

Letting \$25 a day day care go is a bad idea ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

I am so glad my kids are old enough to look after themselves when I have to work.

Last week, I was saddened, but not surprised, to hear that the \$25 a day day care program that had been brought in by the NDP government could end in 2021, making it difficult for some families to afford childcare and will either put a lot of single parents and, particularly women, out of work or have them struggling to make ends meet.

When I had my first child, I knew I would be leaving my job as a journalist. With the messed up hours I work, I would have needed a live-in nanny because not only was I working 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. —ish, I worked evenings and weekends and holidays and the middle of the night. It all kind of depended on what was going on and a nanny just wasn't in the budget.

I was fortunate that my family was able to afford for me to leave my job and stay at home and spend those early years with the boys. It did the three of us good.

Not everyone, however, is in that position and when you have to factor in thousands of dollars in child care per year, you start crunching numbers and more often than not they don't add up.

Last week I got a press release from the NDP Opposition talking about this and I see the story is making its way into the news with a story in the Globe and Mail saying that Rebecca Schulz, Alberta's Minister of Children's Services and the United Conservatives are looking at whether the millions spent on the program provide good value. She's also considering whether the program respects the choices of parents who might be looking for support, but not at a government-funded day care.

Now, years ago, the Harper government did the same thing, got rid of day care subsidies and brought in a child care benefits program. While every parent got these cheques, I know when I looked at mine there was no way it would have covered the cost of child care — it would barely help subsidize it.

While the UCP hasn't said they are cancelling the program, that it's under review, this creates a great deal of uncertainty, not only for families but also for day cares — like the Wetaskiwin Boys and Girls Club's Child Care Centre — which was able to increase staff and expand service because of the \$25 a day day care program.

Really not seeing how this is creating jobs and providing stability to families in Alberta.

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Region: Alberta ^[3]

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