

Celebrating the one-year anniversary of the signing of the Canada-wide early learning and child care agreement with Saskatchewan ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Every child deserves the best possible start in life, and all parents should have the ability to build both a family and a career. That's 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 celebrated the one-year anniversary of the signing of the Canada-Saskatchewan Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

As part of the agreement with the Government of Saskatchewan, the Government of Canada is providing nearly \$1.1 billion over five years to help improve regulated early learning and child care for children under 6 years of age in the province. Through these investments, the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan 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 Saskatchewan families have access to regulated child care for an average of \$10-a-day by March 31, 2026.

Through the Canada-Saskatchewan Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, Saskatchewan has already achieved a 50% reduction in average parent fees for regulated child care spaces for children under 6 years of age, retroactive to July 1, 2021. Starting September 1, 2022, parent fees for regulated child care will be further reduced, to an average of 70% compared to March 2021 levels. These fee reductions means families in Saskatchewan are already saving up to an estimated average of \$3,910 annually per child, and could save an average of approximately \$5,220 a year per child once fees reach an average of \$10-a-day. These are significant milestones, and the province is on track to reach an average of \$10-a-day early learning and child care fees by March 2026.

The province is also increasing the supply of early learning and child care spaces and has already created more than 1,800 new licensed not-for-profit child care facility spaces in many rural and urban Saskatchewan communities over the past year. These spaces are part of the goal to create 28,000 new regulated child care spaces for children aged 0 to 5 by March 31, 2026. These new child care spaces will be created in regulated not-for-profit child care centres, small child care facilities and family-based child care providers. As work is being done to expand the number of child care spaces, Saskatchewan has also provided grants to regulated child care facilities to assist them in recruiting and retaining qualified early childhood educators, which is key to the success of a high-quality child care system.

The governments of Canada and Saskatchewan will monitor progress on early learning and child care commitments in consultation with stakeholders.

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 Saskatchewan, 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

"We've made great progress in the past year since the signing of the Canada-wide agreement with Saskatchewan. By reducing child care fees and creating new child care spaces, we are making a real difference for parents and children across the province. I look forward to continuing to work with the Government of Saskatchewan, to make access to high-quality, affordable, flexible and inclusive child care a reality in the province."

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

"The Government of Saskatchewan continues with its commitment to make life more affordable for families. Through fee reductions and an increase in regulated early child care spaces for children under six years of age, in collaboration with the Government of Canada, we will continue to build a stronger Saskatchewan for families in the province."

Quick Facts

Saskatchewan signed its Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement on August 13, 2021.

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 the 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 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: Saskatchewan ^[3]

Tags: \$10-a-day child care ^[4]

Canada-wide agreements ^[5]

building a system ^[6]

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