

# Supporting early learning and child care in Edmonton's municipal election



## What is early learning and care?

- Early learning and care, also known as daycare or childcare, is a place outside the home where young children spend a portion of their day without their parents.
- If you work full time, your child likely spends about eight or more hours per day in someone else's care.
- A goal of many parents is a safe and stimulating environment that offers programs led by highly skilled, well-supported educators.



## Why is early learning and care important?

- The early years of life are extremely important for your child's learning, social development, and health.
- A strong start through high-quality early learning and care lays the foundation for a successful life.



## What is high quality early learning and care?

- High quality early learning and care can be distinguished by **characteristics** such as staff qualifications specializing in early childhood education, low child-to-staff ratios, indoor and outdoor spaces, appropriate curriculum, and more.
- Overall, high quality early learning and care:
  - has a positive impact on children's well-being, especially for low-income and vulnerable children;
  - is associated with healthy social, emotional, and intellectual development in children;
  - requires highly skilled and well-supported educators; and
  - reduces child poverty and provides educational advantage.

## What is the current state of early learning and care?

- In 2019:
  - Fees in for-profit child care centres in Edmonton were 62 percent higher than in non-profit centres.

- Families in Edmonton and Calgary often paid more for child care than families in many other major Canadian cities.
- Alberta had **fewer centre-based spaces** than most provinces. Spaces were available for only 19% of children from 0-3 years, for 39% of children 3-5 years, and 9% of school aged children.



## Affordable and accessible early learning and care adds value to Alberta by:

- supporting a healthy economy;
- allowing parents to pursue or continue work and education;
- addressing barriers that prevent women's full participation in the workforce;
- producing a return of \$6 for every \$1 **invested**;
- preparing children for success in their schools and communities.



**Government policy has an impact on the quality, availability, inclusiveness, and affordability of early learning and care. Here's how you can support early learning and care in this municipal election.**

- Learn about the candidates in your jurisdiction:
  - Are candidates considering families as part of their platform?
  - Is support for early learning and care part of their platform?
  - Have they supported early learning and care in the past?
  - Do they understand that the city and school boards can do a lot to support early learning and care?
  - Do their campaign platforms benefit early learning and care?
  - Do their campaign platforms support early learning and care?
  - The Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care offers solutions that promote affordable and accessible care options. This information is available on the website [here](#).

- Contact candidates in your Ward.
  - Learn about the candidates' campaign platforms in your jurisdiction.
  - Talk with them about the early learning and care policies you want them to support.
- VOTE! Find out more about candidates and where you can vote [here](#).
- Early learning and care is a responsibility that transcends jurisdictional boundaries.
  - The City of Edmonton, the Catholic and Public School Boards, the Alberta Ministry of Children's Services and the Ministry of Education, and the federal Ministry of Families, Children and Social Development can all enact policies that can positively impact.



**The Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care calls on all levels of government and school boards to enact policies that support affordable, accessible, high quality, and inclusive early learning and care.**

