



Early Learning and Child Care

MONTHLY E-NEWS

MARCH 2025

[MOVING FORWARD
ON CHILD CARE
PRIORITIES](#)

[SPOTLIGHT ON
SUCCESS](#)

[ANNOUNCEMENTS
AND REMINDERS](#)

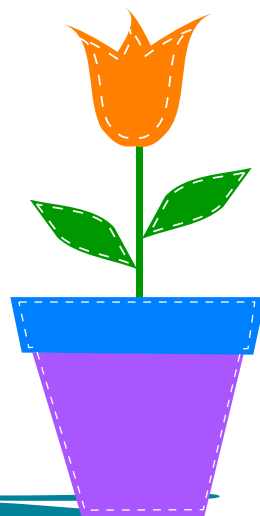
[EARLY LEARNING
AND CHILD CARE
DIVISION UPDATE](#)

Celebrating the Return of Spring

With the snow and ice giving way to warmer days, spring provides a wealth of opportunities for children to discover and learn. They can connect with nature by spotting the return of birds and insects, and the bloom of green returning to our parks and neighbourhoods. Hands-on activities, like planning a garden for summer, encourage creativity and curiosity. Spring sparks a sense of renewal and joy, offering an ideal atmosphere for playful, experiential learning.

And, of course, Early Childhood Educator Week is just around the corner, April 27 to May 3! Please read the [letter](#) and [proclamation](#).

To all early childhood educators and caregivers: *Happy Easter, Ramadan Mubarak, Chag Purim Sameach, Happy Holi, and Sláinte!*



Moving Forward on Child Care Priorities

Canada and Manitoba Investment in New Hospital, School, and Post-Secondary Spaces

Announcement calls for 700 new child care spaces in hospitals, schools, and post-secondary institutions (PSIs), as well as funding for professional training and curriculum.

On Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at St. Boniface Hospital, then Families, Children and Social Development federal Minister Jenna Suds and Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister Tracy Schmidt announced that three health care facilities, six schools, and two post-secondary institutions (PSIs) across the province will soon open new, high-quality, flexible child care spaces for children under the age of seven.

In February 2025, the governments of Manitoba and Canada completed negotiations for an action plan under the infrastructure funding annex to the Canada-Wide ELCC Agreement. This plan outlines how Manitoba, through the [Health and Child Care Infrastructure Project](#) will invest \$20.9 million in federal funding over three years to support the creation of approximately 324 quality and flexible child care spaces in three health care facilities across the province.

Manitoba also announced the creation of an additional 256 new child care spaces in partnership with school divisions and 128 new child care spaces in post-secondary institutions for children under seven.

- For school divisions, these investments will provide new infant and preschool child care spaces through six new [School-Based Child Care Centre Expansion Projects](#), in addition to the 36 previously announced projects.
- For post-secondary institutions, the additional investments will create new infant and preschool spaces at Red River College Polytechnic and University College of the North's Thompson campus through the [Post-Secondary Child Care Expansion Project](#) in addition to the nine previously announced projects.

The new spaces will have a positive ripple effect by providing additional support to health care workers and students in need of affordable and flexible child care for their families.

To support the growth in spaces, continued investments under the Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement in the workforce include:

- Programming that educates and helps employ up to 75 Ukrainian newcomers, through partnership with the Manitoba Métis Federation (MMF).
- Programming to train 30 Indigenous students to work in the child care profession, through partnership with The Urban Circle Training Centre.
- New one-time Outdoor Early Childhood Education Grant (closed February 14, 2025) that will provide funding to child-care facilities to enhance current outdoor and land-based programming or create new nature education programming in which licensed non-profit centres (including nursery schools) can receive up to \$25,000 and licensed home-based providers can receive up to \$2,500.
- A Tuition Reimbursement that offers up to \$5,000 per school year to help cover out-of-pocket tuition-related costs for Manitoba students at recognized early childhood education programs offered at post-secondary institutions in the province. Since 2022, the program has provided over \$6.1 million in tuition reimbursement.

A Request for Proposals was issued in October 2024 to develop 29 stand-alone child care centres on school property over the next two years leveraging modular building technology. A similar development method has been used to construct 22 high-quality child care facilities across the province through the Municipalities and Indigenous Governing Bodies' Ready-to-Move Child Care Initiative. These Ready-to-Move child care centres have been constructed in an average of nine months, from piles being poured to occupancy. An information session with participating school divisions will be organized in Spring 2025 to kick off the next phase of the School Based Child Care Expansion Project.



The Honourable Jenna Sudds, then Minister of Families, Children and Social Development of Canada speaks at the announcement on February 18, joined at her right by the Honourable Tracy Schmidt, Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister.

DID YOU KNOW??

As of February 2025 nearly 8,300 spaces have opened and more than 6,650 spaces have been committed since 2021, for a total of almost 15,000 new spaces for children twelve and under throughout Manitoba. This includes 4,300 opened spaces and 5750 committed spaces for children under seven, in partnership with the government of Canada. Additionally, through provincial investments, nearly 4,000 additional school ages spaces have opened and almost 900 school age spaces have been committed.

For more information, see the news release at <https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=67759>.

To learn about investments in child care space creation, visit the department website at <https://manitoba.ca/education/childcare/resources/spacecreation.html>.

To learn more about training and careers in child care, visit the department website at www.manitoba.ca/childcarecareers.

Canada Announces an Additional 36.8 Billion Dollars for Child Care and Launches a National Child Care Workforce Campaign



Over the past two months, Manitoba has worked closely with our federal partners on a plan to extend our current early learning and child care agreements.

On March 6, 2025, the Government of Canada announced it had reached agreements with 11 of the 13 provinces and territories, including Manitoba, resulting in an additional \$36.8 billion invested in child care across the country for the period ending in 2031. Beginning in 2027/2028, provinces and territories will also receive a three per cent funding increase every year. For Manitoba, this will mean an additional \$1.9 billion in child care funding that will continue to support important investments for increased access to affordable, quality child care and a stronger child care workforce.

One year ago, in March 2024, *The Canada Early Learning and Child Care Act*, received Royal Assent, enshrining the guiding principles for federal investments in a Canada-wide early learning and child care system where families have access to affordable, high-quality, flexible, and inclusive programs and services no matter where they live. This included a federal commitment to maintaining long-term funding.

Manitoba currently holds two funding agreements for early learning and child care with the Government of Canada. The agreements are:

- The Canada-Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (Bilateral)
- The Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (Canada-Wide)
 - The Infrastructure Funding Annex to the Canada-Wide Agreement provides additional funding to support capital space creation.

These agreements establish a partnership between Canada and Manitoba to grow Manitoba's early learning and child care system.

Manitoba's overall goals will remain the same under the extensions, which include affordable, accessible, high-quality, inclusive child care for children under seven; and continuing to grow and strengthen the child care workforce, providing competitive wages and increasing the number of qualified early childhood educators.

To support recruitment of the future child care workforce, Economic and Social Development Canada has also launched a national advertising campaign that will run most of March and again in late spring to promote the early childhood education profession as a career of choice and to support workforce recruitment into the early learning and child care sector.

To learn more about the Early Childhood Education: Careers that Matter Campaign, visit www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/campaigns/early-childhood-education.html.

Further reading:

[Early Learning and Child Care Bilateral Agreements](#)

[Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework](#)

Budget 2025 Highlights: Early Learning and Child Care

On March 20, 2025, the Manitoba government announced Budget 2025, which commits additional funding to support families and our early learning and child care sector. Specific commitments focused on fostering healthy children, families, and communities include the following:

- Under the Canada-Wide Agreement with the federal government, Manitoba will create more than 4,600 new and affordable child care spaces including hundreds of flexible child care spaces in hospitals in Winnipeg and Brandon for children under the age of seven.
- Infrastructure and capital allocations with investments in building 11 new schools creating hundreds of new child care spaces, including 880 new school-age child care spaces.
- Maintaining \$10-a-day child care for all licensed and funded child care spaces, including school age spaces on non-school days.
- Continuing to offer subsidies for eligible families to ensure costs are not a barrier to accessing quality early learning and child care.

Spotlight on Success

Helping to Shape the Future in Eastman

On Tuesday, February 25, 2025, the department, in collaboration with the Hanover School Division, hosted an Early Learning and Child Care Career Fair in Steinbach. The event was well received by participants and welcomed 30 people, including representatives from four child care centres.



Sarah Watt, Inclusion Support Program Coordinator, and **Anna-Marie Quilty**, Child Care Coordinator, greet attendees at the Hanover School Division Career Fair. Sarah and Anna-Marie were just two of six ELCC staff on hand for this special event.

The Early Learning and Child Care Career Fair was open to all members of the Eastman community who were interested in learning more about starting a rewarding career in child care. It also provided an opportunity to connect local child care centres with potential candidates to help address immediate staffing needs.

The department led an information session about the benefits of pursuing a career in child care and the training options available. Centres in attendance also had the opportunity to talk about their centre and what they are looking for in potential employees. Participants were encouraged to bring their resume and to directly connect with centres who were hiring.

"I just want to take a minute to thank the team for setting up the meet and greet in Steinbach, it was such a great idea, and it was so nice to see the interest in this field. [...] and the information was offered in such a positive and clear manner."

—Tami Joyal, ECE III, Director, Legacy Children's Centre

The department is developing plans for future career fairs in other parts of the province. Upcoming events will be posted at www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/childcare_news/index.html.

Meet the ELCC Team

Debbie Huebner, ECE III, Child Care Coordinator

I believe that having been a child care centre director prior to becoming a coordinator has been a huge asset in learning this role and advancing my understanding. It's very interesting seeing things from both sides.

I always loved working with children and being around children. I took a child care course and had the opportunity to work in a child care centre, which I really enjoyed. That's when I started pursuing my education. I received my Early Childhood Educator (ECE) II certificate from Université de Saint-Boniface in June of 1993.

I started at a centre in Transcona in March 1994 as a supervisor. I took evening courses at Red River College Polytechnic while working, and received my ECE III, focusing on children with special needs. I made my way up to assistant director, and then it was a good 15 years as a director before coming to Early Learning and Child Care in government in 2023.

The child care sector has grown tremendously over thirty years. How we're portrayed has improved. Way back, we were considered 'babysitters,' but now our profession is recognized, which is really nice to see. There have been so many different things implemented to benefit children, centres, and families. Integration with the education side of things has been a positive. I think that helps with recognition and awareness.

Being in the field for so long, my advice is to never stop your professional development. Don't be scared to ask questions, even about simple things. Don't be afraid to specialize, for example in infant or preschool or school age care. Take all the information in from staff that can mentor you. Always be open to new ideas and keep growing and learning throughout your career. It will help you form stronger relationships with the children, their families, and fellow staff.

You can make a difference in the lives of children and families throughout your entire career. I worked in a school age centre for close to thirty years. I remember a child in our care at one point, who came in again years later carrying a little baby car seat of his own. Wow. You really do get to see life come full circle.



Debbie Huebner, Child Care Coordinator, Early Learning and Child Care



Each month, the division will answer a common inquiry received from facilities in a question-and-answer format.

This Month's Question

What does the Early Learning and Childcare (ELCC) Building Fund entail and where can I get more information?

Answer

The Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Building Fund offers capital grant funding to non-profit child care centres that wish to renovate, expand their existing centre, or build a new centre for the purpose of adding child care spaces. This fund provides approved projects with capital funding of up to 60 per cent towards the total eligible project construction costs as follows:

- New infant and pre-school spaces receive funding for 60 per cent of total eligible project costs with no set maximum, in partnership with Canada under the federal child care agreements
- New school-age spaces receive provincial funding for 60 per cent of total eligible project costs and up to a maximum of \$1.2 million, through provincial investments

For more information and to submit a proposal, visit www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/resources/building_fund.html and carefully read the requirements in the guide package.

If you have any questions or need help as you develop your proposal, email ccgf@gov.mb.ca.

Announcements and Reminders

Board Governance Manual and Free Support Services

The customizable best-practice Board Governance Manual and implementation supports developed in partnership with the Manitoba Child Care Association and People HR First Services are designed to help Centre directors and board members effectively fulfill their responsibilities and ensure the success of their Boards and operations now and into the future.

Visit the Manitoba Child Care Association website at <https://mccahouse.org/professional-development/board-governance> to register for a copy of the Board Governance Manual and/or individualized support services provided at no-charge by People First HR Services.

To learn more about this initiative, view a copy of the [operational circular and webinar recording](#).

MCCA Winter/Spring 2025 Workshops

Over 55 professional development opportunities are available this year. For a complete list of workshops, times, and dates, view the [brochure](#). Questions? Email events@mccahouse.org.

New ECE II Training Pathways Flyer

Are you, or someone you know, considering your next step in your career as an Early Childhood Educator? You are encouraged to view, share, and/or post a copy of the ECE II Training pathways flyer promoting a career in Early Childhood Education and highlighting the various recognized Early Childhood Education training options in Manitoba.

- [ECE II Training Pathways](#) (English)
- [ECE II Training Pathways](#) (French)



For more information, visit www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/resources/publications.html.

Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P) Training—Deadline March 31, 2025 (No Cost)

In May 2024, ELCC partnered with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P) to deliver an online child sexual abuse prevention training program for all child care staff in Manitoba. The program is intended to create a model for early childhood educators to help detect and prevent child abuse in Canada.

As a reminder, licensed child care facilities including Early Childhood Educators, Child Care Assistants, and home-based child care providers (including substitutes) are required to complete this mandatory training by March 31, 2025, and every four years thereafter.

To learn more about the C3P initiative and how to access the online training at no cost, view a copy of the [operational circular and webinar recording](#). For further details about the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P), visit www.protectchildren.ca/en/about-us/.

Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation

The Accessible Information and Communication Standard Regulation under The Accessibility for Manitobans Act, builds on existing requirements of Manitoba's Human Rights Code and requires organizations to identify, remove, and prevent barriers that exist digitally, in-print, or through interaction with technology or people.

All licensed early learning and child care centres, including nursery schools, as well as family and group child care home providers with one or more employees (including casual staff), are required to comply before May 1, 2025.

For more information, visit www.manitoba.ca/education/childcare/childcare_news/current_circulars.html.

Help Keep Board of Directors Contact Information Up-to-Date

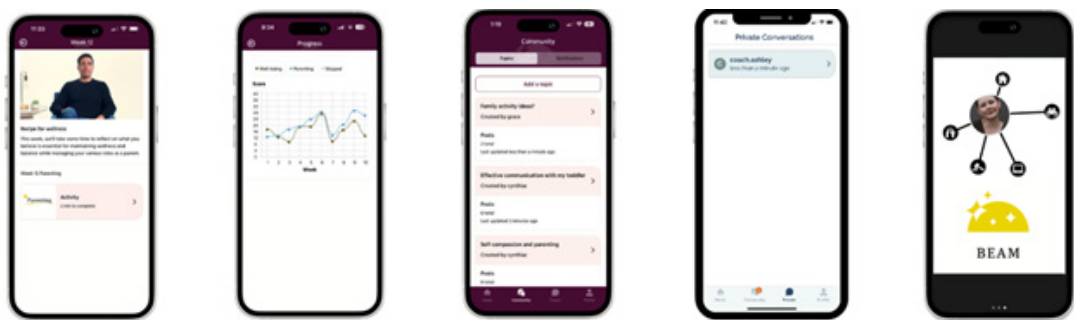
To support communication efforts with our sector, please ensure that contact information and email addresses for all board members are entered and up-to-date in the [Child Care Online—Record of Board of Directors](#) section.

BEAM Program—Seeking Participants for May 2025

Dr. Leslie Roos at the Children's Hospital Research Institute of Manitoba along with the University of Manitoba have been implementing BEAM (Building Emotional Awareness and Mental Health), a 12-week app-based program to promote family mental health and reduce parenting stress. It's designed for Manitoba parents with children aged 2 to 5 years. Through this online, self-paced program, parents can choose to access learning modules when it works best for them. The weekly time commitment is around 60 minutes.

The modules offer practical advice on parenting and mental health. Parents will learn how to navigate strong emotions, effective communication skills, and supportive parenting techniques to foster family relationships and well-being. BEAM has been shown to reduce mental health problems and improve parent-child relationships.

The next cohort starts on May 20, 2025. Participants will be compensated.



Screenshots of the BEAM app and its different features.

For more information and to register, visit www.thebeamprogram.com or email beam.research@umanitoba.ca.

Early Learning and Child Care Division Update

ELCC Provincial Staff Meeting

On Thursday and Friday, February 6 and 7, Early Learning and Child Care Division staff from across the province gathered for the 2025 ELCC Provincial Meeting at Centro Caboto Centre. More than 130 staff and guests met to reflect on the work of 2024 and chart the path forward in 2025 and beyond.

Presentations included *Early Childhood Education in Canada*, by Dr. Emis Akbari, a professor with the School of Early Childhood, George Brown College, University of Toronto. Dr. Akbari led a compelling seminar and interactive session guided by her research on policy related to early childhood development and education at all levels of government, comparing Canada to other developed economies, and examining the status of the Early Childhood Educator (ECE) workforce in Ontario.

We welcomed Sarah Gazan, Director of Indigenous Excellence, and Wade Houle, Curriculum Lead on Land-Based Education and Indigenous Languages, to facilitate an anti-racism workshop focusing on anti-racism and anti-oppression education. The workshop provided an opportunity to learn about, reflect on, and find ways to take action to address bias, racism, and inequity and improve outcomes for children and families.

We also heard inspiring words from Elder Ivy Chaske, Minister Schmidt, and Deputy Minister O'Leary, and took time to recognize several members of our team for their exemplary years of service.



Top left to right: Staff of the Capital and Space Development Team—**Terry Smith**, Facility and Capital Development Analyst; **Signe Hanson**, Executive Director Capital and Space Development; **Lawrence Kuroshi**, Portfolio Manager; **Shelley Jonasson**, Space Expansion Program Coordinator; **Pam Wever**, Director, Capital and Space Development; **Elizabeth Olurunfemi**, Policy Analyst; **Lily Mallard**, Senior Capital Projects Manager; **Larissa Zacharuk**, Senior Capital Projects Manager; **Emma Donald**, STEP Student; **Milina Dueck**, STEP Student; **Oliver Barham**, Policy Analyst; **Dr. Emis Akbari**.

Centre left to right: **Yang Shang**, Senior Data Scientist; **The Honourable Tracy Schmidt**, Minister, Education and Early Childhood Learning; **Jennifer Faulder**, Executive Director, Policy and Planning Branch; **Assistant Deputy Minister Sarah Whiteford**, Early Learning and Child Care Division; **Deputy Minister Brian O'Leary**, Education and Early Childhood Learning; **Melissa Shapiro**, Policy Analyst; **Larissa Zacharuk**, Senior Capital Projects Manager; **Maxine Lam**, Senior Policy Analyst.

Bottom left to right: **Gurpreet Grewal**, Quality Enhancement Consultant; **Joanna Flores**, Quality Enhancement Consultant; **Laura Dale**, Policy and Program Analyst; **Cees de Vries**, Director, Quality Enhancement and Program Development; **Crystal Carvalho**, Policy and Program Analyst; **Jon Bitton**, Licensing and Compliance Supervisor; **Darcy Orvis**, Inclusion Support Program Coordinator; **Nikki Tynes**, Subsidy Advisor, **Carmen Zubin**, Licensing and Compliance Supervisor.

Early Learning and Child Care Connecting with Community

On Wednesday, **February 12**, ELCC attended the Yellowquill University College Career Fair. Over 400 career-seekers attended the event, ranging from young adults to elders, predominantly representing Indigenous communities across the province.

On Thursday, **March 6**, staff from ELCC attended the River East Transcona School Division Career Fair at the Transcona Country Club. More than 500 youth ages 12 to 18 from nearby RETSD schools visited the Fair to learn more about career paths, training, and educational options.

On Saturday, **March 8**, staff from ELCC attended the annual *Fédération des parents de la francophonie manitobaine/ Division scolaire franco-manitobaine* (FPFM/DSFM) conference at the Canad Inns Destination Centre Club Regent in Winnipeg. Parents, board members, FPFM/DSFM employees and early learning and child care professionals took part in two workshops in the morning and a group discussion in the afternoon. The theme this year was *Prenons le temps... de célébrer la parentalité* (Let's take time... to celebrate parenthood).



Lindsay Ortlieb, Policy Analyst (left) and **Carla Fleury-Charles**, Program Analyst, with ELCC's Workforce Development Unit attend the Yellowquill University College Career Fair, to promote careers in early childhood education.



Anaïs Ratté, Engagement Specialist (left) and **Carla Fleury-Charles**, Policy and Program Analyst, attended the FPFM/DSFM Conference on behalf of ELCC.

Staffing Updates

We continue to welcome new staff into our division to support Manitoba's priorities for early learning and child care and support career growth and development of existing staff.

Delaney Boehm joined the Provincial Operations Branch as Quality Enhancement and Program Development Support Administrator with the Quality Enhancement Unit at 210 Osborne on February 10, 2025. Delaney holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with a minor in Business Administration from the University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI), and is currently pursuing a Master's in Public Administration. Delaney has experience working in public health in multiple roles such as community resources and financial expenditures.

Kari Cook joined the Provincial Operations Branch as Child Care Coordinator with the Licensing and Compliance Unit, Provincial Operations Branch at 114 Garry on March 10, 2025. Kari is a certified Early Childhood Educator III with 14 years experience in the child care sector, specializing in culturally-responsive and inclusive programming.

Jeannette Slate has also joined the Provincial Operations Branch as Child Care Coordinator with the Licensing and Compliance Unit at 114 Garry on March 10, 2025. Jeanette is a graduate of Red River College Polytechnic and the University of Winnipeg, holding both an ECE III and a Bachelors of Arts in Developmental Studies. She has more than ten years experience in rural and urban child care facilities, with an emphasis on inclusive care.

Maria Cielo Dhaliwal has joined the Policy and Planning Branch as a Data Scientist with Strategic Policy and Intergovernmental Relations Unit at 114 Garry on March 10, 2025. Maria holds a Bachelor of Mathematics and Computing and a Graduate Diploma in Data Science and Innovation from the University of Technology in Sydney, Australia. Maria has more than ten years experience in international business analytics and will be supporting staff across the Division with data analysis and reporting.

For the list of key department contacts, visit www.edu.gov.mb.ca/aboutus.html.

We Value Your Input!

Would you like to share some of your facility's ideas or tell us about a program or celebration at your facility? Would you like to share a quote about why you love being an early childhood educator? Email us at CDInfo@gov.mb.ca with the subject line "ELCC Newsletter" and you could be featured in our next edition.

For general inquires about the Early Learning and Child Care Division

Website: www.manitoba.ca/childcare

Email: cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca

Phone: 204-945-0776

If you would like to remove your email from the ELCC Monthly E-News distribution, contact melcc-ed@gov.mb.ca.