

Today's News - Monday, December 11, 2017

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Ontario is taking a significant step towards creating [45,000 new licensed child care spaces](#) in schools, communities and other public spaces by funding almost 500 new child care rooms at 188 schools across the province. As a result of this investment, more than 8,400 children and their families will gain access to high-quality licensed care in a safe, convenient setting. Premier Kathleen Wynne was with Indira Naidoo-Harris, Minister Responsible for Early Years and Child Care, at Santa Maria Catholic School in Toronto to announce funding for 2017–18. Helping more families access quality, affordable child care is an essential part of the government's plan for a fairer, better Ontario. It will give more children a safe, caring environment in which to learn and grow, and allow more women to go back to work and pursue their careers, which is critical to closing the gender wage gap. As part of a five-year commitment to help 100,000 more children up to the age of four access child care, Ontario is investing up to \$1.6 billion in capital projects alone. This will add an estimated 45,000 new licensed child care spaces in schools and other community settings. Additionally, the province is increasing operating funding and subsidies to help more children aged 0–4 years access quality child care. During this period of rapid economic change, the government knows it must step up to create fairness and opportunity for families. In addition to providing easier access to affordable child care for 100,000 more children, the plan includes a higher minimum wage and better working conditions, free tuition for hundreds of thousands of students, and free prescription drugs for everyone under 25 through the biggest expansion of medicare in a generation.

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Our government's plan to build a stronger, healthier Ontario includes **historic new investments in health care**, including free **medications for everyone 24 and under through OHIP+: Children and Youth Pharmacare**, providing free **tuition to over 210,000 students** and on-the-job learning opportunities to help land a great job, helping 100,000 kids access quality, licensed child care and making it more affordable for families, making everyday life more affordable by **reducing electricity costs by 25 per cent** on average through our Fair Hydro Plan, and taking action to **make housing more affordable** for homebuyers and renters through our Fair Housing Plan.