

FEDERAL PROVINCIAL TERRITORIAL AGREEMENTS

Since 2001/02, three agreements between the federal and provincial and territorial governments¹ (FPT agreements) have resulted in substantial new federal funds transferred to provinces and territories specifically to advance services and supports for young children and their families, including child care.

In fact, this year (2005/06) Nova Scotia is receiving \$41.6 million in federal funding for early childhood development, including child care. This is an increase of \$22.5 million from last year. The increased funds are supposed to be invested in regulated² child care.

Here's a summary of the FPT agreements and resulting federal funding that is available to Nova Scotia for 2005/06 (\$ millions):

1. Early Childhood Development Agreement (ECDA) \$14.6M

Signed in 2000, this agreement provides federal funding to provinces and territories for a range of early childhood development programs and services for children under six, including child care. While provinces and territories can determine their own priority areas for spending this money, they agree to:

- work together in four areas (promoting healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy; improving parenting and family supports; strengthening early childhood development, learning and care; and strengthening community supports);
- develop shared guidelines to track progress; and
- report annually to the public.

2. Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care (MLF) \$6.6M

Building on the ECDA, this 2003 agreement specifically directs federal funds to improving access to affordable, quality, regulated early learning and child care for children under six years of age.

3. Agreement-in-Principle on Early Learning and Child Care (Bi-lateral) \$20.4M

In its February 2005 budget, the federal government committed \$5 billion over 5 years towards a national child care system, working in cooperation with provinces and territories. Since May 2005, bi-lateral agreements were signed between the federal government and some provincial/territorial governments³. While there are variations between each of these agreements, to date all build on the Multilateral Framework requirement to invest in regulated child care. Further, these agreements commit the provinces and territories to developing Action Plans that are based on 4 principles for child care called the QUAD principles (quality, universally inclusive, accessible and developmental).⁴

The following table summarizes federal funding to Nova Scotia from the start of these agreements projected through 2007/08⁵:

	(\$ millions) 2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	TOTAL
ECDA	9.0	11.9	14.8	14.7	14.6	14.4	14.3	93.8
MLF	0	0	0.7	4.4	6.6	8.7	10.0	30.4
BI-LATERAL	0	0	0	0	20.4	18.8	33.0	72.2
TOTAL	9.0	11.9	15.5	19.1	41.6	41.9	57.3	196.4

NOTE: Totals may not add due to rounding. The bi-lateral funding for 2005/06 is in a trust fund which is available to the provinces and territories to draw down in either 2004/05 or 2005/06.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

1. Find out if your province or territory has signed the third FPT agreement (Agreement-in-Principle on Early Learning and Child Care) http://www.sdc.gc.ca/en/cs/comm/sd/news/agreements_principle/index.shtml
2. If not, contact your provincial and federal elected representatives and urge them to sign an agreement that will ensure more children and families in your province or territory have access to more regulated, high quality, affordable child care.

FOR MORE INFORMATION/ADDITIONAL LINKS:

1. The FPT Agreements are available at:
<http://www.ecd-elcc.ca/> and http://www.sdc.gc.ca/en/cs/comm/sd/news/agreements_principle/index.shtml
2. Details on the federal transfers to the provinces and territories are available at:
<http://www.fin.gc.ca/fedprov/ecde.html>
Table 4.1 — Federal Support for an Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Initiative
<http://www.fin.gc.ca/budget05/bp/bpc4ae.htm#early>
3. Provincial/territorial elected representatives to Legislatures
<http://www.childcareadvocacy.ca/mtc/en/links.html#gov>
Federal Members of Parliament http://canada.gc.ca/directories/direct_e.html

NOTES

¹ http://www.ecd-elcc.ca/en/ecd/ecd_home.shtml

While the Government of Québec supports the general principles of the ECDA and MLF, “it did not participate in developing these initiatives because it intends to preserve its sole responsibility on social matters. However, Quebec receives its share of federal funding and the Government of Québec is making major investments toward programs and services for families and children.”

² Regulated child care meets minimum standards that are developed by each province and territory.

³ The third agreement is called the Agreement-in-Principle on Early Learning and Child Care. As of October 1, 2005, the federal government has signed bi-lateral versions of this agreement-in-principle with Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Alberta and British Columbia. Others are expected, and in the meantime the 2004/05 and 2005/06 federal funding set aside for this agreement is available to all provinces and territories through a trust.

Bi-lateral agreements http://www.sdc.gc.ca/en/cs/comm/sd/news/agreements_principle/index.shtml

⁴ Fact Sheets:

Universality and Accessibility <http://www.childcareadvocacy.ca/resources/factsheets/english/universality.pdf>

Inclusion <http://www.childcareadvocacy.ca/resources/factsheets/english/inclusion.pdf>

Quality and developmental programming <http://www.childcareadvocacy.ca/resources/factsheets/english/quality.pdf>

⁵ This table does not include funding specifically announced for First Nations ECD and early learning and child care programs on reserves. Figures are subject to revision upon periodic release of Statistics Canada official population estimates.

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