

Questions and answers to the federal government's hike to the universal child-care benefit ^[1]

Author: Lazaruk, Susan

Source: The Province

Format: Article

Publication Date: 21 Jul 2015

AVAILABILITY

Read online ^[2]

EXCERPTS

Federal National Revenue Minister Kerry-Lynne Findlay, also MP for Delta-Richmond East, made official Monday Ottawa's hike to the universal child-care benefit at a news conference at a North Vancouver community centre.

What does the change mean?

At \$3 billion, it's billed as the largest, one-time benefit payment in federal history and it boosts the amount parents receive in federal monthly payments for their kids.

How much is the new amount?

Parents have since 2006 been receiving a \$100 taxable benefit for each child under age six. The payment is now \$160 a month for children under six, from \$100 a month, and children between six and 17 are now eligible for \$60 a month. The payments are retroactive to Jan. 1, so parents on July 20 received \$60 extra per child under 18 times six months, or \$360 for each child, for the first six months of 2015.

Do families have to register?

No. If parents are already receiving it, or have already applied to receive it, the increase will be applied automatically. Parents should register newborns or any children that have come to live with them.

Is there a means test for the payments, so the money will go only to families making a certain income?

No. "We're making it available to all families. We think that's fair," said Findlay.

Do parents have to spend the money on daycare or do children have to be enrolled in daycare?

No, they can spend the money on anything they choose, with no receipts required. "We want to make sure that they (parents) have this benefit so they can use it in the way they wish," including on daycare, said Findlay.

"It's up to them to choose how best to spend it. Child care is a personal choice. Some people use daycare, some people use a family member" and shift workers may need non-traditional daycare for nights or weekends, she said.

What does the NDP, the official opposition, think of the announcement?

"It's electioneering on the taxpayers' dime," said Newton-North Delta MP Jinny Sims after Findlay's announcement. "Isn't it convenient that six months' worth of cheques are arriving in one lump sum just (months) before an election?"

If elected, would the NDP scrap the payments?

No. "We would keep the enhanced UCCB payments," said Sims. The NDP would also create a national daycare program (with a million spaces countrywide) that would cost parents just \$15 a day. She didn't disclose a cost. "Because for many, many families I deal with, (daycare) is not a choice, it is a necessity."

Why do the Conservatives not support a national daycare program?

"Liberals and NDP will take all this money away and spend it on big, bureaucratic programs that never deliver any results to families," said federal Employment Minister Pierre Poilievre in Halifax on Monday.

If elected, what would the federal Liberals do with the payments?

Liberal Leader Justin Trudeau on Monday in Fredericton said his plan for a child-care benefit includes a larger tax-free monthly payment targeted at families who need it most. "Those people ... making over \$200,000 family income actually don't get any child benefits under the

Liberal plan. So we're focused on helping the middle class and those working hard to join the middle class."

-reprinted from The Province

Region: Canada [3]

Tags: federal programs [4]

Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/15/07/questions-and-answers-federal-governments-hike-universal-child-care>

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/15/07/questions-and-answers-federal-governments-hike-universal-child-care> [2]

<http://www.theprovince.com/news/Questions+answers+federal+government+hike+universal+childcare/11229605/story.html> [3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/federal-programs>