

P.E.I. daycare centres preparing to accept more children as school starts ^[1]

100 jobs at P.E.I. child-care centres could be filled

Source: CBC News

Format: Article

Publication Date: 4 Sep 2020

AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

EXCERPTS

With classes resuming on P.E.I. next week, numbers at Island daycares are expected to rise with more parents heading back to work and needing child care again.

Daycare centres were shut down due to COVID-19 but have been operational — in some capacity — since May.

More child-care spaces should be opening soon, says Sonya Hooper, executive director of the Early Childhood Development Association of P.E.I.

"Now that centres understand the directive and group sizes and they're working through development of operational plans for this next phase, they'll be reaching out to the families and reaching their capacity at some point in September," she said.

Hooper said there needs to be enough staff to manage new tasks like extra cleaning put in place due to the pandemic.

Centres are required to create an operational plan identifying what additional staff may be needed, she said.

"I think there is a lot of hiring happening right now," she said. "It's been a challenge for centres to be able to find staff to fill these voids."

Hooper estimates about 100 positions could be filled across P.E.I.

She said the association has been advocating for a recruitment and retention strategy for a number of years.

Shortage of centres

There was a shortage of space in licensed centres prior to COVID-19 — and that won't change until more centres open and more workers are hired, she said.

Hooper said child-care staff are facing different challenges because of the pandemic.

"One of the challenges that daycares are facing in the current directive is that when children are part of a group they stay in that group, so there will be less movement of children," she said.

The association has also been putting on professional development opportunities for early childhood educators and those working in centres to support them as they work through the year with the pandemic in mind.

"We've put on a series that is helping explore sort of getting back to professional practice," she said.

Hooper said there is also a series which explores organizing family groupings or how to manage how kids play during a pandemic.

Region: Prince Edward Island ^[3]

Tags: workforce ^[4]

Source URL (modified on 11 Sep 2020): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/20/09/pei-daycare-centres-preparing-accept-more-children-school-starts>

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