

Governments of Canada and Nova Scotia release early learning and child care action plan ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

Excerpts

Families across Canada know that affordable child care is not a luxury—it is a necessity. That is why the Government of Canada is working with provincial, territorial and Indigenous partners to implement a Canada-wide early learning and child care (ELCC) system that will bring fees for regulated child care across the country down to \$10-a-day on average by March 2026.

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Over the course of the three-year plan, Nova Scotia's Canada-wide ELCC Action Plan 2023–2024 to 2025–2026 outlines spending of more than \$440 million in five areas:

Affordability

- More than \$285 million towards the goal of achieving regulated child care fees of \$10-a-day average by March 31, 2026. The Government of Nova Scotia has already reduced child care fees by an average of 50% as of December 2022 saving families up to \$6,000 per year, per child. When combined with the Child Care Subsidy Program, this resulted in more than 3,000 families having access to free child care.

Access

- \$52 million towards the creation of 9,500 new regulated child care spaces by March 2026. In Nova Scotia, 3,861 new spaces have already been created as of December 31, 2023.

Quality

- More than \$105 million toward an early childhood educator (ECE) compensation framework, including ongoing support for the ECE wage grid introduced in November 2022, and implementing retirement and health benefits for all ECEs and ELCC workers in the regulated sector.

Inclusion

- More than \$30 million to implement an inclusive early learning and child care strategy that focuses on respect for diversity and strives for equity, inclusion and accessibility across the child care system; as well as continuing to support inclusion measures for diverse and vulnerable communities, including children with additional needs. Nova Scotia is committed to creating inclusive spaces to support diverse and vulnerable children and families, including children with disabilities and children needing enhanced or individual supports, Indigenous children, Black and other racialized children, children of newcomers, and official language minorities.

Administration

- \$23 million to support the implementation and administration of the Canada–Nova Scotia Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, including building targeted capacity and additional resources within the Government of Nova Scotia to support the implementation of initiatives, and enhanced data collection and reporting.

Building a Canada-wide early learning and child care system that works for families in every region of the country is a key part of the Government of Canada's plan to make life more affordable for families, while supporting a strong workforce and growing the economy.

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Quick facts

- 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 provinces and territories. Combined with other investments, including 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.

- As part of the agreement with Nova Scotia, the Government of Canada is contributing \$605 million over five years to help improve regulated early learning and child care for children under the age of 6 in the province. This is in addition to the over \$69 million announced through the Canada–Nova Scotia ELCC Extension Agreement – 2021 to 2025, which includes about \$10.9 million through a one-time investment in 2021–2022 to support the early childhood workforce.
- Over half of the provinces and territories are delivering regulated early learning and child care for an average of \$10-a-day or less, and the remaining jurisdictions have reduced fees by 50% or more compared to 2019 levels. The goal is that all families in Canada will have access to regulated early learning and child care for an average cost of \$10-a-day by March 2026.
- As part of the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care system, the Government of Canada aims to create approximately 250,000 new child care spaces across the country by March 2026 to give families affordable child care options, no matter where they live.

Related link: Canada Nova Scotia Canada-wide early learning and child care agreement: 2023-2024 to 2025-2026 action plan [3]

Canada-Nova Scotia Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement [4]

Region: Nova Scotia [5]

Tags: action plan [6]

CWELCC [7]

funding [8]

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Links

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