

# Quebec outlines new financing for subsidized daycares <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

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## EXCERPTS

Quebec has unveiled the details of its new funding scheme for provincially subsidized daycares, calling it a more efficient approach to running the system.

The arrangement will see government funding for daycares cut by \$120 million a year – taking full effect in 2018.

The announcement comes after months of negotiations between the government and the four associations representing Quebec's publicly funded centres de la petite enfance (CPEs), as well as subsidized private daycares.

Those negotiations concluded this week with Monday's decision by the Association Québécoise des Centres de la Petite Enfance (AQCPÉ) to accept a government offer of \$41 million in transitional funding to help the province's non-profit, publicly subsidized daycares to prepare for and cope with the coming cuts.

The province's subsidized private daycares will receive \$20 million in transitional funding.

Winners – or losers?

Quebec Family Minister Sébastien Proulx said the transitional funding can only be used for improvements to direct services to children and changes to management practices.

"There will be accountability for this," he said.

Proulx said the measures will bring "more stability" to the province's publicly funded daycare system.

"We're all winners," he said.

Not everyone shared the minister's enthusiasm for the deal, however.

"We don't in any way see this as a victory," Gina Gaspirini, president of the AQCPÉ, told CBC Montreal Tuesday. She said while the transitional funding will help, by 2018, Quebec's network of 950 CPEs will have to cope with the full effect of \$120 million less annually.

How that cut will affect CPEs will only become clear in the next year or so, she said.

"For sure we're cutting in working hours and services because it's a huge amount. Every daycare will have to make major cuts," Gaspirini said.

The number of work hours for educators is one area that she said will likely be affected.

"It means the children might have to spend part of the day with someone who's not their regular educator, parents will have less access to speak with educators, and educators will have less time to plan, to have sit down meetings – all that will have to be cut and that will have a direct impact on the children."

By the numbers

The government provided examples of what the new financing arrangement means for different types of daycare:

- A small CPE of 21 places that currently receives a subsidy of \$261,357 will see that amount cut by 2.6 per cent to \$254,646.
- A subsidized private daycare with 65 places with a current subsidy of \$674,677 will receive \$648,095, representing a reduction of 3.9 per cent.
- A CPE with 60 places that currently receives \$724,270 will have its subsidy reduced to \$691,475, representing a 4.5 per cent reduction.

The new per-child subsidy scale for direct services at CPEs and private daycares was outlined as follows:

## CPEs

- 0-17 months : \$52.47 per day
- 18-47 months: \$32.95 per day
- 48-59 months: \$26.44 per day

## Private daycares

- 0-17 months : \$50.20 per day
- 18-47 months: \$31.53 per day
- 48-59 months: \$25.31 per day

Parents will pay a per-diem rate that starts at \$7.55 for those with a household income under \$50,000 and slowly creeps up as a household's income nears \$75,000.

Above \$75,000, the increase spikes sharply.

Families with a household income of more than \$155,000 will end up paying a total of \$20 per child a day.

## Food, special needs

The new measures include a provision that will see food subsidies indexed to the consumer price index for 2015 and beyond.

The government also said that subsidies for children with special needs and children from disadvantaged communities will not be affected by the funding cuts.

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**Region:** Quebec <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** funding <sup>[4]</sup>

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