



## Caring At Work Campaign 2004 FACT SHEET

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### Government Agreements Regarding Child Care in NS

- In their policies in recent years, the government of Nova Scotia, along with the federal/provincial/territorial governments, has made commitment to positive outcomes for children 0-6. These policies include the Early Childhood Development Agreement, and the Multilateral Framework Agreement on Early Learning and Child Care.

#### Early Childhood Development Agreement (ECDA)

- On September 11, 2000, the provincial, territorial and federal governments reached an agreement on early childhood development, the Early Childhood Development Agreement, which was outlined in the First Ministers' Communiqué on ECD.
- The objectives of this agreement, which focused on children and their families, from prenatal period to age six, were:
  - "to promote early childhood development so that, to their fullest potential, children will be physically and emotionally healthy, safe and secure, ready to learn, and socially engaged and responsible, and
  - to help children reach their potential and help families support their children with strong communities."
- Four key areas of action identified were healthy pregnancy and birth, improve parenting and family supports, strengthen early childhood development, learning and care, and strengthen community supports.
- Through this agreement, the federal government committed about \$66 million over five years, to Nova Scotia to take action in these key areas. In 2001-2002, the NS government received \$9 million under the agreement, and in 2002-2003, the government received \$11.9 million.
- The April 2003 report on the Nova Scotia Early Childhood Development Agreement indicated the stabilization and enhancement of child care as a priority issue. Actions taken to stabilize child care in Nova Scotia included the child-care stabilization grant, a training initiative, grants provided to non-profit centres, an increase in subsidized spaces, inclusion for special needs and grants to child development centres.
- According to the 2003 report from NS Community Services, the provincial government and federal government together spent \$29.1 million on stabilizing and enhancing childcare in 2002-2003, \$10.7 million of which was federal funding.

#### *More on the Stabilization Grant*

- The stabilization grant, which was developed under the Early Childhood Development Agreement was meant to supplement staff wages in 203 full-day child care centres.
- This grant is a federally funded initiative. \$3.6 million was put toward this grant by the federal government in 2002-2003.

- In 2006, the federal funding for the ECDA will end. As of today, there is no plan for the future of the stabilization grant, or staff wages at child care centres.

*More on Subsidies*

- As of 2001, there were 2,655 subsidized child care spaces available in Nova Scotia, which accounted for 23% of total spaces. In 2003, under the ECDA, 100 more existing spaces became subsidized.
- The maximum subsidy for all ages is \$14.95 per day, plus the minimum \$2.25 user fee to parents.
- The cost of full-day child care in Nova Scotia ranges from \$20 to \$28 per child per day, which mean fully subsidized parents are still paying \$5.05 to \$13.05 per day, or \$1,313 to \$3,393 every year.
- In 2001, one parent, one child families were eligible for full subsidy if net income was \$16,812 or lower. In two parents, two children families, full subsidies were available to those whose net income did not exceed \$17,712.

**The Multilateral Framework Agreement on Early Learning & Care (ELCC)**

- On March 13, 2003 the provincial, territorial and federal Ministers Responsible for Social Services agreed on a framework for improving access to affordable, quality regulated early learning and child care programs and services.
- The objective of the MFA is to promote early childhood development and support parent participation in the paid workforce or training, by improving access to affordable, quality early learning and child care programs and services.
- Over five years, the federal government will provide the government of Nova Scotia with \$26.1 million toward the MFA.
- In 2003-2004, the province received \$750,000, and in 2004-2005 it will receive \$2.2 million in federal funding for the MFA.
- As of Spring 2004, there has been no provincial report on progress and investments under the MFA.

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**References:**

1. Early Childhood Development Activities: Government of Canada Report 2002-2003. Ottawa: Government of Canada
2. Nova Scotia's Early Childhood Development Initiative: Annual Report April 2003 Halifax: Community Services, Government of Nova Scotia
3. Friendly, M., Beach, J., Turiano, M. (2002). Early Childhood Education and Care in Canada 2001 Childcare Resource and Research Unit Toronto: University of Toronto