

Trudeau touts new P.E.I. daycare spots, says child care key to cutting cost of living ^[1]

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Excerpts

CORNWALL, P.E.I. – Wages for some early childhood educators in Prince Edward Island will go up this fall and new daycare spaces will be added, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Prince Edward Island Premier Dennis King announced Monday.

Trudeau is in P.E.I. this week for a cabinet retreat that will focus mainly on economic issues, including housing and the rising cost of living. The prime minister said investments by the provincial and federal governments in early learning are part of the solution to Canada's affordability woes.

Offering parents access to more affordable child care helps ease labour shortages, provides employment and makes life less expensive for families struggling with the effects of high inflation, Trudeau said.

...

He also made a point to mention that King is a Progressive Conservative premier who shares this viewpoint, and that King has been "pushing and challenging other premiers" to also consider child-care investments as one tool to help tackle the cost-of-living crisis.

...

P.E.I. was the third province to sign on to the federal government's national child-care program in 2021, which unlocked \$120 million in federal funding for P.E.I. to gradually lower child-care costs for parents to \$10 a day.

King said Monday the deal originally committed the province to meet this fee benchmark by the end of 2024, but he said his government has accelerated these efforts and is now on track to lower daycare fees to \$10 a day by the end of this year.

As part of this federal-provincial agreement, P.E.I. will now spend an additional \$4.6 million to add 300 new child-care spaces throughout the province within the next 18 months, Trudeau and King announced Monday.

The province will also increase wages for early childhood educators who work in designated Early Years Centres and provide them with a new defined contribution pension plan – the first of its kind for daycare workers in P.E.I. The province will spend \$1.18 million a year to provide the matching pension contributions and to support the program's administration by the Early Childhood Development Association of P.E.I.

Improving child-care affordability and the lives of daycare workers is important not only for parents but also for the province in its efforts to entice health-care and other important workers to the Island, King said.

Region: Prince Edward Island ^[3]

Tags: cost of living ^[4]

labour force participation ^[5]

space creation ^[6]

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