

'You know you're helping': Yukon gets first 24/7 daycare ^[1]

Business serves shift workers and parents with unexpected emergencies

Author: Morin, Phillipe

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AVAILABILITY

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EXCERPTS

Joy Agus calls her new business more than a "daycare."

For starters, it's open at night.

Grow with Joy is the first childcare business in Whitehorse to offer 24-hour service as well as drop-in care.

Agus started the business in May after seeing help-wanted ads.

"I just got an idea, seeing people looking for a babysitter for overnight," she said. "I saw the need from a few people."

So far, a few children have been using the overnight service. Agus says there is only one child who regularly stays overnight and others who stay intermittently.

Most of the parents are shift workers, who work unusual hours and late-night shifts. Others have evening jobs in retail and can sometimes only pick up their children in the late evening.

Younger children sleep in cribs. There are also beds set up for older children. Boys and girls above eight are separated into different rooms.

Drop-in service helps people with medical appointments

The centre is a regular daycare during the day with a subscription monthly rate. However it also offers drop-in care. The business has a roster of accredited workers on call in case new children arrive.

Agus says this serves a need in Whitehorse.

One recent example is that someone came into Whitehorse from Watson Lake. The mother is expecting a second child and needed someone to watch her two-year-old during medical appointments.

Some other parents recently came into Whitehorse from Dawson City and needed a few hours to attend a canoe safety course.

Agus says it feels good to help people. For now, the rate for children is \$15 per hour for nights because sometimes there is only one child on site during the night. (That compares to \$65 a day or \$70 on weekends.)

She's hearing from many people that the business meets a need.

"It's the feeling that you are helping people," she says.

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