



Early Learning and Child Care Backgrounder

New Federal/Provincial Agreement in Principle

- The Agreement in Principle provides a formal arrangement between the Governments of Canada and Saskatchewan that articulates a shared vision for early learning and child care in Saskatchewan. It also describes specific objectives and investments to achieve this vision.
- Four principles identified in the Agreement guide investments and decisions regarding local needs and priorities under this initiative. They are reflective of, and build on, the principles for effective approaches established under the previous Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care (2003).
 - **Quality** – supports optimal child development
 - **Universally inclusive** – openness and responsiveness, without discrimination, to young children, including those with special needs, Aboriginal children and children with various cultural and linguistic circumstances
 - **Accessible** – broadly available to children and parents, as well as affordable
 - **Developmental** – child-centred, reflects family and community contexts and encourages meaningful partnerships between parents and child care providers
- Working with parents and stakeholders, we are creating a made-in-Saskatchewan early learning and non-profit child care system to support preschool children and their families so they are better prepared to take the best advantage of their learning years.
- New federal funding is in addition to funds already committed under the previous Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care.

	Funding under existing ELCC Agreement (CST) (million)	New ELCC Funding (million)	Total (million)
2005-2006	\$7.0	\$22.0	\$29.0
2006-2007	\$9.2	\$20.0	\$29.2
2007-2008	\$10.6	\$35.0	\$45.6
2008-2009	\$10.6	\$35.0	\$45.6
2009-2010	\$10.6	\$34.0	\$44.6
	\$48.0	\$146.0	\$194.0

- Funding for 2005-2006 will be made available through a trust fund from which Saskatchewan can draw \$22.0 million.

Child Care Saskatchewan

- In 2003, the Government of Saskatchewan announced Child Care Saskatchewan, the largest child care expansion in our province's history. Child Care Saskatchewan is a four-year plan to develop 1,200 new licensed spaces by March 2007.

Current Status

- The beginning of a new provincial strategy for early learning and child care announced April 5, 2005, includes the following initiatives:
 - 500 more child care spaces will be available throughout the province, including 250 as previously announced as part of Child Care Saskatchewan.
 - We will eliminate the waiting list for families of children with a high level of special needs.
 - Child care subsidies will increase an average of \$20 per child per month for those families that qualify. On average, that's an increase from \$240 per month to \$260.
 - Day care grants for the wages of early childhood educators will increase three per cent.
- Today, there are 8,132 licensed child care spaces in Saskatchewan, an increase of 849 since the inception of Child Care Saskatchewan.
- Saskatchewan Learning's Prekindergarten program provides early childhood education to approximately 1,600 children and their families who need extra support in 100 locations across the province.
- The *KidsFirst* program brings together resources and knowledge from a variety of sectors to support vulnerable families with children to age 5 years as well as expectant mothers. Currently, there are 787 families participating in nine communities: Meadow Lake, Moose Jaw, Nipawin, North Battleford, Prince Albert, Regina, Saskatoon, Yorkton and the North.
- Currently, Kindergarten programs are offered in 578 provincial schools to 10,920 children. A majority of the children are 5 years of age.