

# Half-a-million daycare spaces part of Kennedy's national learning strategy [CA] <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

See text below.

## EXCERPTS

A national daycare strategy creating 500,000 new spaces within a decade would be on the agenda for a Gerard Kennedy government, the Liberal leadership hopeful said Friday.

"I don't think Canadians really got a chance to get acquainted with what early learning can do," Kennedy said after unveiling his national learning strategy at Queen's University in Kingston, Ont.

...

The former Liberal government committed \$5 billion over five years to help build a national child-care network. Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba signed on to the plan, while the seven other provinces had one-year agreements in principle.

But the Harper government put the brakes on the program when it took office, instead offering families \$1,200 a year for each child under age six.

Kennedy's strategy - to create 300,000 new daycare spaces within four years and half-a-million by 2015 - was part of a larger education initiative targeting aboriginal communities, university undergraduates and students chasing their masters and doctoral degrees.

"Many other countries have now decided to make (education) their way of moving forward," said Kennedy, who added Canada severely lags behind nations such as France and Denmark.

"(Education initiatives) will add up to an economic advantage."

What's needed, Kennedy said, is a national consensus on education issues - an ambitious goal given that education, constitutionally, falls under provincial jurisdiction.

"If it's properly constructed and properly negotiated with the provinces, we can actually have robust national standards," said Kennedy.

"They don't have to be imposed by the federal government."

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- reprinted from the Canadian Press

**Region:** [Canada](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

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