

Daycare funding boost means wage increases, more opportunity for low-income families ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

The Nova Scotia government says it will increase wages for early childhood educators and improve access for children from low-income families.

The new measures will be part of the \$6.6-million funding boost for early childhood education, announced in the provincial budget.

Early Childhood Education Minister Karen Casey gave more details about how the money will roll out Friday. The formal announcement for the extra funding is expected next week. Casey told Global News, the new rules will include setting a wage for daycare staff.

The changes are in response to a March report that called on the government to increase hourly pay rates for early childhood workers who are the lowest paid in the country.

The Education Department report made 18 recommendations aimed at improving a system it says needs to be made more affordable and accessible.

The increase in funding also means more subsidies will be available for children in low-income families, Casey said. The current system limits access for low income families who aren't able to pay for the shortfall between the government subsidy and the cost of daycares.

"Together we will close that gap and that will allow more children to be involved in a daycare. Parents want them there, they need to be able to afford it and so we're trying to make that more affordable," she said.

There are currently 5,000 children from low-income families in daycare. Casey said more low income children will be able to access daycare once the changes are in place.

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Region: Nova Scotia ^[3]

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