



EARLY LEARNING AND AFFORDABLE CHILDCARE PROPOSAL

October 23, 2020

Alberta's
NDP Caucus

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Message from Alberta NDP Leader Rachel Notley

My Fellow Albertans,

A successful and robust economy is one that is built through participation by all and opportunities for all.

One of the most effective levers available to governments to impact economic growth is investment in quality, accessible and affordable childcare. It is also one that has been overlooked for far too long.

The view on investment in childcare as an economic strategy is changing as economists across the country and around the world make policy proposals that focus on this investment as a foundational element for growth and prosperity.

Ensuring that all Alberta families have access to universal, affordable, and quality early learning and child care will open up opportunities for women to work, increase their education and skills, or start a business.

Investing in early learning and child care will not only set up Alberta for success in the short and

medium term, but will lay the foundation for growth and prosperity for generations by improving future school readiness, educational outcomes and incomes - which is why it is a key element of our economic strategy.

Based on economic modelling by some of Canada's leading economists, if this proposal was fully implemented, Alberta's GDP would be about \$6 billion larger, and 42,500 people would get back to work. These numbers demonstrate the significant long-term economic potential of universally accessible childcare in Alberta.

Together, we can create a bold roadmap that sets Alberta up for a recovery today, while creating a stronger economy for tomorrow. Affordable childcare is a key pillar of our plan to build a new future for Alberta.

Sincerely,
- **Rachel Notley**
Alberta NDP Leader

please head to AlbertasFuture.ca
for further information and to sign up for the
discussions on the future of Alberta's economy



Message from Alberta NDP Children's Services Critic Rakhi Pancholi

Dear Albertans,

On behalf of the Alberta NDP, I am proud to bring forward a policy proposal on early learning and child care for Alberta. This policy recognizes the principles of our economic strategy that focus on *economic security* by creating jobs that support Alberta families, *economic equality* by recognizing that women and racialized minorities cannot be left behind, and *strong society, stronger economy* by ensuring that all Albertans have a fair shot at success.

The proposals below are grounded in the evidence that early learning and child care is critical to economic recovery. The pandemic and economic recession have highlighted that child care is an economic issue. If families do not have access to safe, affordable, and quality child care, they cannot work, return to work, or train for new work. Women, in particular, are leaving the workforce at an alarming rate to accommodate increased child care and at-home schooling. This will slow our economic recovery and means that many Alberta families will be left behind.

Early learning and child care is the necessary infrastructure to get Alberta women back to work and part of economic recovery and growth. It creates jobs, increases women's participation in the workforce, and invests in the long-term educational outcomes of our children.

Thousands of Alberta parents have written to me and signed petitions to express their need for access to affordable, quality child care and the difference it makes to their families and children. I have heard from countless non-profit and private child care providers and dayhome providers who are concerned about the sustainability of the child care sector at a time when Albertans need it more than ever.

The recommendations below are part of a conversation about how best to ensure Alberta's early learning and child care sector is strong and accessible to Alberta families to drive economic recovery. The recommendations recognize the importance of quality early childhood education as an investment in human capital and one of the most effective ways to improve the quality of life for Albertans and attract people and businesses to our province.

It is time to talk about early learning and child care as the strong lever for economic growth that it is. I hope you will join us in this conversation.

Sincerely,

- Rakhi Pancholi

NDP Official Opposition Critic for Children's Services

Response to Government Policy

Early learning and child care is necessary infrastructure to support the economy - whether in a crisis or not. Yet the UCP have done nothing but weaken and create instability in the sector since being elected. The onset of the pandemic has only made the negative impact of their choices on the sector more pronounced.

Over the past year, the UCP has:

- *Cancelled accreditation standards for early learning, reducing quality in the sector and making it more difficult for parents to make informed decisions about child care options for their families.*
- *Eliminated the Benefit Contribution Grant program, which offset mandatory costs to operators as a result of government funded wage top-ups, forcing operators to either raise parent fees or reduce wages for staff.*
- *Eliminated the Staff Attraction Incentive which gave new or reentering qualified staff members bonuses at the end of 1 and 2 years of employment.*
- *Eliminated the kin care and stay-at-home subsidies for parents seeking support from family for child care or to access early learning programs like pre-school.*
- *Cancelled the Early Learning Child Care (\$25/day) pilot project, resulting in fee increases of 100 - 150 per cent in communities across the province (many of them rural) and decreasing access to quality, affordable early learning in Alberta.*
- *Provided the worst level of financial support of any province in Canada to the child care sector during the period of shutdown due to COVID-19 from mid-March to June 2020.*
- *Withheld and failed to invest 85 per cent of available budgeted provincial child care dollars in the sector while operators are at real risk of closing due to increased costs because of COVID-19, decreased enrollment and inability to attract and retain staff.*
- *Cancelled the Early Learning and Child Care Career Scholarship program.*

These actions have placed Alberta's already fragile child care sector in a state of crisis. In just over a year, the UCP has made early learning and child care in Alberta less affordable, less accessible, less stable and actively discouraged quality early childhood education. All at a time when early learning and child care is more important than ever.

In order to stabilize the sector and position early learning and child care as the economic driver that it is, immediate actions and a long-term strategy are necessary.

WHAT WE'VE HEARD FROM PARENTS & CHILD CARE PROVIDERS:

"Our community will be devastated if we have to close our doors. We employ between 15-20 staff and our contribution to the economy is close to one million dollars. These are economic issues."
- child care provider

"We shouldn't have to choose between paying for childcare and paying for rent each month."
- parent, essential worker

"Our fees after ELCC will have to increase substantially and we will not be able to provide care for lower income families."
- child care provider

"\$25/day daycare not only has a financial benefit for families, but also ensures that children at these centres get quality programming. My daughter is getting a huge start in her early education, which will serve her well when she enters the school system."
- parent



Setting the Stage for This Report

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and economic recession has significantly affected all Albertans. However, the evidence is clear that women are bearing the brunt of the economic recession.

The sectors of our economy that have been most affected – and the slowest to recover – are those in which women are predominantly employed. This includes food services, retail, accommodation, educational services and other caregiving sectors.

This has resulted in higher unemployment rates, greater reduction in hours and a slower return to work for women as compared to men in Alberta. The complete shutdown and uneven reopening of child care centres across the province and the failure of the UCP government to properly support a safe school reopening plan means more women have chosen to further reduce their hours or leave their jobs altogether to take care of children and support at-home learning. As a result, close to one-third of women are considering leaving the workforce permanently and women's workforce participation rates are at their lowest in 30 years.

Despite the clear, disproportionate impact of the economic recession on women in Alberta, the UCP government chose not to include women in a meaningful way in its Economic Recovery Panel nor did it complete a Gender Based Plus (GBA+) analysis (as required) to determine what policies are required to ensure women and marginalized Albertans are included in recovery. The result is a \$14 billion Economic Recovery Plan that does not include significant funding or strategies to address how to get women back to work.

The UCP's decision to ignore women is not just inequitable, it is bad for the economy and will hold Alberta back from an actual recovery.

There is remarkable consensus among economists, major banks, investors, and civil society organizations across Canada and Alberta about the critical first step for

economic recovery, which means getting women back to work. It is child care. From RBC & Scotiabank, to AIMCO, to the YWCA in Alberta & Canada, experts are agreed that to get women back to work, accessible & affordable child care is essential.

"In the near-term, policies to address childcare will be crucial to keeping women engaged in the workforce."

- RBC

"Failure to quickly address the childcare supply shock will not only inhibit our recovery from the COVID recession, but permanently lower Canada's growth trajectory."

- Ken Boessenkool & Dr. Jennifer Robson, Economists

Unfortunately, prior to the pandemic, the UCP government severely weakened Alberta's childcare system by cutting critical financial supports and programs, as well as cancelling accreditation standards for quality early learning and childcare. This has left Alberta's child care in an incredibly precarious state at a time when it is most needed for economic recovery.

A real economic recovery plan for Alberta must address the evidence and what is required to get Alberta families – particularly women – back to work. This includes a long-term strategic plan for universal, accessible, affordable and quality early learning and child care. The Alberta NDP recognizes the necessity of supporting children and families with high quality early learning and child care to ensure all Albertans are included in economic recovery in the short term and also benefit economically and socially in the long-term.

BASED ON THE LATEST NATIONAL SURVEY:

Average daily cost for child care in Calgary is \$52.42
(a savings of \$27.42 with \$25/day child care)

Average daily cost for child care in Edmonton is \$44.67
(a savings of \$19.67 with \$25/day child care)

The Economic Value of Early Learning & Childcare

In order to ensure that women and families are fully able to participate in economic recovery, the foundational infrastructure to get parents - particularly women - back to work is critical. Universal, quality, affordable, and accessible early learning and child care is that infrastructure.

A robust and sustainable early learning and child care sector is necessary for Alberta women to be able to return to work, increase their hours of work, or pursue training for new employment opportunities. Government investment in new or expanding work opportunities for women will be ineffective if early learning and child care supports are not in place for women to access these opportunities. This means early learning and child care must be affordable and flexible to meet the needs of Albertans, in all areas of the province.

The early learning and child care system must also be grounded in the principles of quality early learning. This means supporting child care operators in meeting high standards of early childhood education. The primary indicator of quality early childhood education is the qualifications and ongoing professional development of early childhood educators. It also means the implementation of a research-based early childhood education curriculum.

In 2017, the Conference Board of Canada issued a report indicating the clear economic benefits of investing in early learning and child care. Increased workforce participation of women boosts household income, leading to greater spending and higher GDP, generates tax revenue for provincial and federal governments, results in more equitable distribution of family incomes, and reduces poverty. Additionally, children receiving quality early childhood education before the age of five demonstrate improved educational outcomes - which boosts skills development and earnings later in life - and demonstrate better signs of school readiness. The analysis was also clear that while investing in fully accessible and affordable early learning where it doesn't currently exist may be costly, the long-term economic benefits far exceed the cost with a return of \$4 for every \$1 invested.

The economic imperative to invest in a strong and sustainable early learning and child care system has always existed. It's why the former NDP government initiated the pilot project for \$25/day affordable, quality and accessible early learning and child care in 2017. That economic imperative is more critical than ever due to the current economic recession to address the incredible set-back of women's participation in the workforce, the loss of jobs typically performed by women, and the need for a strong

educational foundation for children to move our economy forward.

We recognize that supporting women and families in full participation in the economy requires more than early learning and child care.

It also requires supporting those sectors that currently employ women in significant numbers and that have been so critical to Albertans during the pandemic, like healthcare, educational services, the non-profit sector and caregiving work. It requires opening up new opportunities in sectors and industries where women are under-represented, like STEM and the trades.

It requires policies to change the climate of workplaces where women are currently under-represented to ensure women are hired and stay employed in those sectors. It requires active engagement with and direction to industries, businesses and organizations to ensure full participation of women, removing barriers, and providing supports aimed at increasing access to training and learning.

But the foundation of ensuring these measures are effective and inclusive is a strong and stable early learning and child care sector. If the sector cannot meet the demand, if it is not affordable, or if the quality is lacking, women and families will not be able to access the workforce - and the economy and province as a whole will suffer.

The proposal laid out would spur about \$6 billion in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth and help get 42,500 Albertans back to work. These calculations are based on an analysis of the Quebec model of universal childcare conducted by economist Pierre Fortin.



Proposals

An Early Learning & Childcare Proposal for Today, Tomorrow, & the Future

- 1 Release unspent Budget 2020-21 funding for child care to stabilize the sector and minimize parent fee increases.
- 2 Improve existing online tools by creating an online Early Learning and Child Care mapping system and portal to (1) identify where childcare is currently available and; (2) track where new spaces and the kinds of spaces are needed to improve accessibility.
- 3 Support full implementation of Alberta's "Flight" early childhood curriculum at all child care centres & approved family day homes to ensure the pillars of quality early childhood education are in place.
- 4 Support quality early learning by developing and implementing a workforce strategy for early childhood educators that includes strategies to improve educational attainment, support professional development, and address long-term challenges associated with the attraction and retention of the workforce.
- 5 Immediately establish an Early Learning and Child Care Task Force to:
 - implement the universal \$25/day quality early learning and child care program,
 - assist in the development of a comprehensive workforce strategy for early childhood educators, and
 - develop further strategies to address inclusive and accessible early learning and child care.
- 6 Implement provincewide, universal \$25/day quality early learning and child care through mechanisms, including public, licensed non-profit and private child care programs and family dayhome providers.



1**RELEASE UNSPENT BUDGET 2020-21 FUNDING FOR CHILD CARE TO STABILIZE THE SECTOR AND MINIMIZE PARENT FEE INCREASES**

Budget 2020/2021 currently has \$33 million per month available to invest in the child care sector for parent subsidies and wage top-ups for educators. With the complete closure of the child care sector during mid-March to June 2020 and the fact that the sector is currently only operating at approximately 50 percent capacity, there is well over \$100 million currently in the child care budget available to be invested immediately. Instead, the UCP has only invested approximately 15 percent of its budget in the child care sector and is holding onto the remaining funds with no explanation of how or even if it will be spent on child care.

These budgeted funds for child care within the Children's Services 2020/2021 Budget must be released to support child care operators with the increased costs and instability associated with COVID-19. Sufficient funding must be provided immediately to operators with the expectation that parent fees must not increase during the current budget year.

2**IMPROVE EXISTING ONLINE TOOLS BY CREATING AN ONLINE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE MAPPING SYSTEM AND PORTAL TO (1) IDENTIFY WHERE CHILDCARE IS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE AND; (2) TRACK WHERE NEW SPACES AND THE KINDS OF SPACES ARE NEEDED TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY**

The development of an online early learning and child care map and portal to connect parents with child care providers in their communities based on their specific needs is necessary to ensure that we have the information to grow the child care system alongside the population of the province.

This tool would also assist in mapping out child care needs across the province, including demands for specific types of child care, to determine where the creation of new or specific types of spaces are required.

The current online system only allows for lookups of existing providers. It doesn't track where parents are looking for providers and if parents are unable to locate child care in their area. Further, it doesn't track whether families are in fact able to access child care in their area.

This online mapping portal must be redeveloped to:

- a. track where demand is and what type of child care is needed;
- b. publish waiting list numbers for each centre; and
- c. assist in mapping out child care needs across the province, including demands for specific types of child care, to determine where the creation of new or specific types of spaces are required.

3**SUPPORT FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF ALBERTA'S "FLIGHT" EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM AT ALL CHILD CARE CENTRES & APPROVED FAMILY DAY HOMES TO ENSURE THE PILLARS OF QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ARE IN PLACE**

Alberta's "Flight: Early Learning and Care Framework" is the early childhood education curriculum at the heart of quality early learning. Intricately linked to this for quality early childhood education are the qualifications and ongoing professional development of early childhood educators.

Previously supported as part of the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) \$25/day pilot program, Children's Services has now indicated that it will be available to all Alberta child care centres and approved family dayhomes. However, no supports have been provided by the UCP government to either child care operators or post-secondary institutions to implement access to this enhanced professional development and education to early childhood educators.

In order to fully implement Flight in all early learning and child care settings, all child care operators and educators must have access to it.

Our proposal includes recommendations to:

- Work with the post-secondary institutions to ensure the Flight curriculum is integrated into all early childhood education programming by linking it to graduation requirements.
- Increase direct financial supports to early childhood educators to access the Flight curriculum for professional development.
- Provide tax incentives to early learning and child care operators to support the professional development of their staff to access the Flight curriculum.

Expanding the number of educators and early learning and child care programs that have access to the Flight curriculum will set Alberta up as a leader in early childhood education.

4

SUPPORT QUALITY EARLY LEARNING BY DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A WORKFORCE STRATEGY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS THAT INCLUDES STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND ADDRESS LONG-TERM CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE ATTRACTION AND RETENTION OF THE WORKFORCE

A qualified and professional early childhood education workforce is the foundation of quality early learning. However, in Alberta, the early childhood education workforce has long been under-valued and unstable due to legislated qualification requirements that fall below professional standards and lack of support for ongoing professional development. The high turnover and challenges in retaining qualified educators has been exacerbated by the pandemic, which led to the lay-off of thousands of educators and the slow return to work due to decreased enrollments and capacity restrictions.

Now more than ever, a short and long term comprehensive workforce strategy is needed for the early childhood education workforce.

This should include, but is not limited to:

- strategies to improve educational attainment of current early childhood educators,
- identify professional development pathways through targeted funding and supports,
- strategies to attract more people to study and work in early childhood education to address potential labour shortages, and
- address long-term challenges associated with the attraction and retention of the workforce, including remuneration and benefits.

This workforce strategy must be developed in collaboration with educators, early learning and child care operators, and post-secondary institutions. The development of the strategy must also be grounded in labour projections and quality early childhood education research.

5 IMMEDIATELY ESTABLISH AN EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE TASK FORCE TO: A) IMPLEMENT THE UNIVERSAL \$25/DAY QUALITY EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE PROGRAM, B) ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE WORKFORCE STRATEGY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS, AND C) DEVELOP FURTHER STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE.

An Early Learning and Child Care Task Force should be established immediately to advise on the following:

- The phased-in implementation plan for universal \$25/day child care across licensed providers and across the province. This would include, but is not limited to, incorporating results from the pilot program evaluations and expansion to out of school care programs.
- The development of the workforce strategy to address the recruitment, training, and retention of the early childhood education workforce. This would include efforts to ensure access to increased educational and professional development opportunities, as well as appropriate remuneration and benefits for educators.
- Strategies and opportunities to improve accessibility and inclusion in early learning and child care.

The Early Learning and Child Care Task Force would include representation from all parts of the sector including licensed non-profit and for-profit providers, approved family day homes, out of school care providers, preschools, and early childhood educators. Representation and input would also include post-secondary institutions providing early childhood education programs/diplomas/degrees and early learning advocacy organizations, including those focusing on inclusive education, poverty alleviation and gender equity.

6 IMPLEMENT PROVINCEWIDE, UNIVERSAL \$25/DAY QUALITY EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE THROUGH MECHANISMS, INCLUDING PUBLIC, LICENSED NON-PROFIT AND PRIVATE CHILD CARE PROGRAMS AND FAMILY DAYHOME PROVIDERS

This recommendation reflects the reversal of the decision by the UCP to cancel the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) \$25/day pilot program introduced by the Alberta NDP in 2017 and the province and system-wide expansion of the program to all licensed non-profit & private child care centres, as well as approved family day homes.

Results from NDP ELCC programs

- In 2 years, the \$25/day pilot project increased accessibility by creating 1740 new spaces, including 664 spaces in rural communities.
- \$25/day centres enrolled as many low income families on subsidy as other centres (in fact, a little higher). Low income families eligible for full subsidy at \$25/day centres paid \$0/month.
- \$25/day centres had fewer licensing non-compliances, improved staff retention, & higher qualified staff. Parents were more likely to highly satisfied w/ quality of care & viewing educators as professionals.
- Women with children in \$25/day centres had increased labour force attachment, were more likely to return to work full-time, go back to school, accept more responsibility at work & report a positive impact on their career.

As with the pilot program, the implementation of the program will be guided by the principles of *affordability, accessibility, quality, and universality*.

Affordability:

Affordability remains one of the most significant barriers to parents accessing early learning and child care and returning to the workforce, particularly at a time when Albertans are struggling to make ends meet or working reduced hours. Child care fees are on the rise given the additional costs operators face due to COVID-19 health & safety protocols, reduced enrollments & limits on cohort sizes, the difficulty in attracting qualified early childhood educators, and the effect of UCP cuts to child care.

Focusing only on putting more money into the pockets of parents through subsidies or tax benefits does not address the growing costs of quality child care and compromises the quality of early learning that lower income parents will be forced to seek out. Direct support is necessary to child care operators to ensure a cap on child care fees while also ensuring the operator can provide quality programming.

Parent subsidies to the lowest-income families alone are not sufficient to cover increasing child care fees as they do not address the reality that child care is increasingly unaffordable for most middle income Alberta families. With average monthly fees ranging between \$900 to \$1300 per child in Edmonton and Calgary, most Alberta families do not qualify for subsidy and would have to pay between 40-60 per cent of their net monthly income for child care costs for 2 children.

Under the \$25/day program, parent fees would on average be cut in half. Low-income families would still be eligible for parent subsidy and those receiving full subsidy would pay \$0/day for child care, ensuring that the lowest income families would still receive the greatest financial support.

Accessibility:

The expansion of the \$25/day child care program is also focused on improving accessibility to child care by providing additional grant support for innovative programs providing flexible care, weekend care, and culturally-specific care. This is important because we know that many women – particularly racialized and low income women – are employed in shift work and frontline work that cannot be met by traditional child care program hours. It is important to ensure that all families have access to quality affordable child care.

Quality:

Early learning and child care is about early childhood education, not child-minding. For this reason, quality programming is an integral part of a strong early learning and child care system. The two most critical aspects to quality early learning is an educated and supported early childhood education workforce and strong early childhood education curriculum. The \$25/day program will continue to include wage-floors for educators and the system-wide adoption of Flight: Alberta's Early Learning & Care Framework.

Universality:

Early learning and child care must be universal – meaning available to all Alberta families choosing to access it. The research and evidence is clear that brain development in the early years of a child's life is critical. Children begin learning long before they enter the school system at age 5. Early intervention, learning and supports in a child's life is more effective and reduces the needs for more significant and intensive health and education supports later in life. Quality early learning should be universally available to all Alberta children as it is a societal and economic benefit. Just as education and healthcare is not means-tested, access to early childhood education should also not be means-tested. Early learning is part of the spectrum of education and must be universally available.



Potential Costs

The costs detailed on this page are neither prescriptive nor exact. They represent a range based on preliminary study and conversation with experts in the field. They're offered solely as means to provide a sense of the scope that would likely be required to achieve these objectives. This is not a budget, this is merely a starting point to facilitate discussion. We welcome feedback on the costing of each proposal put forward as part of Alberta's Future.

POLICY	Estimated Cost (in million CAD)
RELEASE UNSPENT BUDGET 2020-21 FUNDING FOR CHILD CARE TO STABILIZE THE SECTOR AND MINIMIZE PARENT FEE INCREASES	120
IMPROVE EXISTING ONLINE TOOLS BY CREATING AN ONLINE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE MAPPING SYSTEM AND PORTAL TO IDENTIFY WHERE CHILDCARE IS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE AND TO TRACK WHERE NEW SPACES AND THE KINDS OF SPACES NEEDED TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY	0 Enhancing the current online look up, which already has all of the childcare centres in the system. This could be covered through the existing Children's Services budget.
SUPPORT FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF ALBERTA'S "FLIGHT" EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM AT ALL CHILD CARE CENTRES & APPROVED FAMILY DAYHOMES TO ENSURE THE PILLARS OF QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ARE IN PLACE	10 Costs to the post-secondary system would be offset by student tuition fees.
SUPPORT QUALITY EARLY LEARNING BY DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A WORKFORCE STRATEGY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS THAT INCLUDES STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND ADDRESS LONG-TERM CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH THE ATTRACTION AND RETENTION OF THE WORKFORCE	0 This recommendation could be covered through the existing Children's Services budget



POLICY

**Estimated Cost
(in million CAD)**

IMMEDIATELY ESTABLISH AN EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE TASK FORCE TO:

- IMPLEMENT THE UNIVERSAL \$25/DAY QUALITY EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE PROGRAM,
- ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE WORKFORCE STRATEGY FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS, AND
- DEVELOP FURTHER STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE.

0

Minimal costs associated with establishing task force, conducting research, consultation, and policy development are included in the \$25/day program.

IMPLEMENT PROVINCEWIDE, UNIVERSAL \$25/DAY QUALITY EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE THROUGH MECHANISMS, INCLUDING PUBLIC, LICENSED NON-PROFIT AND PRIVATE CHILD CARE PROGRAMS AND FAMILY DAYHOME PROVIDERS

900

The immediate fiscal impact of a fully implemented \$25/day universal childcare program is estimated at \$900 million annually. However, according to economic analysis by Pierre Fortin, the net fiscal cost moves to zero over time as additional revenues are generated from economic job and growth creation. As TD Bank also notes the benefits of childcare far outweigh the costs.

TOTAL

**130 for 2020/21
900 per year for 2021-23**

If this proposal is fully implemented, the province would spur \$6 billion in GDP growth and help 42,500 Albertans get back to work.



Conclusion

This discussion paper is only one of many in a series outlining opportunities to build a modern, diversified economy for all Albertans.

Our ideas are built around five principles:

- Economic security for Albertans by creating jobs;
- Economic equality which means equity and inclusion of all Albertans;
- Economic diversification is a priority;
- Strategic public investment, recognizing the role of the public sector in supporting private sector growth; and
- Strong society, stronger economy, building a path to the top and not a race to the bottom.

This early learning and child care proposal is based on evidence and sound economic research that in order to ensure and grow participation of all Albertans in the economy, universal access to affordable quality child care is a necessity.

Without this foundation for economic recovery, our economic future - and the future of our children - will suffer.

The \$25/day Early Learning and Child Care pilot project provided the proof that quality, affordable child care has a profound positive impact on Alberta families and children. This impact is social, but also economic.

The proposal on the preceding pages would spur billions in GDP growth, tens of thousands of Albertans able to work that currently aren't.

Investing in early learning and child care is not a luxury for better days, it is a necessary foundation for economic growth now.

By working together, we can create a stronger economy for tomorrow.

It starts now.

And it starts with you.



Give Us Feedback

WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

Alberta's Future is an initiative to build a new economy that benefits every person in our province. We want you to share your thoughts and ideas on proposals like this one.

We welcome you to submit your own proposals too!

All of our proposals and those contributed by Albertans like you can be found at AlbertasFuture.ca. On that website, you can also register for in-person and online conversations happening right across Alberta.

We are also hosting this conversation on social media, using the hashtag [#ABFuture](https://twitter.com/ABFuture)

Engage directly with NDP Leader Rachel Notley on YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook



@RachelNotley

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