

**1. How many new spaces and new child care centres are being created for the province?**

The province will approve up to 15 new regulated child care centres in communities that demonstrate need and create up to 500 new regulated spaces. Additional spaces will be provided through up to 90 new family home child sites. In total, up to 1000 new spaces will be created through strategic growth.

**2. How did you choose the 11 identified counties?**

As outlined in the 2016 report on the child care review “Affordable, Quality Child Care: A Great Place to Grow!”, government has committed to increase the number of child care spaces in communities that need them most (Action 17), with a focus on infant spaces (Action 18). Using these actions to guide the process, criteria was used to identify counties most in need of child care centres, such as population demographics, Early Development Instrument (EDI) results, current usage of child care spaces and results of the recent consultation with families across Nova Scotia. 11 counties were identified.

**3. If I am interested in operating a child care facility in an identified community, what is the process?**

If you are interested in opening a child care centre through Strategic Growth, please contact the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) to request a **Notice of Intent to Open a Child Care Centre through Strategic Growth** and a **Child Care Facility Proposal Guide**.

EECD Contact for Central and Western Regions (Halifax, Valley, South Shore and Tri-county)**Janice Foote**

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**4. How long will the process take?**

New intents and the first round of proposals will be accepted until September 1, 2018.

**5. Are you only approving one licensed centre in each identified community?**

The number of centres and/or new spaces that are approved will depend on what is required to meet the need in each identified community. This assessment will be made as part of the review process. We anticipate new spaces will be created through a combination of new centres and approved centre expansions. We are going to start with targeting at least one per county, and then prioritize from there based on the strength of the proposals received.

**6. Will my centre receive government funding?**

Child care centres approved under the strategic growth plan will be eligible to apply for government funding.

**7. Can I apply for a license to operate a child care facility in a community that is NOT identified on the map?**

Yes, operators can apply for a license to operate a child care facility but will not be eligible to apply for government funding for centres that are not approved under the strategic growth initiative.

**8. Why is DEECD controlling where child care centres are located?**

Centres can open anywhere and at any time with an approved proposal. This initiative is specific to centres who want to receive government funding, and we want to fund those in area of greatest need, as per the 2016 Action Plan commitment.

**9. Why are FHDC services able to grow across the province but child care centres are limited to 11 counties?**

Part of the strategic growth process was to look at the type of regulated child care that was the best fit with the needs of the community. For example, some areas of the province are very rural with limited or no public transportation, or have a population density that would not support additional sustainable child care centres. FHDC provides a sustainable option in these areas and expanding family home day care programs increases options and offers flexibility for families (Action 19).

**10. Why was my county not identified as needing regulated child care?**

The initial release includes counties that were identified as being in the greatest need of regulated child care based on the priorities of the child care plan and data collected on each community. This is a 2-year initiative and we will revisit provincial needs again, at that time.

**11. If more than one application is received for each identified community, how will you choose the successful applicant?**

All applications will be reviewed and scored based on established criteria. The successful applicant will be selected based on the scoring results.

**12. Who makes the decision on approving the proposal, once it is submitted?**

The department will be collaborating with community early years' networks to review and make recommendations regarding location of centres/expansions. All final decisions will be made by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD).

**13. Will this include space for school-aged children?**

We are focusing our efforts on growth of child care for 0-5 year-olds, as per our federal agreement, and to provide more access for families with children not in school.

**14. What is this incentive for infant spaces? How much will centres receive if they choose to open an infant space?**

Spaces for infant care is a priority for this funding. The infant incentive has been established to off-set some of the costs related to the provision of infant care.

**15. How much will we receive?**

Child care centres will receive \$4/per space/per day. Family home day cares will receive \$2/day per space/per day.

**16. What if I already have infant spaces?**

You can apply for the incentive if you currently have infant spaces

**17. Who can I contact for more information about the Strategic Growth Initiative?**

EECD Contact for Central and Western Regions (Halifax, Valley, South Shore and Tri-county)

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