

# Alberta plans higher child care pay; Stay-at-home parents to get extra cash [CA-AB]<sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

See text below.

## EXCERPTS

Extra cash for stay-at-home parents and higher pay for child care workers will be the result of federal money Alberta is receiving from its child care agreement with Ottawa.

But those wanting to see tax credits for parents who stay at home with their children will be disappointed, according to Alberta's Children's Services Minister, Heather Forsyth.

"That wasn't the mandate of the agreement. I brought it to the table with the minister in January about tax incentives and his immediate reaction was it's not part of the discussion and it's not part of his ministry," Ms. Forsyth said at a news conference.

"We are going to continue to lobby on behalf of Albertans in regards to tax incentives. It's clearly not just what Albertans want but it's what Canadians want," she said.

A letter will be sent to federal Finance Minister Ralph Goodale outlining Alberta's wishes, she said.

The Alberta government received \$489-million from Ottawa under its deal.

Some of the cash will go toward a new benefit of up to \$100 per month to help eligible stay-at-home parents pay fees for licensed nursery schools and other approved early childhood development programs beginning in January.

There is also increased funding to improve access to specialized care for children with disabilities.

"It's going to give them more money in their pocket obviously. Stay-at-home parents have told us they face child care expenses as well," Ms. Forsyth said.

The government has boosted both the income threshold to allow more families to be eligible to receive the maximum child care subsidy and the level of the subsidy itself. A two-parent family earning \$39,600 with an infant and a toddler will receive the full subsidy.

The rate for infants will increase by \$100 per month and the pre-school level will rise by \$120.

The other major plank in the child care plan is to boost both wages and training opportunities for workers in accredited daycare and approved family day-home programs retroactive to Sept. 1.

A daycare worker with a two-year diploma would make close to an extra \$3 per hour.

"If I was leaving my children with someone eight hours a day, you would think they would have the respect and professionalism that they deserve," Ms. Forsyth said.

"They said to retain good quality daycare providers we clearly needed to work on increases of their salary so we did that."

- reprinted from the Globe and Mail

**Region:** Canada<sup>[2]</sup>

**Tags:** subsidy<sup>[3]</sup>

funding<sup>[4]</sup>

federalism<sup>[5]</sup>

federal programs<sup>[6]</sup>

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<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/funding> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/federalism> [6]  
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