

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 24, 2026

New Francophone Child Care Spaces Now Open in North Grenville

Kemptville, ON – The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, in partnership with the Municipality of North Grenville, the Conseil des écoles catholiques du Centre-Est (CECCE), and Centre éducatif Cœur des Jeunes Notre Dame, are pleased to celebrate the expansion of francophone child care spaces in Kemptville through the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) initiative.

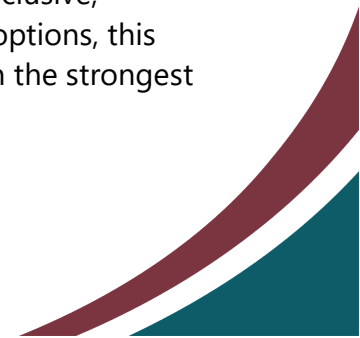
As part of the Leeds and Grenville CWELCC Directed Growth Strategy, 23 new affordable, high-quality licensed francophone child care spaces have been added at the existing Centre éducatif Cœur des Jeunes Notre Dame site. These spaces were created following Cœur des Jeunes assuming operation of the program in September 2025, previously operated by CECCE. All newly created spaces will transition to the new CECCE elementary school currently under construction in Kemptville.

This expansion is the result of a strong collaborative partnership between the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, the Municipality of North Grenville, CECCE, and Centre éducatif Cœur des Jeunes Notre Dame, with joint funding from the federal and provincial governments. It represents a significant investment in both economic and social development for the region, while strengthening access to francophone child care services.

The 23 new CWELCC spaces include 10 infant spaces, 5 toddler spaces and 8 preschool spaces. In total, 105 child care spaces, both CWELCC and non-CWELCC, are currently operated at this site, further supporting families with affordable and flexible child care options.

This expansion aligns with the Leeds and Grenville CWELCC Directed Growth Strategy, which aims to create 685 new affordable, licensed child care spaces across Leeds and Grenville by the end of 2026. Since 2022, the United Counties has successfully led the creation of 370 new CWELCC-directed spaces, increasing access to quality early learning environments across both urban and rural communities.

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville, the Municipality of North Grenville, CECCE, and Centre éducatif Cœur des Jeunes Notre Dame remain committed to supporting inclusive, affordable, and high-quality child care. By expanding francophone early learning options, this project provides families with greater choice and confidence, while giving children the strongest possible start in life.

A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner consisting of a curved, overlapping shape in maroon and teal colors.

Quotes

"Congratulations to everyone involved in the opening of Centre éducatif Coeur des Jeunes Notre Dame. I'm proud that our government is supporting the addition of 23 new spaces under the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care program," said Steve Clark, MPP for Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes. "As MPP, I've been proud to deliver hundreds of new childcare spaces locally and remain committed to working with the United Counties and its partners to continue expanding access to affordable childcare opportunities for families."

– Steve Clark, MPP for Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

"Early learning and child care is not just a service; it is essential community infrastructure. It supports parents and caregivers, strengthens the local workforce, and lays the foundation for children's lifelong learning. Today's expansion reflects a shared understanding of how critical access to child care is for families and for the health of our region," said Corinna Smith-Gatcke, Warden, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville. "Congratulations to everyone involved, and thank you for helping build a stronger future for our community, one child at a time."

– Corinna Smith-Gatcke, Warden, United Counties of Leeds and Grenville]

"From a municipal perspective, this kind of investment strengthens North Grenville as a whole. It supports our workforce, our local economy, and our schools. Most importantly, it helps ensure that families can put down roots here with confidence, knowing their children are supported from the very beginning," said Nancy Peckford, Mayor of the Municipality of North Grenville. "Today is a moment to celebrate, but it's also part of a bigger picture, a picture of a growing, inclusive, and forward-looking community. I'm proud of the role North Grenville has played in this project, and I'm grateful to everyone who helped make it happen."

– Nancy Peckford , Mayor of the Municipality of North Grenville]

"L'ouverture de 23 nouvelles places dans le cadre du SPAGJE nous touche profondément, car elle représente bien plus qu'un projet ou une expansion de services. C'est une réponse concrète aux besoins des familles francophones, un geste d'amour et de solidarité envers notre communauté.

Derrière chaque place, il y a un enfant qui pourra grandir, s'épanouir et découvrir le monde dans un milieu sécurisant et chaleureux, et des parents qui pourront avancer avec un peu plus de confiance et de sérénité. Nous sommes fieres et reconnaissantes de participer à cette belle avancée collective, portée par la conviction que chaque enfant mérite un départ de qualité. Ces 23 places incarnent l'espoir, l'engagement et la promesse d'un avenir plus accessible, plus humain et profondément tourné vers le bien-être des familles."

– Johanne Lafleur, Executive Director, Centre éducatif Coeur des Jeunes Notre Dame

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