

Office of the Premier

Government of New Brunswick News Release

Education and Early Childhood Development
Office of the Premier

Premier reports on progress in rebuilding early childhood services

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DIEPPE (GNB) – Premier David Alward visited La Garderisson daycare in Dieppe today to report on progress being made to provide the best early childhood services as part of rebuilding New Brunswick.

“We are making monumental changes to early childhood services to provide our children with the best possible start in life,” said Alward. “Research clearly shows the connection between the quality of a child’s experience in the early years and his or her success in school, and even throughout life. Eventually, the broader impact of healthy development for our children is stronger families and communities and a stronger, more vibrant province.”

Early childhood and education services were brought under the same roof in 2010, creating a continuum of learning from birth to Grade 12.

Earlier this spring, the government unveiled its three-year action plan, *Putting Children First: Positioning Early Childhood for the Future*. The plan includes several measures and investments totaling more than \$38 million to improve early childhood services.

“These investments are helping families better prepare children for the future with a focus on improving the quality, affordability, accessibility and inclusivity of early childhood services,” said Alward. “I want to recognize Education and Early Childhood Development Minister Jody Carr for his leadership and commitment to enhancing and integrating early childhood services.”

All early childhood and education services are being integrated. The boundaries for local early childhood services have been realigned to coincide with the seven school district boundaries. The definition of early childhood has been extended to include children up to and including eight years old from the previous standard of birth to five years old. Early intervention agencies, which support children at risk of developmental delays, and their families, are having their mandates broadened to match this new definition in co-operation with the school system.

“By making these changes, we are allowing early childhood services and local school districts to partner and work together as we establish a strong and robust leadership to ensure a seamless continuum of learning and development from birth onward,” said Alward.

Two provincial networks of early childhood services are being established, one for each linguistic community, and will be tasked with implementing the strategic framework for early childhood. Local early childhood service networks are being also developed to work together to identify and respond to the needs of families in their communities.

Investments over the next three years to improve the quality, affordability, accessibility and inclusivity of early childhood services include:

- \$16.7 million to create new early learning and childcare spaces, bringing the total increase to 10,000;
- \$4.11 million to support wage subsidies for child care workers;
- \$4.4 million invested in the Day Care Assistance Program to enhance affordability of child care for families;
- \$5.25 million to support the training in early childhood education for child care staff; and
- \$3 million to provide services for preschool children with autism spectrum disorder.

“We look forward to continuing to work with all stakeholders as we lay the right foundations to improve the quality of life for all New Brunswickers, including our children,” said Alward.



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