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THE REAL COSTS OF FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN IN ONTARIO

Full-day kindergarten will cost Ontario \$1.8 billion annually, double initial estimates; the costs of the full proposed early learning plan could rise to over \$6 billion annually

November 25, 2009 (Ottawa) – A new study released today by the *Institute of Marriage and Family Canada* reveals that full-day kindergarten in Ontario will cost \$1.8 billion annually, about double initial estimates. If the proposed vision for early learning in Ontario is fully implemented, encompassing “the prenatal period through to adolescence,” the costs would easily rise to \$6.1 billion annually. This is nearly half the current Ministry of Education budget.

Were the money given to parents instead of being spent on institutional care, parents could receive a minimum of \$9,199 dollars per child, annually.

The study conservatively estimates the salary and benefit costs for teachers and early childhood educators, operating costs, capital costs and the increased bureaucracy costs of the Charles Pascal blueprint for early learning in Ontario. It also highlights areas of risk for increased costs that are not included in Pascal’s blueprint for early learning in Ontario, and explains why the Quebec example of ballooning costs is instructive for Ontario.

“Government expenditures in Quebec have risen 850 per cent since 1995,” says Andrea Mrozek, author of the study, “and Ontario just revealed a much higher than expected deficit. Is this what Ontario needs in these tough economic times?”

The study *The cost of a free lunch—The real costs of the Pascal early learning plan for Ontario* can be viewed in full [here](#).

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