

Sask. gov't funding 135 new child care spaces ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Some Regina families who have been waiting for a long time will benefit from the opening of more child care spaces.

On Tuesday the Government of Saskatchewan, Ranch Ehrlo and Regina Public Schools announced the opening of 135 licensed child care spaces in four schools in Regina.

Thirty spaces will be open at the Ehrlo Early Learning Centres at Imperial, Ruth Pawson and Gladys McDonald schools. Forty-five spaces will open at Wilfred Walker.

Almost \$2 million from the government will help fund the four new child care centres.

"Providing high quality, safe, educational spaces for children is really a very high priority for our government," Minister of Government Services Laura Ross said.

Some mothers have been waiting for this news for quite a while. Helen He is happy she no longer has to wait for a space to open up for her son Jerry. Now, she can begin a career in teaching.

"Every day I send him here, and when I leave, he is crying, but the teacher will hug him," He said.

She explained the quality of care is the payoff, even though the wait is so long. Ross attributes the wait to a booming province.

"We have a growing and exciting province, so because of that there is much more demand for child spaces," Ross explained. She hopes to see additional spaces in the next provincial budget.

Since 2007 the province has funding 3,000 child care spaces, but wait lists are still long. Wait times will continue to rise thanks to a mini baby boom in Saskatchewan. Compared to 2009, 250 more babies were born this year in the province.

"It depends on the location," Karen Duff from the Ranch Ehrlo Society said. "W.F. Ready School has 170 families on the wait list. At (Wilfred Walker) I believe we have over 60 people on our wait list."

All the new locations already have wait lists of two to three years.

- reprinted from Global News

Region: Saskatchewan ^[2]

Tags: quality ^[3]

 funding ^[4]

 accessibility ^[5]

 spaces ^[6]

 infant/toddler ^[7]

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[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/11/01/sask-govt-funding-135-new-child-care-spaces>

[2] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7858>

[3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/quality>

[4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/funding>

[5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/accessibility>

[6] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/spaces>

[7] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/8165>