

# Make child care more affordable, MLA David Swann tells province <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** CBC News

**Source:** CBC News

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 28 Mar 2014

## EXCERPTS:

The provincial government needs to do more to create affordable child-care options for Alberta families, says opposition MLA Dr. David Swann.

The Calgary Liberal hosted a town hall meeting Thursday night at the Hillhurst-Sunnyside community hall to discuss the issue.

"We are spending the least of any province on early education in Canada," he said.

"As a proportion of our GDP we are spending very much lower than we should be to get the quality of care, the salaries, then, of child-care workers."

Natalie Kershaw, a single parent and student who attended the forum, said she has been struggling to find services she can afford.

"Last year I was earning \$24,000 a year. And even getting the full daycare subsidy, I was still paying \$600 a month for daycare," she said.

"Imagine what my fee would be if I had two children. If we really want to reward people who are working who have children, do we want to punish people working with low incomes so they don't have children, or do we want them to not work?"

According to the province, licensed daycare in Alberta costs on average between \$950 and \$1,200 per month.

To qualify for a subsidy, a household income has to be below \$50,000.

Swann says that's not good enough.

He said while Alberta might not be ready for Quebec-style subsidized child care - where parents pay \$7 per day but also pay higher provincial taxes - the province should find ways to make the service more affordable.

Child-care programs are beneficial for the province because they put more parents back into the workforce and increase income tax revenue, Swann added.

-reprinted from CBC News

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

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

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