



# \$10 a day Early Learning and Child Care

Raising kids is expensive, and for too many families in Canada, affordable early learning and child care is not accessible. The COVID-19 pandemic has also made clear that without access to early learning and child care, parents – particularly women – can't fully participate in the workforce. With child care and schools frequently disrupted or closed during the pandemic, parents have struggled to balance the demands of work and raising children. Many reduced their hours, or left jobs altogether.

Affordable child care has the potential to add about 240,000 workers to the Canadian workforce, and studies show that every dollar invested in early childhood education generates between \$1.50 and \$2.80 in economic return. A Canada-wide early learning and child care system will not only support working parents and make life more affordable for families, it will also create jobs, strengthen our economy, and grow the middle class.

A re-elected Liberal government will work with provincial, territorial, and Indigenous partners to build a high-quality, affordable and flexible early learning and child care system across Canada. We will:

- Achieve a 50 per cent reduction in average fees for regulated early learning and child care by the end of next year;
- Reduce regulated child care fees to \$10 a day on average within the next five years, everywhere outside of Quebec;
- Work with the province of Quebec to build on its world-class, affordable child care system, improve working conditions for educators, and create more spaces for families; and

- Invest up to \$30 billion over the next five years, and a minimum of \$9.2 billion per year ongoing, to make a Canada-wide system a reality.

## \$10 a day early learning and child care for families

Since laying out this historic plan for an affordable, accessible, and high-quality Canada-wide early learning and child care system this past spring, the Liberal government signed bilateral 5-year agreements with eight provinces and territories, including British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Yukon.

The eight agreements cover 47 per cent of all children in Canada under the age of six, meaning nearly half of all Canadian families who want access to early learning and child care for \$10 a day will have it, in five years or less. Five of the eight agreements so far commit to achieving \$10 a day child care sooner than the five-year target.

Additionally, under these agreements, Canadian families will see fees for their child care reduced by 50 per cent by the end of 2022. Parents in some cities could save over \$10,000 annually per child by 2022 and almost \$20,000 per child by 2026 under this plan, according to one study.<sup>1</sup>

Together, these current agreements will also lead to the creation of over 125,000 new, regulated child care spaces in the next five years across Canada, helping to make child care more accessible to parents.

Recognizing Quebec's leadership in launching its own affordable child care system for all nearly 25 years ago, the signed asymmetric agreement with the province will deliver a federal transfer of nearly \$6 billion over five years to Quebec, a significant portion of which will go toward strengthening the system and improving working conditions for educators.

### **Supporting a high-quality system and a growing, valued workforce**

The Liberal early learning and child care plan includes:

- Working with provinces and territories to increase quality spaces across the country, primarily in the not-for-profit sector, while ensuring that families in all licensed spaces benefit from more affordable child care;
- Ensuring that early childhood educators – over 95 per cent of whom are women – benefit from greater opportunities for professional development and from the development of tools like wage grids to better value their work; and
- Working in partnership with provinces and territories to ensure the system is accountable to Canadians with publicly available data to measure progress and help continuously improve the system.

### **Improving accessible child care spaces**

For parents of children with disabilities, it is often challenging to find affordable and accessible child care spaces that meet their needs. The Liberal plan for early learning and child care includes a \$29.2 million investment in the Enabling Accessibility Fund to help child care centres improve their physical accessibility. This funding will make spaces more accessible at over 400 child care centres, through constructing ramps and accessible doors, washrooms, and inclusive play structures for all kids.

### **Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care**

The Liberal plan will invest \$2.5 billion over the next five years in Indigenous early learning and child care. This investment will provide high-quality, culturally-appropriate early learning and child care, designed by and with Indigenous partners and communities to meet the needs of Indigenous families wherever they live, help deliver more flexible and full-time hours of care, build, train and retain a skilled workforce, and create up to 3,300 new spaces. Through the Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities, our plan supports before and after-school care for First Nations children on reserve, and builds and renovates new and existing Indigenous child care centres. High-quality, culturally appropriate early learning and child care for Indigenous children, guided by Indigenous priorities, is a vital part of reconciliation.

<sup>1</sup> Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, <https://monitormag.ca/articles/a-10-a-day-national-child-care-plan-will-mean-big-savings-for-parents>