



Employment and
Social Development Canada

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Canada

Investing in our future

National Progress Report on Early Learning and Child Care 2017–18

August 2019



**Investing in our Future -
National Progress Report on Early Learning and Child Care 2017-18**

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Minister's message

I strongly believe that all Canadians should have a real and fair chance to succeed in life. Central to that success is a strong and growing middle class. If we want the middle class to grow, both now and into the future, we need to ensure that all children have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

We know the early years of life are critical in the development and future well-being of children, but many Canadian families face challenges when trying to balance work and home life, including finding affordable, quality child care. It is no surprise then that investments in high-quality early learning and child care are among the best investments we can make to strengthen the social and economic fabric of our country.

That is why our government is investing \$7.5 billion over 11 years to support and create more high-quality, affordable child care across the country. As part of this historic investment, the federal, provincial and territorial ministers most responsible for early learning and child care agreed to a Multilateral Framework in June 2017. The guiding principles of the Framework are to increase quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility and inclusivity in early learning and child care. Since then, we have entered into bilateral agreements with all provinces and territories; providing \$1.2 billion over three years for early learning and child care programs.

By 2020, the investments we are making through the bilateral agreements will lead to the creation of up to 40,000 more affordable child care spaces. I am pleased that we are on track to deliver on those results, having already reached over 50% of our target in 2017-18. This will make it more affordable for some parents to return to work, so fewer families will have to make the difficult choice between working and staying home to care for their children.

In my mandate letter, the Prime Minister highlighted the importance of tracking and reporting on the progress of our commitments to Canadians. In keeping with this, I am pleased to publish our first annual national progress report on early learning and child care to show you the important strides we are making. While significant work remains to reach our long-term vision, I am proud to share with you the important work that has been accomplished thus far to help Canadian children experience the enriching environment of quality early learning and child care.

By taking care of our children today, we are growing and strengthening Canada's middle class for years to come. I look forward to continuing to work with my provincial and territorial colleagues and to engaging with the newly established Early Learning and Child Care Data and Research Expert Panel to make our country a global leader in high-quality, affordable early learning and child care.



The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development

Section 1: National overview

Help for Canadian families

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In Budget 2017, the Government of Canada announced \$7.5 billion over the next 11 years to increase the quality, affordability, inclusivity, accessibility and flexibility of early learning and child care. Investing in education and child care for young children in Canada is one of the best investments that governments can make.

”



– **The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos**,
Minister of Families, Children and Social
Development, June 15, 2017

A recognized need

Research shows that high-quality child care supports positive child development outcomes, particularly among children from disadvantaged families. Studies indicate that high-quality early learning and child care has positive effects on child cognitive and social development, improves school-readiness, and creates a foundation for lifelong learning.

Studies also show that access to affordable, high-quality early learning and child care provides parents, particularly women—who often bear the primary responsibility for the care of young children—with increased opportunity to participate in education and training, to join the labour force in greater numbers, and to earn higher incomes.

However, access to affordable, high-quality child care remains limited and costly, particularly in low- and middle-income families. For regulated child care, parents in Canada pay an average of close to \$11,500 per child per year, and that fee can reach up to \$20,000 in some parts of the country. At the same time, while about 60% of children under the age of six participate in some form of formal or informal child care, availability of regulated child care remains relatively low in Canada outside of Quebec, with only about one in four children having access to licensed child care.

The federal government committed to increase its investments to help Canadian children get the best start in life.¹ This began with a \$500 million investment announced in Budget 2016 “toward establishing a **national framework** on early learning and child care,” including \$100 million for Indigenous early learning and child care. A significant new commitment followed in Budget 2017: an additional \$7 billion to be invested over the next decade to increase the availability of high-quality, affordable child care across the country. This brought the total to **\$7.5 billion** and included a commitment to support the establishment of up to **40,000** more affordable child care spaces by March 2020. This included an investment of \$1.7 billion for the development and implementation of an Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework. This Framework was co-developed with Indigenous partners recognizing the distinct aspirations and early learning and child care priorities of First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, families and communities. In addition to the investments announced in the budget, the federal government provided \$13.7 billion to provinces and territories in 2017-18 through the Canada Social Transfer to support post-secondary education, social assistance and social services, and early childhood development and early learning and child care.²

¹ This federal investment builds on investments by provinces and territories on early learning and child care. Provincial and territorial expenditures are estimated at \$5.7 billion in 2017, based on data compiled by the Atkinson Centre in its [*Early Childhood Education Report 2017*](#).

² In 2004, Canada's major social services transfer program, the Canada Health and Social Transfer, was restructured to create two new transfers – the Canada Health Transfer and the Canada Social Transfer – to improve transparency and accountability of federal support to provinces and territories. The Canada Social Transfer is an unconditional block transfer that provides support for children, post-secondary education, and social programs. Cash payments under the Canada Social Transfer have since been increased through an annual 3% escalator, starting in 2009-10. Budget 2007 indicated that about 10% or \$850 million of the Canada Social Transfer amount (\$9.5 billion) in 2007-08, was provided as support for children. Through Budget 2007, an additional \$250 million annually was also provided to provinces and territories to support the creation of child care spaces, which was rolled into the Canada Social Transfer starting in 2008-09.

Creating a shared vision

This shared vision took shape in June 2017 when the federal, provincial and territorial ministers most responsible for early learning and child care signed the **Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework** (the Framework).³

The Framework created a foundation to work toward a shared long-term vision “where all children can experience the enriching environment of quality early learning and child care” so they can reach their full potential.

Following the signing of the Framework, the federal government entered into three-year **bilateral agreements** with each province and territory. Under these agreements, the Government of Canada is allocating \$1.2 billion over three years (from 2017 to 2020) to the provinces and territories. Spending under the agreements is aligned with the Framework’s **guiding principles**, which focus on areas that will improve quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility and inclusivity in early learning and child care—particularly for families that need it most. Recognizing that the early learning and child care requirements in each jurisdiction are unique, each agreement is accompanied by an action plan detailing how that jurisdiction will support the specific early learning and child care needs in that province or territory.

For highlights of the results to date, see Taking action - Year one results (page 9).

Guiding principles

The guiding principles of the Framework are to increase **quality, accessibility, affordability, flexibility** and **inclusivity** to create an environment where all children have access to early learning and child care that helps them reach their full potential.

High-quality means providing rich early learning experiences and environments. It means viewing children as capable, competent learners who are full of potential. It means valuing relationships that support optimal learning for children, and it recognizes the importance of proper qualifications and training for those working in the field of early childhood learning and care.

Systems that are **accessible, affordable and flexible** are able to respond to the varying needs of children and families. Such systems can support families participating in employment, education or training, and can provide support to harder-to-serve populations.

Inclusive early learning and child care systems respect and value diversity, such as children with varying abilities. It also means supporting families and children who are vulnerable, such as families that are lower-income, Indigenous, located in underserved communities, or families supported by a lone parent or those working non-standard hours.

³ The Government of Quebec supports the general principles of the Framework but does not adhere to it, as it intends to remain solely responsible for early learning and child care within its jurisdiction. However, it will receive its share of the federal funding and will continue to invest significantly in programs and services for families and children.

Innovation + knowledge = better results

To support the successful implementation of the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework, work is underway at the federal level in two key areas: data and innovation.

Ensuring evidence-based decision-making

As part of the \$7.5 billion federal investment, the federal government is investing \$95 million over 10 years to **close data gaps**, track progress and better understand child care challenges across the country and support robust reporting on the progress made.

Toward a comprehensive data and research strategy

Currently, work is underway with stakeholders, experts and academics, provincial and territorial governments, Indigenous partners, and various federal departments to inform the development of a federal data and research strategy for collecting and analyzing information on early learning and child care.

To advance that process and invigorate a national dialogue on the subject, more than 150 participants attended the Early Learning and Child Care Data and Research Conference in February 2019. Its purpose was to identify data and research gaps, discuss the best mechanisms to close these gaps, and help inform where the federal government should focus its efforts. This was in addition to a smaller workshop on early learning and child care data that took place in June 2018 to begin the process of examining what we know and what we need to find out.

In addition, more than 220 applications were received at the end of 2018 following a call for nominations to establish an expert panel on early learning and child care to provide advice on creating the data and research strategy. The **expert panel** on early learning and child care data and research was announced on June 4, 2019 and its membership brings together a diverse group of leaders, practitioners, Indigenous representatives and experts. For more information, please visit Employment and Social Development Canada's webpage on the [expert panel](#).⁴

Employment and Social Development Canada has also been working collaboratively with **Statistics Canada** on a number of projects to increase the knowledge of the child care sector as well as sharing and releasing more data. One new data source is Statistics Canada's Survey on Early Learning and Child Care Arrangements, the results of which were released on April 10, 2019. For more information, please visit Statistics Canada's webpage to find the [Daily](#)⁵ and [infographic](#).⁶

⁴ www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/early-learning-child-care/expert-panel

⁵ www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190410/dq190410a-eng

⁶ www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2019026-eng

Encouraging innovation

The Government of Canada is investing \$100 million over 10 years to **foster innovative practices**. A call for concepts asked participants to submit ideas such as an innovative solution, best practice, tool or methodology that would support learning and child care services aimed at children under six years of age to respond to current and emerging issues. More than 300 concepts were submitted. For additional information on innovative projects taking place across the country, please see Annex A.

Support for francophone minority communities

Early learning and child care can have a profound influence on children's overall development including their language skills and identity. That is why the Government of Canada is investing \$12 million over four years in partnership with the Association des collèges et universités de la francophonie canadienne to support training for early childhood educators and strengthen their capacity in French-speaking minority communities. This multi-year project is being funded as part of the \$20 million investment announced in Budget 2018 to support early childhood development initiatives in Francophone minority communities as part of the Action Plan for Official Languages 2018-2023.

Section 2: Taking action – Year one results

As this year's progress report shows, a significant amount of work has been undertaken across the country since the agreements were signed in 2017. The most recent information from the provinces and territories indicates that, in only the first year (2017-18) of the three-year agreement, an additional **21,205** more affordable child care spaces have been established, representing over half (53%) of the March 2020 target of 40,000 spaces. Families in need have particularly benefitted.

Progress indicators

As part of the Multilateral Framework, all of the provinces and territories must report annually on their progress from a suite of **eight common indicators** supporting the guiding principles of the Multilateral Framework, that is, to increase **quality, accessibility, affordability, inclusivity** and **flexibility** in early learning and child care, according to the areas of investment outlined in each bilateral agreement. Here are some highlights from 2017-18:

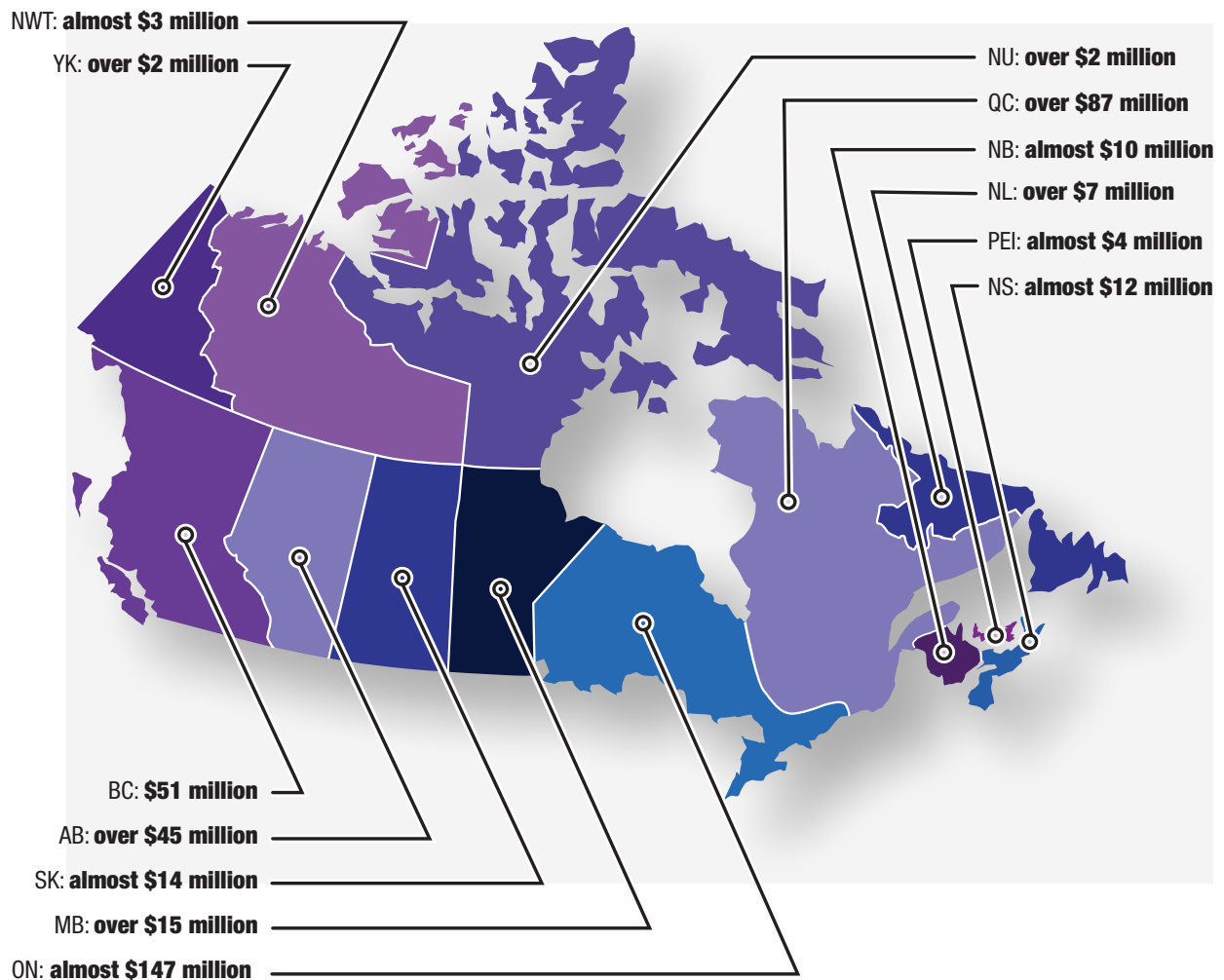
NATIONAL IMPACT (2017-18)

P/T SPECIFIC EXAMPLE (2017-18)

<div>QUALITY</div> <div>ACCESSIBLE AND AFFORDABLE</div> <div>INCLUSIVE</div> <div>FLEXIBLE</div>	<div>1,780</div> <p>Number of ELCC educators and staff across Canada participating in or having increased access to training or professional development opportunities</p>	<div>72%</div> <p>Yukon of the territory's early childhood educators participated in a two-day conference for professional development</p>
	<div>21,205</div> <p>more affordable child care spaces available in 2017-18 across Canada – on track to meet the target of up to 40,000 more spaces by March 2020</p>	<div>\$25/day</div> <p>Alberta 994 children enrolled in 83 early learning and child care centres whose parents paid \$25 per day or less –average pre-schooler fees across Edmonton dropped 6% in 2018 according to the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives</p>
	<div>2,955</div> <p>children from diverse populations benefitting from inclusive child care programming (including Indigenous children, children with additional support needs, children from francophone minority communities and recent immigrants)</p>	<div>\$2.2m</div> <p>Saskatchewan invested to support 144 children with unique abilities through the Enhanced Accessibility Grant or the Early Learning Intensive Support Pilot</p>
	<div>1,960</div> <p>flexible child care spaces created for children whose parents work non-traditional hours or in seasonal employment</p>	<div>\$500k</div> <p>Prince Edward Island allocated to support parents working non-standard hours and/or in seasonal employment with 48 child care spaces in five facilities</p>

Federal funding transfers to provinces and territories

A total of **\$400 million** for the early learning and child care initiative was transferred to the provinces and territories in 2017–18.



Section 3: Results by province and territory

The provinces and territories have provided summaries of their results from the first year of the bilateral agreements (2017-18) as well as their plans going forward. Of note, provinces and territories could carry forward a significant portion of their first-year funding to fiscal year 2018-19, and some are still in the process of implementing new programs and services. The results of these efforts will thus become more evident in the second and third year of the agreements.

The 13 bilateral agreements were signed over a nine month period between June 2017 and March 2018.

2017:

Ontario	June 16
Prince Edward Island	August 29
New Brunswick	September 8
Nunavut	September 20
Manitoba	December 14
Newfoundland and Labrador	December 15
Alberta	December 20

2018:

Nova Scotia	January 10
Yukon	February 7
Northwest Territories	February 14
British Columbia	February 23
Saskatchewan	March 5
Quebec	March 29

The staggered dates mean that results in the first year (2017–18) are limited in some cases, but each jurisdiction has now put measures in place that will lead to lasting improvements in the years to come.

British Columbia

Funding under the bilateral agreement: approximately \$155.6 million over three years.

Achievements

Training fund to support recruitment and retention of early childhood educators

Early childhood educators are critical to the quality of early learning in licensed facilities. In 2017-18, British Columbia allocated \$10 million to expand and enhance the Early Childhood Educator Bursary Program, which helps recipients reduce the cost of pursuing early childhood education credentials. The program is delivered through Early Childhood Educators of BC, the provincial association for the profession. The association promotes professionalism and improved educational preparation for its members and provides professional support and resources for educators to improve the quality of the experiences they are able to provide to children.

The new early childhood education support fund has two funding streams:

- **The Early Childhood Education Bursary Fund.** This fund increases the maximum bursary amount from \$300 to \$500 per course, up to a maximum of \$4,000 per semester. It provides 60% of the funding to students up front, with the remaining 40% provided upon proof of successful completion of the eligible courses.
- **The Workforce Development Bursary Fund.** This fund provides up to \$5,000 per semester to existing early learning and child care professionals to help with the costs of taking time away from work to attend courses, including tuition, books, and materials, occasional child care, and travel to courses and practicum placements that are away from learners' home communities.

Expansion of culturally based Indigenous child care

Aboriginal Head Start programs are a no-fee Indigenous-led early learning and child care program offered to both on- and off-reserve communities. Federal funding to expand Aboriginal Head Start includes wrap-around family support, supportive services (including Elder involvement, provision of food and transportation) and inclusion for up to 600 new spaces for infants, toddlers and three- to five-year-olds across the province by 2020. The Aboriginal Head Start Association of BC, the First Nations Health Authority and the British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development are working closely together to implement the expanded programs.

Enhanced funding for Young Parent Programs

Young Parent Programs throughout British Columbia offer child care services for children of young parents who are working to complete their high school education. These programs also provide additional wrap-around services to meet the needs of young parents and their children. Prior to the implementation of the bilateral agreement, parents enrolled in the Young Parent Program could receive as much as \$1,000 per month toward their child care costs. Through the bilateral agreement, BC has increased the maximum monthly amount to \$1,500 to promote program sustainability and help ensure young families receive this much-needed support. This initiative will provide support to 249 children and their families.

Enhanced funding for Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development programs

Supported Child Development (SCD) programs help to make child care more accessible by enabling children with extra support needs to fully participate in child care and early learning programs. Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD) programs, which are available to Indigenous children both on- and off-reserve, offer similar services to SCD within a cultural model. ASCD programs enable Indigenous children with extra support needs to be included meaningfully in child care programs while also learning about their heritage and culture. Supports offered by SCD and ASCD programs can range from helping the child care facility build their capacity to support a variety of extra support needs, such as through program and equipment adaptations, or providing dedicated staffing support to assist with meeting a child's needs. Through the bilateral agreement, \$30-million has been invested over three years to make these programs more accessible for waiting families, supporting an estimated 1,428 more children and their families.

Anticipated achievements

- **Childcare BC Universal Prototype Sites.** Increasing the affordability of child care is another priority, which is why the province is investing \$60 million over two years to convert existing licensed child care facilities into Childcare BC Universal Prototype Sites, supporting up to 1,800 spaces by 2020. Families using the prototype sites will pay a maximum fee of \$200 per month for full time regular child care. Some lower-income families at Prototype Sites receive additional support through the Province's Affordable Child Care Benefit and may pay less than \$200 per month to no fee at all.
- **Community Child Care Space Creation Program.** Through the bilateral agreement, British Columbia is allocating funding to enhance the accessibility of child care through the Community Child Care Space Creation Program, with a particular focus on supporting the creation of infant and toddler spaces.

Alberta

Funding under the bilateral agreement: approximately \$136.4 million over three years.

Achievements

In 2017, the Government of Alberta launched the Early Learning and Child Care Centres pilot program at 22 day care locations, with parent fees capped at \$25 per day. The pilot is designed to test concepts in the areas of access, affordability, and quality. The participating centres provide care to children from birth to kindergarten and help to increase access to quality child care through the creation of new spaces or increased enrolment.

The funding through the Canada–Alberta Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, \$43.3 million in 2017-18, expanded this pilot to 100 additional centres, of which 92 received grant funds in the 2017-18 fiscal year.

The following are some of the program components implemented through the expansion of the pilot:

Access - Centres have increased access by creating new child care spaces or by hiring additional staff so that vacant spaces can be filled and enrolment increased.

Affordability - The 92 Early Learning and Child Care Centres that received grant funding in 2017-18 offered child care with maximum fees of \$25 per day. Additionally, low and middle-income families who cannot afford \$25/day for child care fees may be eligible for a child care subsidy (depending on their income, the age of their child and type of child care).

Quality - Centres participating in the pilot program implement Flight, a curriculum framework intended to guide early learning and child care educators in their work with young children.

Inclusivity - Centres must follow inclusive practices for children with diverse needs to ensure they are included in programming. Centres are also required to develop one or more improvements, such as serving vulnerable populations and must work with Getting Ready for Inclusion Today (GRIT), an organization that helps child care educators build their skills and knowledge to support inclusion of all children.

Research and Development

Funds provided to MacEwan University and Mount Royal University for the development of early learning and child care curriculum resources and training. This includes:

- Producing, piloting, refining and expanding Flight (Alberta's curriculum framework)
- Conducting a pilot test to explore models of pedagogical leadership that would support staff in licensed Early Learning and Child Care Centres to use the Flight framework to guide curriculum planning and practices
- Conducting research and development to implement and apply the curriculum methodology within the day care context
- Developing online course materials to introduce the theory and concepts from Flight
- Supporting participating Francophone Early Learning and Child Care Centres to implement Flight

Saskatchewan

Funding under the bilateral agreement: approximately \$41.3 million over three years.

Achievements

Previous engagement with stakeholders from the Saskatchewan Disability Strategy, the Saskatchewan Poverty Reduction Strategy and parent and community focus groups have been vital to understanding needs within the early learning and child care sector. Some results achieved in the first year of the agreement are highlighted below.

Quality

Significant investments were made to support early childhood educator staff and to enhance children's learning environments, primarily through the Play and Exploration Grant and the Active Play Grant. A total of 332 licensed child care centres and 251 licensed child care homes received a combined total of \$2.5 million. The Play and Exploration Grant helps centres implement Saskatchewan's foundational early learning framework and supports indoor and outdoor play and exploration. Eligible expenditures may include furniture, equipment, materials and resource books. Similarly, the Active Play Grant supports the purchase of materials to encourage active play in licensed child care settings.

Accessibility

A variety of both one-time and periodic grants were provided to licensed child care facilities to ease the financial burden and encourage new start-ups to increase accessibility. These grants include start-up grants; capital grants (to assist with the cost of renovating or constructing new child care spaces in centres); fire and health and safety grants (to help programs meet these requirements as part of the licensing process); nutritional grants (to support centres' abilities to provide well-balanced nutritious meals and snacks); and equipment and program grants (to support the purchase of equipment and furnishings to enhance children's activities).

Inclusivity

Supporting inclusive early learning and child care opportunities for young children with disabilities is a priority for Saskatchewan. The Early Learning and Intensive Support Pilot provides children with intensive needs access to pre-kindergarten programs. The Enhanced Accessibility Grant provides monthly financial support to facilities to pay for the additional staff required to care for children with particularly challenging needs or behaviours.

Inclusion of French-language communities

Based on consultation with Fransaskoises parent boards and the Conseil des écoles fransaskoises, efforts are being made to develop additional child care spaces in Francophone schools and communities (30 Francophone spaces were allocated in Regina in 2017-18). Saskatchewan will also continue to build curriculum and foundational documents in French to ensure culturally appropriate, quality environments and equitable opportunities for Francophone children in child care and early learning programs.

Manitoba

Funding under the bilateral agreement: approximately \$46.9 million over three years.

Achievements

Support for new and newly funded affordable and accessible spaces

Manitoba provided a new operating subsidy for 621 licensed child care spaces in 63 child care facilities across the province to help ensure that child care is affordable for families. These spaces were created through expansions undertaken by facilities in response to the needs of their communities. Thompson Children's World Inc. received capital and operating subsidy funding to create 12 new licensed spaces in Thompson, which has a low rate of coverage for early learning and child care services. The Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation received funding to invest in capital projects to create new infant and preschool licensed early learning and child care spaces in communities with greater needs. Community-based and school-based capital projects are underway, which will keep Manitoba on track to reach the targeted 780 newly created and funded spaces by the end of the bilateral term.

Build sector capacity and stability

Manitoba provided funding to Red River College to develop Manitoba Access, an online portal allowing free access to the Science of Early Child Development, which has two regularly updated living textbooks and three modules. All Manitobans, including centre staff and home-based providers now have access to current research, training and resources in a convenient online platform that is accessible via computer, tablet and smartphone. Additionally, the Manitoba Child Care Association received funding to support a new online training program developed specifically for the early learning and child care sector to strengthen board governance and the administration of non-profit centres. It is anticipated that throughout the period of the agreement, board members of up to 100 centres will participate in the training. Manitoba funded a pilot project using the Circle of Security approach, which is an early

intervention model to increase attachment and security in children of all abilities. The goal over the period of the agreement is to train up to 100 facilitators and expand the use of this approach in more facilities, which will build capacity to meet the diverse needs of all children in a secure and inclusive environment. Development work continued to support the implementation of a pilot mentorship program to support home-based providers.

Implement a rural and northern strategy

Manitoba piloted an enhanced operating subsidy program to alleviate challenges associated with high operational costs and to improve their financial stability at 12 early learning and child care facilities with a total of 793 spaces in rural and Northern Manitoba. This additional funding will allow these facilities to hire and retain more qualified staff and offer more flexible, high quality, inclusive child care programming to better serve these higher-need communities. The foundation was laid to expand the Competency Based Assessment Program in rural communities and to explore opportunities for more flexible operations for home-based providers during the balance of the bilateral term.

Ensure diversity and inclusion

Manitoba launched a pilot program that allocated grant funding to six community service organizations to hire early childhood educators. These organizations provide casual child care services for children while their parents are receiving supportive programming such as English as an additional language classes, literacy and job skill courses, parenting courses and counselling. While families are moving through a significant transition, early childhood educators provide quality early learning and child care programming for their children, with the goal of enhancing the children's developmental outcomes and allowing the family to establish a level of security. The pilot will continue to support other community service organizations through the bilateral term. Development work continued to support the implementation of a new dual stream service and funding approach for inclusion support.

Ontario

Funding under the bilateral agreement: approximately \$439.1 million over three years.

Achievements

Increasing access to affordable, high-quality licensed child care

The funding under the Canada–Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement has provided support for new full or partial fee subsidies and has increased access. In 2017, more than 12,700 children were supported through increased access, increased affordability, fee subsidies and community-based capital.

Increasing access to EarlyON Child and Family Centres

Approximately 145 new EarlyON Child and Family Centre rooms in 88 locations were approved by the ministry in 2017-18, increasing access to no-cost, high-quality early-years experiences. Of these, 84 were new rooms in 47 locations that were approved using approximately \$21.4 million invested by the federal government through the bilateral agreement. The ministry is also monitoring potential EarlyON expansion supported through operating funding provided under the agreement.

Access to high-quality training and professional learning opportunities for those in the early years and child care workforce

To support access to high-quality training and professional development, the Early Childhood Educators Qualifications Upgrade Program (ECE QUP) supports individuals working in eligible child care and early years settings to obtain an early childhood education diploma and become eligible to apply for membership with the College of Early Childhood Educators. The ECE QUP also provides opportunities for leadership development for those who already have their Registered Early Childhood Educator (RECE) designation and are working in supervisory roles (or who aspire to do so). Financial support is available to eligible applicants in the form of education grants, travel grants, book allowances and training allowances. The ministry continues to work to expand access to the program to increase the number of RECEs in child care and early years programs.

Centres of Excellence for Early Years and Child Care is a new initiative being funded as part of Ontario's action plan under the bilateral agreement aimed at supporting a high-quality early years and child care workforce. Provincial, Francophone and Indigenous Centres of Excellence have been established to:

- Support alignment with the provincial early years curriculum *How Does Learning Happen?* and promote cohesion in pedagogical approaches and practises across early years programs
- Build the pedagogical leadership capacity of program staff working in the early years sector through innovative professional learning networks and strategies
- Create linkages to and/or develop professional learning resources that are responsive to the needs of the sector and accessible online

The following organizations, working in collaboration with partners across the province, were selected to lead the three Centres of Excellence:

- Provincial Centre of Excellence: Western University and Ontario Reggio Association
- Francophone Centre of Excellence: Collège Boréal and L'Association francophone à l'éducation des services à l'enfance de l'Ontario.
- Indigenous Centre of Excellence: Ontario Aboriginal Head Start Association and Kenjigewin Teg Education Institute

Quebec

Funding under the bilateral agreement: approximately \$260.5 million over three years

Quebec is seen as a leader in early learning and child care and has a well-established low-fee child care system (introduced in 1997). Quebec also has the highest child care coverage with 78% of children under six years participating in some form of formal or informal child care, and more specifically, 47% having access to a licensed child care space. As a result, in 2016, 81% of women aged 15 to 44 in Quebec participated in the labour market, with the largest increase among women with young children. From 1996 to 2016, the labour force participation rate of women whose youngest child was under the age of three increased by 19 percentage points in Quebec (from 61% to 80%).

As of March 31, 2018, nearly 300,000 licensed spaces are offered by educational day care centres. In this regard, the annual budget for the educational day care services fund for 2017-18 is \$2.3 billion (up 3% over 2016-17). Quebec offers the most affordable child care in Canada with close to 60% of families – those earning an annual maximum of \$75,820 – paying less than \$9 per day.

While the Government of Quebec supports the general principles of the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework, it does not adhere to it, as it intends to remain solely responsible for early learning and child care within its jurisdiction. However, it will receive its share of the federal funding and will continue to invest significantly in programs and services for families and children. On March 29, 2018, the Canada-Quebec Early Learning and Child Care Agreement was signed allocating approximately \$262 million over three years, to provide additional direct services to Quebec families.

Examples of direct services to families⁷

Creation of 5,800 new child care spaces

To strengthen the educational child care system, Quebec has committed to creating 5,800 subsidized spaces across Quebec, by:

- moving forward with the creation of 3,800 new spaces for 92 previously identified projects lowering the contribution from the child care centres (CPEs) toward the financing of their infrastructure, from 50% to 25%, and in some cases, offering a complete exemption
- putting out a call for tenders for 2,000 spaces between now and June 2018 for CPEs (85%) and subsidized child care (15%), for:
 - ▶ 1,400 spaces in regions facing a shortage of spaces
 - ▶ 200 spaces in disadvantaged communities
 - ▶ 400 spaces allocated on the recommendation of advisory committees

"Agir tôt"

Early childhood intervention has an important impact on children's educational success when they start school and as they continue their studies. More specifically, these investments will make it possible to:

- Enhance exceptional integration support measures in early learning and child care services for children with significant needs
- Increase specific allowances to coordinating offices for projects aimed at improving the educational quality of home-based educational day care centres
- Increase the funding provided to family community organizations and community drop-in day cares in order to enhance their capacity to support parents with a greater need for support so they can play a role in the overall development and educational success of their children
- Finance the development or redevelopment of outdoor playgrounds at child care centres
- Provide financial support to organizations so they can reach parents of children who do not attend educational services, in particular those in disadvantaged communities and immigrants, and provide them with appropriate educational services

⁷ Examples are from the Canada-Quebec Early Learning and Child Care Agreement

New Brunswick

Funding under the bilateral agreement: approximately \$29.3 million over three years.

Achievements

The 2017-18 funding under the Canada–New Brunswick Early Child Care Agreement has provided support for the following areas:

New Brunswick Early Learning Centres

New Brunswick Early Learning Centre is a designation awarded to licensed early learning and child care facilities. As of April 2018, a total of 25 designated locations were operating in the province, providing a total of 1,828 spaces for children from birth to age five. Designated centres must adhere to a number of requirements, including:

- Establishing a low-fee policy to ensure affordable services
- Improving capacity to serve all children, including those with disabilities and diverse needs, through inclusive policies and practices
- Creating quality improvement plans and undergoing quality assessments
- Fostering the vitality and the cultural development of New Brunswick's Acadian and Francophone communities by developing guidelines to ensure strong language acquisition and cultural identity

Early learning and child care improvement grant

To increase the quality of both indoor and outdoor learning environments, approximately \$3.1 million was distributed to 506 licensed child care facilities across the province. Operators must use 50% of the funding to create or enhance natural outdoor play spaces or facilitate outdoor experiences that align with the early learning and child care curriculum.

Guidelines for language acquisition and cultural identity learning

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development entered into an agreement with l'Association francophone des parents du Nouveau-Brunswick to recommend guidelines for supporting early childhood educators so they can use proven teaching practices to integrate language acquisition and cultural identity learning within centres that use the Curriculum éducatif pour la petite enfance francophone du Nouveau-Brunswick.

Quality assessment and inclusion policy

In 2017-18, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development entered into a partnership with the New Brunswick Association for Community Living to help designated centres implement policies that are based on a provincial inclusion policy. Representatives from the association will work with facility operators to assess their current practices and develop their own inclusion policies.

Prince Edward Island

Funding under the bilateral agreement: approximately \$10.6 million over three years.

Achievements

Improving accessibility and affordability of child care

To improve access and gain a comprehensive understanding of the demand for early learning and child care, PEI has contracted the Early Childhood Development Association to update and enhance the Early Learning and Child Care Registry.

A capital grant program was established that offers eligible centres up to \$6,000 for equipment and \$10,000 for capital improvements to assist licensed centres increase accessibility of child care for infants and preschoolers. This will support the creation of 201 licensed spaces. In 2017-18, a total of 21 grants were awarded and \$200,964 was paid out.

To support parents who work non-standard hours or in seasonal employment, a total of \$500,000 in federal funding was allocated in 2017-18. Of this investment, \$19,568 was expended toward initial investments, to support five Alternate Hours Projects, allowing these centres to provide more flexible child care programs for at least 48 children.

Supports for children and families with diverse needs

PEI is expanding Handle with Care, a culturally relevant interactive parenting program that promotes the mental health and well-being of young children from birth to age six and the health of their parents or caregivers in partnership with the Early Childhood Development Association. In 2017-18, 26 programs were delivered to 213 participants. Two workshops were conducted that provided training to 25 facilitators.

In response to the growth of newcomer families, in partnership the PEI Association for Newcomers, PEI is providing outreach and support to licensed early learning and child care programs to help them respond to the needs of newcomer families. In 2017-18, 15 licensed centres with a total capacity of 717 spaces participated in the project.

PEI is investing to provide Acadian and Francophone families with language development and family literacy support to help children learn and maintain their language through the Francophone home visiting/francization program. In 2017-18, the focus was on designing the program, establishing key partnerships, and beginning program delivery. The program was implemented in early 2018 and, by March 31, 2018, 16 families from French-language minority communities had registered.

To increase access to early learning and child care for children with unique needs, funding supported two programs that helped a total of 33 children with unique abilities through the Early Years Autism Service and the Special Needs Assistant Program. The number of children on the waiting list for autism services decreased from 42 to 18, and the number of autism assistants increased from 40 to 56. In March 2018, wait times dropped from approximately 12 months to between six and eight months.

Improving the quality of child care

To increase the number of certified staff, funding was allocated to the Early Childhood Education Training Grant. This grant provides casual, part-time and temporary employees of licensed Early Learning and Child Care Centres to pay for course fees and textbooks. In total, 109 applications were approved for funding. In addition, to assist centres in providing quality programming to children and their families, funding was allocated to expand the Quality Enhancement Grant. This grant aims to foster relationships between children, their families and communities, and to provide high-quality environments to bolster all areas of child development.

Nova Scotia

Funding under the bilateral agreement: approximately \$35.1 million over three years.

Achievements

Funding under the Canada–Nova Scotia Early Learning and Child Care Agreement has resulted in more than 1,600 children in Nova Scotia’s early childhood education system becoming eligible for increased subsidy rates, making early learning programs more affordable and accessible for new families coming into the system. Changes to the subsidies will save Nova Scotia families approximately \$5 million.

- An additional 666 children now receive a higher subsidy rate.
- An additional 720 children now receive the maximum subsidy.
- Of the existing 1,877 part-day spaces, 20% (approximately 375 spaces) will be subsidized.

In September 2017, the province launched its free pre-primary program for four-year-olds, which will be fully implemented across the province by the beginning of the 2020-21 school year. The program is a child-centred, play-based, and developmentally appropriate experience for children who will be entering primary school the following September. The program is designed to facilitate a smooth transition to elementary school and provide children with the experiences required to succeed in school and life.

In January 2018, Nova Scotia introduced a new funding model for child care centre employers to ensure stronger accountability for the province’s investments in regulated child care. Quality Matters is a province-wide assessment program that will be used to determine funding eligibility for licensed centres. The program focuses on continuous quality improvement and ties funding to outcomes in key areas (leadership, qualifications, learning environment, relationships, and inclusion) and to compliance and accountability measures.

Nova Scotia is investing significantly in training and development for early childhood educators and has made key policy decisions regarding their wages. As of fall 2016, all child care centre employers who receive government funding and are licensed to provide child care in Nova Scotia are required to provide a minimum wage of \$17 to \$19 per hour (up from below \$13 per hour) to early childhood educators who have a two-year diploma or four-year degree.

By 2020, the Government of Nova Scotia will use the federal funding to support:

- 15 new regulated child care centres in communities that demonstrate need
- 500 new spaces, 250 (50%) of which will be located in rural and/or vulnerable communities
- 90 new family home day care sites (a 35% increase), with 50% targeted at infants
- 200 additional child care staff in completing an early childhood education diploma, raising the percentage of staff trained from 50% to 67% of the staff required for a sufficient staff–child ratio
- 140 child care staff in completing the Recognition of Prior Learning Process to have their training recognized in Nova Scotia
- 100 individuals benefitting from bursaries to allow them to earn their early childhood education diploma
- Up to 100 additional children benefitting from early childhood development intervention services, with a priority on ensuring families from under-represented cultural and linguistic groups have equitable access to these services
- Piloting and evaluating the Pyramid Model in approximately 40 sites to inform its planned implementation across the province

Newfoundland and Labrador

Funding under the bilateral agreement: approximately \$22 million over three years.

The federal funding will be applied in the following areas:

Improve accessibility and affordability

- New operating grants are being introduced for licensed family child care homes to reduce costs for low- and moderate-income families and support the affordability of child care.
- The net family income threshold used for the Child Care Services Subsidy is being raised to increase the number of families that are eligible for full and partial subsidies. This will further reduce the parental contribution for child care for those who are not currently eligible for the full subsidy.
- The Child Care Capacity Initiative is being enhanced to provide developmental, capital and start-up funding to not-for-profit community groups that want to develop child care centres. This will increase the number of regulated child care services, particularly in underserved areas, with a focus on rural, linguistic minority and Indigenous communities.

Enhance quality

- Grants, bursaries and professional learning opportunities are being enhanced to create additional incentives for early childhood educators to increase their qualifications, which will have a positive impact on the quality of care that children receive.
- The new one-year Capital Renovation Grant for licensed child care centres will be made available to centres and family child care homes that currently hold waivers for the physical space requirements under the new *Child Care Act*. This new legislation improved quality in a number of areas, including staff qualifications, programming and minimum space requirements for child care services.
- A quality improvement program will be developed and rolled out in 2018-19 to improve program design and physical environments.

Anticipated achievements

- Provide support for an additional 540 affordable child care spaces, including approximately 180 spaces in licensed child care centres and 360 spaces in family child care homes. It will also provide a full subsidy to 100 additional families and a partial subsidy to 60 families.
- Support approximately 180 spaces in five new licensed child care centres, of which one will be a new or expanded centre for an Indigenous community or group.
- Support approximately 56 spaces in 10 new family child care homes in rural settings. Up to two of the 10 homes (approximately 12 spaces) will serve an official language minority community.
- Support early childhood educators through enhancements to grants, bursaries and professional learning opportunities. Approximately 50 educators will receive a certificate or diploma in early childhood education (impacting approximately 400 children).
- Implement a new program to improve the quality of child care program design and physical environments. Developed in 2018-19, this program will offer dedicated child care quality consultants who will work with any providers who want to participate. The program is expected to impact approximately 1,850 spaces in child care centres and family child care homes and involve a total of approximately 240 early childhood educators.
- Implement a new Quality Enhancement Grant to boost quality and provide consultation services. This will be available to child care providers participating in the Operating Grant Program. It is anticipated that 15 centres and five family child care homes will apply, impacting a total of 550 spaces.

Nunavut

Funding under the bilateral agreement: approximately \$7.2 million over three years.

The territory's funding will focus on early learning and child care programs and services to support parents, families and communities to ensure the best possible future for children in the territory.

Nunavut is investing in the following priority areas:

- Supporting and maintaining access to affordable early learning and child care programs and services through operations and maintenance funding and creating child care spaces in underserved communities
- Promoting high-quality, inclusive child care programs and services through greater training and professional development opportunities for the early learning and child care workforce
- Developing learning and teaching resources and programming, in all of Nunavut's official languages, for use in early learning and child care centres

Achievements

As of March 31, 2018, 47 of 52 facilities (90%) accessed operations and maintenance top-up funding. This means that the parents or guardians of 1,001 children benefitted from maintained or reduced fees, increasing the affordability of child care. This funding helps early learning and child care centres bridge the gap between the cost of running their programs and the amount of money they bring in (through funding or revenues) without raising parental fees. The funding will therefore help centres deliver more affordable and more consistent programs and services.

All licensed child care facilities in Nunavut are encouraged to offer culturally and linguistically relevant programming. As of March 31, 2018, a total of 1,089 children in these centres had the opportunity to benefit from various programs that support Indigenous language and culturally appropriate early learning and child care.

Anticipated achievements

In 2018-19, Nunavut will work to develop resources that are culturally relevant and increase the level of program and training resources available to support the Inuit language and culture, particularly in recognition of the International Year of Indigenous Languages in 2019.

The Department of Education is planning to deliver a territory-wide training and professional development session as well as training on financial literacy and management for child care staff. This will provide staff with the opportunity to come together to share best practices, identify common challenges and issues, and access training and professional development opportunities.

Northwest Territories

Funding under the bilateral agreement: approximately \$7.4 million over three years.

Due to the late signing of the Canada–Northwest Territories Early Learning and Child Care Agreement in 2017-18, the NWT is undertaking significant work in 2018-19 to further improve the quality and accessibility of child care. This includes the development and distribution of cultural resources, increasing the number of qualified early childhood development professionals working in licensed programs through post-secondary learning opportunities, as well as supporting access to early learning and child care within all communities in the NWT through funding for new child care spaces.

Achievements

High quality

High-quality early childhood programs require well-trained and knowledgeable educators. As part of the bilateral agreement, the NWT will provide funding to increase the number of scholarships offered to support students enrolled in full-time early childhood education programs. As of March 31, 2018, a total of 13 scholarships had been provided to students pursuing post-secondary education in early childhood development (three funded through the bilateral agreement and 10 funded through the territorial budget). Of the 228 early childhood staff working in licensed facilities who received the Early Childhood Staff Grant, 25 have a certificate and 17 have a diploma (or higher) in early childhood development from an accredited post-secondary institution.

In 2018-19, the NWT will also be supporting high-quality child care through increased opportunities for professional development and training as well as the development and distribution of culturally-appropriate resources such as music and books in Indigenous languages that are reflective of Indigenous beliefs and culture. Funding will also be used to support health and safety in licensed centre-based early childhood programs and family day homes, and the Provider Enhancement Grant will be created to help licensed early childhood programs purchase or replace equipment that supports quality play-based environments.

Accessibility

Improving access to early learning and child care not only includes supporting the development of new child care spaces, but also supporting the sustainability of existing licensed early childhood programs and improving access in underserved communities. As of March 31, 2018, there were 111 licensed early childhood programs operating in 22 of 33 communities in the NWT. This includes 18 day care centres, 18 preschool programs, 51 family day homes, and 24 before- and after-school programs.

The NWT will engage with communities to identify gaps and opportunities for early learning and child care options and assist with raising awareness and knowledge of the importance of early childhood development. The engagement will also support communities by dedicating funding to improving the accessibility of child care programs that best meet their needs.

A total of 614 before- and after-school spaces (located in licensed child care centres) benefitted from funding to support the delivery and sustainability of high-quality early learning and child care experiences for children aged four to 11 years. A total of 13 new before- and after-school spaces were created. Although the funding is targeted to children aged four to five years, because licensed early childhood programs provide services for children up to age 11, there is an incidental benefit for children aged six to 11. In addition, 650 preschool spaces (including 28 new preschool spaces and one French-language program with 22 licensed spaces) also benefitted from funding.

Yukon

Funding under the bilateral agreement: approximately \$7.2 million over three years.

Achievements

Improving quality through training

Recognizing the challenges in accessing training opportunities and professional development materials, Yukon, working in partnership with the Yukon Child Care Association, organized a two-day professional development conference that was attended by 165 individuals (72% of Yukon's early childhood educators). The conference will be held annually to address educators' challenges in accessing training opportunities or professional development materials that can enhance the quality of early learning and child care services. In 2017-18, five students from rural communities completed early learning and child care coursework to advance to the next level of their education. These five students represent 14% of the Yukon early learning and child care providers who are working to obtain a child care work level 1 certificate.

A total of 57% (36) of Yukon's licensed programs accessed one-time funding through the Enrichment Fund to purchase culturally and developmentally appropriate toys and equipment aimed at increasing the quality and inclusivity of child care facilities in Yukon.

In 2018-19, Yukon is supporting the development of a curriculum framework that will reflect the early learning and child care needs of the territory's linguistic, cultural and urban/rural communities, including Yukon's Francophone population and 14 First Nations.

Improving affordability and accessibility

To improve the accessibility and affordability of early learning and child care, all 62 licensed child care programs in Yukon, representing a total of 1,477 spaces, benefitted in 2017-18 from a 15% increase in the Direct Operating Grant, the first increase in funding since 2008. An additional 20% increase in funding was allocated specifically to child care programs in rural communities to reflect the extra costs of operating outside urban areas. The funding will stabilize the fees paid by parents for licensed care programs to help make child care more affordable for Yukon families.

In addition to supporting affordability for Yukon families through the Direct Operating Grant, five people accessed a grant that provides support to individuals who provide primary care for their grandchildren. Many grandparents are primary caregivers for their grandchildren for a variety of reasons and were not previously eligible for existing subsidy programs because of current income-testing guidelines.

In addition to supporting the operations and maintenance of existing programs, start-up funding—to support the opening of new licensed programs in underserved and rural areas as well as programs that offer flexible, non-traditional child care hours—resulted in the opening of 20 new child care spaces and the reopening of approximately 59 spaces that had been temporarily closed.

Inclusive child care programs

Thirteen additional children were supported through funding for inclusive programs to ensure that children with special needs meet their developmental potential. These supports include both one-to-one and reduced-ratio support, specialized equipment, and training for staff.

In 2018-19, Yukon will work with the Francophone community and with all Yukon First Nations to review their communities' early learning and child care needs to help determine the best way to use future funding to address gaps in early learning and child care programming.

In summary

To help Canadian children get the best start in life and better support Canadian families, the Government of Canada announced investments of \$7.5 billion over 11 years, starting in 2017-18, to support and create more high-quality, affordable child care across the country.

This report demonstrates progress made in 2017-18 on supporting early learning and child care at a national level. This includes the implementation of the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework; the creation of an Expert Panel to provide advice on the development of an early learning and child care data and research strategy; and investing in innovative projects across the country. The report also highlights the results achieved after one year of investment according to each bilateral agreement with provinces and territories. This is in addition to the overall results and ongoing investments made by provinces and territories in early learning and child care. While there is good progress being made, the results of the agreements will become more evident in the second and third year of the agreements. This is due to the late signing of the bilateral agreements with provinces and territories and the fact that a significant portion of first-year funding could be carried forward to fiscal year 2018-19.

Through the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework, governments have committed to report annually on progress and the impact of federal funding, while reflecting the priorities of each jurisdiction in early learning and child care. Reporting data builds knowledge and disseminates information to families, communities and service providers. Results of the second and third year of the bilateral agreements are forthcoming.

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Annex A: Examples of innovative early learning and child care projects

The Government of Canada is investing \$100 million over 10 years to foster innovative practices. A call for concepts asked participants to submit ideas such as an innovative solution, best practice, tool or methodology that would support learning and child care services aimed at children under six years of age to respond to current and emerging issues. More than 300 concepts were submitted. The following projects are currently underway:

- The University of Guelph is working to increase knowledge about parents with non-standard work schedules and their use of child care. Changes in labour patterns, including the growth of jobs in the service sector, increased use of technology and competitive pressures have resulted in a growing proportion of Canadians engaged in what has been called non-standard work. However, child care services have been modelled on a “standard” work week. Expected results include new knowledge about parental work patterns to help better identify needs.
- The National Centre for Early Childhood Inclusion is working on a project to promote incorporating children with disabilities into early learning and child care environments that address their individual needs and support their social integration. Objectives include identifying quality gaps between services for children with disabilities and typical children, recommending measures to improve inclusion quality and identifying best practices.
- The MaRS Centre for Impact Investing is working to build knowledge of social finance models for the early learning and child care sector and improve the capacity of child care providers to engage in social finance models. In addition, this project will aim to improve knowledge and capacity of social finance models and enhance capacity for partnerships and mobilize social finance funding.
- The Learning Enrichment Foundation is aiming to improve the quality of early learning and child care by responding to the growing demand for registered early childhood educators (RECEs) in Ontario and address sector-defined skills needs for RECEs through the development and testing of an enhanced and accelerated early childhood education training program. The objectives of the project will be to increase accessibility for early childhood educators to obtain RECE qualifications; to develop and test an innovative training model that contributes to increased service quality; and to develop and share best practices, knowledge and solutions. This will support employers and training providers in other regions and provinces to work together to develop similar training models.
- YMCAs in Hamilton, Burlington and Brantford are working together to scale and introduce the Weemarkable app to YMCA Child Care Centres across Canada. The app harnesses new technologies to improve the communication and trust between educators and families. It enables families to engage in the day-to-day activities of their children, engage in dialogue about their child's development and celebrate milestones. The app also supports early childhood educators in their continued delivery of quality early learning experiences, including: engaging in documentation with ease and providing opportunities to reflect and learn. Moving forward, the app will be adapted for all provincial/territorial child care regulatory environments.

- The Tl'oondih Healing Society in the Northwest Territories is proposing to review best practices in child care curriculum, as well as design and pilot a quality and inclusive Early Years Curriculum for Indigenous children less than four years of age and their families, with activities designed for both home and child care setting. The organization will collaborate on the Inclusive Early Years Curriculum with urban and rural/remote Indigenous Child Care Centres. The objective will be to complete a curriculum that is culturally responsive and developed with community participation, as well as to develop training for staff.
- The Calgary Immigrant Women's Association is aiming to enhance programming that supports early learning of immigrant children from lower-income families in Calgary. It will develop, test and evaluate an innovative early learning centre for children 19 months to four years of age that uses a model where parents and children interact and learn together. Planned activities will enhance first language literacy skills that are based on Canadian culture and on the countries and cultures that the parents represent.
- The North Shore Micmac District Council of New Brunswick is aiming to gather baseline information on early childhood programs and services at the structural, system and program levels in the seven First Nation communities in New Brunswick, by targeting early childhood professionals. The project aims to analyze and report on Community Self-Studies of Early Childhood Programs to determine assets and gaps, and to make recommendations for future actions, with an emphasis on the inclusion of children with special needs. It expects to present findings to community members, leadership, and agencies that deliver programs and services in communities.
- The Family Education and Support Centre in British Columbia is creating a social enterprise that will expand the organization's programs. This includes building a larger facility to house parent and child supports, with an onsite child care centre. The plan commences with eight child care centres located on the grounds of eight schools in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows, BC. Seven child care centres will be located in Maple Ridge and one will be located in Pitt Meadows. Each centre will provide Reggio Emilia-based preschool sessions and before and after school care. This will include innovative programming focusing on social, environmental, multigenerational and multicultural components. Full day weekend kindergarten to grade seven group child care programming is also being explored.
- The University of British Columbia is developing and testing an early learning and child care risk reframing tool to address early learning and child care issues, needs and challenges regarding encouraging outdoor play, as identified by staff and administrators through planned focus groups. Metro Vancouver's ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic diversity provide the ideal demographics for development and testing of the tool. The project prioritizes early learning and child care centres serving diverse populations, particularly Indigenous, lower income and newcomer families.
- The University of New Brunswick is building on the current early learning and child care system in New Brunswick by supporting the growth of pedagogical leadership among early childhood educators for children under the age of six. Educators and directors will identify strengths, challenges and learning goals in relation to their pedagogical documentation practices; prepare, facilitate and evaluate pedagogical documentation workshops on literacy rich environments, where knowledge, methodologies, resources and exemplary practices will be shared with colleagues, families and community stakeholders; and produce and display pedagogical documentation in public spaces that details the learning of children and the intentional practices of educators.