

Parents step up to head off daycare closure in western Nunavut

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EXCERPTS

The daycare centre in Cambridge Bay is back on track after a close call with indefinite closure—thanks to concerned parents.

The service, run by the non-profit Cambridge Bay Daycare Society, was forced to shut its doors July 17 and 18.

“This closure was the result of a severe drop in volunteer numbers on the society’s board of directors and its committees,” Billy Nicoll, chair of the board of directors for the daycare society, said in a statement provided July 19 to Nunatsiaq News.

The community learned of the closure from social media July 13 in a public service announcement that said more board members were needed to meet regulatory requirements.

“We are sincerely sad that it had to come to this,” read the notice, which also said that the daycare would close indefinitely if more volunteers didn’t come forward by July 21.

But after acquiring 12 new board members at an emergency community meeting, the daycare announced July 18 on Facebook that it would reopen the following day.

“It will continue, because people need childcare,” said one parent, who asked to remain anonymous. The parent said the family had relocated to Cambridge Bay to have access to daycare for their child, so a potential closure was disheartening.

And for families with multiple children who will need the service for years to come, a closure would be devastating, the parent said.

“Then you can no longer go to work ... It’s a basic service that should be provided.”

She said daycare space is hard to find in the region, so “Cambridge Bay is really lucky to have a building,” and standards are high at the daycare, which provides meals, programming and a fenced-in outdoor play area.

Service expenses and salaries for caregivers at the daycare are funded through family payments, government grants and community fundraisers.

The daycare is licensed to care for 46 children.

The new board will be considering input from the community on how to improve service at the daycare and ensure a closure doesn’t happen again.

But for now, the daycare will run as it has been running until the new board decides how to incorporate community feedback, the society’s release said.

The daycare still needs more support and is asking parents and community members who value the daycare to join one of its committees.

“Those who volunteer for the society directly contribute to the healthy development of the children of Cambridge Bay and in doing so promote the health of the community as a whole,” said Nicoll.

Residents who still have questions or suggestions can email the board at cbcschair@gmail.com [3] or call the daycare manager at (867) 983-3211, or speak with her directly.

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