NEWS RELEASES

July 5, 2007

McGuinty Government Strengthens Ontario's Child Care System

$142.5 Million Funding Boost And New Regulatory College Means Better Care For Ontario's Children

QUEEN'S PARK — The McGuinty government is strengthening Ontario's child care system with $142.5 million in funding to sustain 7,000 new licensed spaces and create a first-of-its-kind in Canada regulatory College of Early Childhood Educators to maintain professional standards of practice among child care practitioners, Ontario Minister of Children and Youth Services Mary Anne Chambers announced today.

"Our government recognizes the importance of quality, affordable child care and the need to sustain the significant progress we've achieved to date," said Chambers. "Over the past two years, more than 22,000 new licensed child care spaces have been created province-wide. This is helping more parents balance the demands of work and family, while giving their children access to early childhood education."

This year's additional $142.5 million investment will be used to enhance, strengthen and sustain the government's Best Start program including:

- $105.7 million new funding will sustain 7,374 licensed childcare spaces, including 300 new licensed and culturally-appropriate child care spaces for Aboriginal children in targeted off-reserve communities, as well as assist Ontario municipalities with the pressures they face in supporting quality child care in Ontario
- An additional $24.8 million will provide a wage increase of approximately three per cent for approximately 33,500 childcare practitioners across Ontario
- $12 million to provide improved access to training and create the first regulatory College for Early Childhood Educators in Canada.

The government will also be supporting child care professionals working in licensed child care settings who want to upgrade their qualifications in order to obtain an early childhood education diploma, by providing grants to assist with the costs of training, as well as grants to cover the associated travel and living costs.

"This is an important milestone for the early childhood education field as the establishment of a regulatory body formally recognizes trained early childhood educators as professionals," said Eduarda Sousa, Executive Director of the Association of Early Childhood Educators Ontario. "The announcement of new and additional funding for training and wage enhancement grants is an important step towards addressing the retention and recruitment issue that currently plagues our profession."

The funding comes form the government's Best Start plan to enhance the early learning, child care and healthy development of the province's children so they are ready to achieve success in school by the time they start Grade 1. The government's total investment in child-care province-wide is more than $841 million for 2007-08.

Other government investments supporting the early learning and healthy development of Ontario's young children and their families include:

- In January 2007, the province streamlined the eligibility process for child care fee subsidies based on family net income so more families are now eligible
- More support for the health and well-being of 1.3 million children through the new Ontario Child Benefit, which will provide low-income families with a one-time down payment of up to $250 per child this July, growing to a maximum of $1,100 annually per child by 2011
- Increasing the number of childcare inspectors by 12 to 77 and providing parents and families with improved access to information on licensed child care centres to assist them in making well informed child care decisions.

"Our government is investing in measures that are making the child care system more accessible, more affordable and more accountable to families," said Chambers.

Additional Information :

- **Backgrounder**
- **Fact Sheet**

Ontario

This site is maintained by the Government of Ontario

Privacy | Important Notices
© Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2007

Last Modified: July 26, 2007