

# NDP vow to make \$10-a-day child care available over summers, holidays for school-age children <sup>[1]</sup>

Billboards touting maximum \$10 a day child-care weren't accurate all the time, Wab Kinew says

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### Excerpts

The commitment to \$10-a-day child care shouldn't take a holiday over the summer months, the Manitoba NDP announced.

Official Opposition leader Wab Kinew said an NDP government, if elected in October, would also provide \$10-a-day child care at regulated non-profit child-care centres on days when school-age children are not in the classroom: the summer months and other holidays, weekends and school in-service days.

Currently, those parents and guardians are paying a \$20.80 fee on those dates.

...

He estimated the promise would cost \$10 million annually.

The NDP commitment goes beyond the terms of the federal plan to provide child care at an average cost of \$10 a day. Manitoba signed onto the agreement in 2021 and, starting this April, established \$10 as the maximum price at regulated non-profit child-care centres, three years ahead of its 2026 target.

The joint federal and provincial agreement, though, only covered children under the age of six.

Manitoba's PC government decided to extend the new fee to school-aged children as well, but only on school days. The maximum fee dropped marginally as a result from \$10.30 to \$10, said Jodie Kehl, executive director of the Manitoba Child Care Association.

### Some parents surprised to pay \$20

Kehl said many families of school-age children were surprised to learn they'd still be paying daily fees of around \$20 on non-school-days.

"We've talked about the fact that children do not stop being children at the age of six, and so all families in Manitoba with children and child care should be eligible for the reduced \$10-a-day fee," she said.

In addition, the NDP pledged to expand child-care hours to be more flexible for parents who work variable hours. Kinew said his government would prioritize those centres that expand their hours, but didn't specify how.

Manitoba currently provides increased operating grants to child-care facilities with extended hours, but Kehl said financial incentives to the centres themselves aren't enough.

"It always goes back to the workforce, because without a certified workforce to take care of children during those non-traditional hours, there is no incentive for facilities to do it, really.

...

Kinew also said a NDP government would create more child-care spaces. The party has pledged to adopt the fiscal framework of the PC's last budget, which includes a plan to create 23,000 new spaces by 2026.

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Rochelle Squires, Riel MLA for the Progressive Conservatives, said the government is halfway toward its goal of 23,000 more spaces if you count the child-care spaces opened and announced since 2021.

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Manitoba Liberal Leader Dougald Lamont panned the NDP for being short on specifics.

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