

Newfoundland and Labrador Speech from the Throne ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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Excerpt from the Speech from the Throne

My Government understands that a family's path to opportunity may require access to child care. Parents in our province who would like to balance parenting with careers are not always able to do so because they cannot find child care spaces. Many have little choice but to put their careers on hold. My Government believes insufficient access to child care is not only a barrier to employment but also an obstacle to economic growth. My Government is determined to create the conditions that will enable families to grow and children to develop, conditions that will support people in fully participating in the workforce and contributing to the economic growth of our province. My Government is moving forward to develop a comprehensive child care strategy for Newfoundland and Labrador so more families will have opportunities to make balanced choices. In this year's Budget, My Government will announce a significant initiative in child care, with a focus on infant care, with the potential to increase child care spaces. The beauty of this initiative is that it will benefit families not only in larger centres but also in rural regions where child care spaces are especially scarce.

Children will also benefit from age-appropriate programs and services before entering the K-12 school system. In this year's Budget, My Government will introduce measures to advance the implementation of its early childhood learning strategy, entitled Learning from the Start, to give children a firm footing in their emotional, social and cognitive development.

Excerpt from the Premier's response

Another of the many initiatives we referenced today is that, in this year's Budget, we will take a step forward in expanding access to child care in our communities.

Access to child care is critical, not just to the families who need it, but also to our economy -- and therefore to all of us.

Many parents are putting their careers on hold, taking their skills and expertise out of the labour force at the very time we need them when we are working to continue our economic growth.

Mothers in particular are putting their careers on hold for lack of child care, and when they return to the workforce, they have sometimes lost years of experience. They may find that others have leaped ahead of them in terms of seniority and promotions.

They may have a tough time making up for the years they've missed and, as a consequence, may not be able to achieve their earning potential. We lose some of our most capable professionals because of this.

Our budget will contain an initiative related to child care spaces that I am sure you will agree is an exciting one.

We need young families, raising their children here, filling our schools, growing our communities, pursuing their professional goals and helping secure our future.

As highlighted in the Throne Speech, we are taking action now "to swing wide the doors to opportunity for many."

Child care, early childhood learning, education, career access, inclusion for persons with disabilities, poverty reduction, affordable housing -- our investments in these areas all contribute to placing self-reliance within reach of many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians who might not achieve it otherwise.

Region: Newfoundland ^[4]

Tags: funding ^[5]

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