

FEDERAL CHILDCARE PLAN COULD SPUR PARENT-LED DAYCARE CENTRES

Funding for national childcare system an opportunity for parents to create daycare co-ops

SASKATOON, SK, April 21, 2021 -- The Government of Canada's significant commitment to build a national daycare system presents an opportunity for rural and Indigenous communities to expand much-needed childcare capacity. Parents could take this process into their own hands by creating daycare co-operatives.

In its recently released budget, the federal government committed to implementing a "Canada-wide, community-based system of quality childcare" with the investment of \$30 billion over five years. Its goal is for all families in Canada to have access to affordable, flexible childcare no matter where they live.

Rural and Indigenous communities often lack childcare options — they also know that to get services they want often means doing it themselves. Co-operative businesses are created by the people who want access to a service that no one else provides. By starting a daycare co-op, parents can create an organization that meets their specific needs, that they govern themselves.

"There are many daycare co-operatives in Saskatchewan and Manitoba, but they are less common in other provinces," said Co-operatives First's Executive Director, Audra Krueger. "Our organization was pleased to present the idea to a group of parents in Smoky Lake, Alberta, who went on to create the first daycare co-op in their province. This federal budget commitment is an exciting opportunity for parents in other communities to do the same."

Though more details about the program have yet to be released, Co-operatives First encourages the government to provide funding to groups who start their own daycare centres through this initiative. This will increase available childcare spaces in the communities that need it most.

For more information on the potential of daycare co-operatives, contact:

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Background

Co-operatives First is a non-profit organization funded by Federated Co-operatives Limited and the Co-operative Retailing System. Founded in 2015, the organization provides co-op start-up resources, such as feasibility studies, business plans, and incorporation support to rural and Indigenous co-op entrepreneurs across western Canada. Our goal is to help leaders in these communities build new businesses, grow local economies, and support community development.

