## Province signs day care deal [CA-NB]

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## **EXCERPTS**

The New Brunswick government has signed a day care deal with Ottawa worth \$109.9 million over the next five years. New Brunswick is the last province to sign a day care deal.

New Brunswick had been holding out to include families who chose to keep their children at home within the framework of the deal. At a news conference Thursday details of whether the Lord government achieved that goal were still unclear.

Family and Community Services Minister Joan MacAlpine-Stiles said the government had made a commitment to provide support for stay-at-home parents and they intended to keep that commitment. She said details would be forthcoming.

When asked if federal money would be applied to helping stay-at-home parents, federal Social Development Minister Ken Dryden would only say, "This agreement is for regulated early learning and child care."

MacAlpine-Stiles said her government intends to create 3000 new child care spaces over the life of the agreement.

The provincial government had been coming under increasing pressure to sign a deal. A deal was originally expected six months ago.

The pressure was stepped up even more in the last week, with the threat of a vote of no confidence in the House of Commons scheduled for Monday. Dryden said he cannot guarantee that the deal will stand if there is a change of government.

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