spaces were \$20.70-a-day in Manitoba in 2019. Families in Manitoba could save up to an estimated average of \$2,691 annually per child thanks to the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, once out-of-pocket fees reach an average of \$10-a-day.

In response to requests from provinces and territories, and to support the implementation of the Canada-wide early learning and child care system, the Government of Canada proposed in Budget 2022 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 early learning and 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 regulated spaces will be created predominantly among not-for-profit, public and family-based child care providers.

Investments in 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:** Manitoba <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** Canada wide agreement <sup>[4]</sup>

affordability <sup>[5]</sup>

accessibility <sup>[6]</sup>

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