

Bilateral agreement on early learning and care between Ontario and Canada: A fact sheet ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Fact sheet in pdf ^[2]

Excerpts from the fact sheet:

This agreement, called Moving Forward on Early Learning and Child Care is an agreement in principle between the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario. It was signed on May 6, 2005 and allows Ontario to access the first year of the new federal funding announced for child care in this year's federal budget.

This new bilateral agreement also commits Ontario to working with other government jurisdictions in Canada to create an overarching early learning and care framework. This is good as our ultimate goal is still a national child care system that unites all our provinces and territories in delivering a high quality regulated child care service.

Although we are pleased that Ontario has signed the bilateral agreement, and acknowledge the hard work of everyone in the broader child care community in making it happen, there are significant areas for improvement and further action.

For example, unlike the agreements signed in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Ontario's makes no commitment to expanding only in the non-profit sector. This is disappointing given that research in

Canada and internationally is clear that the non-profit model of child care generally delivers higher quality care, provides accountability in the spending of tax dollars, and better protects us from international trade challenges. Additionally, a clear and widely accepted grandparenting option exists for the current commercial sector, supporting their participation in Ontario's new child care plans.

A second area that must be addressed is that this bilateral agreement only supports increased child care for children 0-6 as the new federal dollars are earmarked only for children 0-6. However communities across Ontario clearly need more and better before and after school learning and care opportunities for children 6-12 as well. Our government must do more outside of the terms of this agreement for those children and their families. Finally, this agreement does not bind Ontario to adding any of its own additional funding to child care. This is of concern as it limits the longer-term sustainability of child care in Ontario.

Related link:

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