

EMBARGOED TILL 12:01 AM ET July 9, 2025

Less than half of Canada has met the \$10-a-day child care fee target

OTTAWA—With the 2026 deadline approaching, only six of the country's 13 provinces and territories have met, or exceeded, the \$10-a-day fee target, according to a new report by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA).

In *The Price is Not Right (Yet): \$10 a day child care falling short of target*, CCPA Senior Economist David Macdonald and the Childcare Resource and Research Unit's Martha Friendly surveyed licensed child care in 37 cities as part of their tenth annual—and possibly final—phone survey to gauge child care fees.

"It's almost certain that even after the 2026 deadline passes, many parents in five provinces will be paying more than \$10 a day for child care," says Macdonald. "That being said, the fee drops for parents so far have been staggering in Ontario, Alberta and Nunavut as these jurisdictions had let fees get far too high before the federal program."

Among the report's findings:

- Six provinces and territories have already met or even improved upon the April 2026 federal target for \$10-a-day child care: Nunavut, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador.
- New Brunswick, Alberta and Ontario have set fees as well, but they are above \$10 a day: In Alberta, they're \$16.69 a day; in New Brunswick they're \$18 to \$21 a day depending on age; and in Ontario, they're \$22 a day, although they'll fall to \$12 a day next year.
- Five provinces don't yet have plans to reduce fees to a maximum of \$10 a day by the deadline of April 2026: British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Ontario, New Brunswick and Alberta.
- Cities in provinces without set fees have the highest median fees for infants. For example, Richmond, B.C., has a median of \$46 a day for infants, and in Surrey, B.C., it's \$39 a day—four times the target.
- 11 cities have preschool-age fees at, or below, the \$10-a-day target. But B.C. cities are still well above the target. Richmond has a median preschool-age fee of \$39 a day, while Vancouver's—at \$29 a day—is lower due to many of its spaces being part of that province's \$10 a day program.
- Generally, the higher child care fees were to begin with, the larger the savings for parents. For example, in the preschool-age category, the biggest savings between 2019-20 and 2025 by far were for parents in Iqaluit, with monthly savings per child at just under \$1,000. Parents in Toronto and the GTA cities are saving about \$700 a month now.

"This requires the creation of more, and more equitably distributed, public and non-profit child care spaces, with an intention to avoid child care deserts, says Friendly. "The expansion of the child care workforce is also key, emphasizing the hiring of more workers and the retention of existing ones. The lessons of what works so far has been clear: we need primarily public and non-profit services, affordable set fees for parents and fair wages and good working conditions for workers."

The Price is Not Right (Yet): \$10 a day child care falling short of target is available at:
<https://www.policyalternatives.ca/news-research/the-price-is-not-right-yet/>

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