

The quality gap: A study of non-profit and commercial child care centres in Canada ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Report and other related documents available online at: <https://childcarepolicy.net/> ^[2]

Access online [PDF] (link no longer available)

Text of the press release: Non-profit child care centres outscore their commercial counterparts in all aspects of early learning and care, says a new Canada-wide study released today. The study, by two University of Toronto economists, is the first to statistically analyze ratings for observed quality in child care centres, finding that non-profit centres do better on every measure. Gordon Cleveland and Michael Krashinsky of U of T's Division of Management authored The quality gap: A study of non-profit and commercial child care centres in Canada. It found that quality differences between non-profit and commercial classrooms were greatest in: - Personal care provided to children, such as diapering, rest and meals (6.9% higher scores in non profit centres). - The use of materials, activities and teaching interactions that affect language and thought development (non-profit centres scored 6.5% higher). - The way staff interact with children, including supervision and discipline, encouragement, warmth and respect (non-profits centres rated 8.3% higher). - Issues specific to parents and staff, such as the level of staff communication to parents about their children, and support for the personal and professional needs of staff (non-profits scored 18.6% higher). Higher quality care in non-profit centres held true even when scores were adjusted to consider other factors that could affect quality. For instance, non-profit centres are better regardless of the province where the centres are located and child population served. Even when scoring was adjusted to consider other quality-contributing variables such as availability of financial resources and the higher education levels of staff in non-profit centres, the for-profit programs still came out at the bottom. Among the commercial centres, those owned by individuals fared better than incorporated businesses, partnerships and other for-profit providers, who had the worst overall rating. The study's findings are particularly relevant at a time when the federal government is negotiating the framework for a national child care program with the provinces and territories. "From our study, it appears that non-profit child care would make good public policy," said Professor Cleveland. The study analyzed data collected in 1998 and reported in *You Bet I Care! Caring and Learning Environments: Quality in Child Care Centres Across Canada* and *A Canada-Wide Study on Wages and Working Conditions in Child Care Centres*.

Related link: Non-profit child care centres rate better, study shows^[3]

Region: Canada ^[4]

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