

# Preschool Excellence Initiative (PEI) <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

See links below.

## Description:

With an aging population, low birth rates, heavy out-migration of young people, and seasonal industries, Prince Edward Island's government is proposing important changes to early childhood services following last month's significant budget commitment which committed to increasing funding for regulated child care by 63%. It has already been announced that half-day kindergarten, which had been delivered by child care centres, will be moving into the public education system this fall. Kindergarten will become a full-school day program staffed by early childhood educators who will now be required to complete a B.Ed. credential. As well, all early childhood services have been moved under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Early Childhood Development.

Recognizing the impact on the early childhood sector of five-year olds moving to the public school system, the provincial government has now announced significant changes for the 0-4 year old population as well -- a new, more publicly managed model for early childhood education and care for children aged 0-4. The policy work that underpins the changes includes a comprehensive "Early Years Report" based on Island-wide consultation with parents and early childhood educators, key informant interviews, and a comprehensive literature review.

The government is now moving ahead on some of the key recommendations needed to initiate the new early years model; others will be fleshed out in the near future. Recommendations include (but are not limited to):

- Ensuring long-term quality and sustainability for the new early years system;
- Ensuring that all early childhood personnel are trained and certified;
- Improving wages and adopting a province-wide salary grid for Early Years Centres;
- Using a newly established planned approach, develop Early Years Centres, the core of the new system;
- Regulating parent fees with uniform rates at Early Years Centres based on a new "unit funding" model;
- Early Years Centres will follow a common curriculum (to be developed), will have mandated parent committees and will be non-profit;
- Expanding infant child care in family child care homes with trained, certified providers, supported by Family Resource Centres and other infrastructure supports;
- Assisting the transition to the Early Years Centre model, including providing funding for private operators who wish to retire their licenses, as well as phasing out direct funding for private centres over the next five years;
- Establishing a community governance structure to provide local management by developing Early Years Advisory Committees, based on "families of schools" these will include members from the education, health, early childhood and other key sectors;
- Improving and expanding training and credentials in early childhood education at all levels;
- Developing an early years curriculum covering birth to school entry following a social pedagogical approach.

## Related documents

[Government press release](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

[Early Years report](#) <sup>[3]</sup>

(See particularly Section Four, pg. 24, for details of proposed framework)

[Parent survey report](#) <sup>[4]</sup>

[PEI plan](#) <sup>[5]</sup>

[Information on the Kindergarten transition](#) <sup>[6]</sup>

## Media coverage

[Daycare viability still a major question](#) <sup>[7]</sup>

CBC News, 2 Jun 2010

[Rural daycares could have trouble meeting numbers](#) <sup>[8]</sup>

CBC News, 1 Jun 2010

Educators pleased with Preschool Excellence Initiative [9]  
Journal Pioneer, 31 May 10

P.E.I. to regulate daycare costs [10]  
CBC News, 28 May 2010

Province reveals plan to revitalize early childhood sector today [11]  
Charlottetown Guardian, 28 May 2010

Province announces new Preschool Excellence Initiative [12]  
Charlottetown Guardian, 28 May 2010

**Region:** Prince Edward Island [13]

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