

GoFundMe launched to help Ajax daycare facing closure by the end of the month ^[1]

'How can the government allow essential services like this small business to be forced to close immediately?' asks parent

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AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

EXCERPTS

A GoFundMe campaign has been launched to help save an Ajax daycare in danger of closing by the end of this month.

Happy Kids Child Care provides care to more than 100 families and employs about 30 staff.

Owner Julie Gilchrist's current lease recently expired and she says the property owner has ordered her to vacate the property as of Aug. 31, because she got behind on rent at the height of the pandemic.

The GoFundMe has so far raised \$550 toward a goal of \$40,000.

"How can the property owners and landlords be allowed to conduct business this way and see so many families without child care and staff without jobs?" asks parent Andrea Garnett, who launched the GoFundMe. "How can the government allow essential services like this small business to be forced to close immediately?"

Gilchrist says public health regulations forced the daycare to close whenever there were two or more cases of COVID-19, which resulted in a loss of income.

"During COVID, I was doing everything I could to make sure my staff were paid and the kids were fed well, while I was drowning a little bit," she said.

Gilchrist says she owes the landlord about \$40,000 and has proposed several payment plans to repay the debt in full.

The lease for Happy Kids lists Elm Ajax Plaza Inc. as the landlord and the commercial plaza that houses the daycare is listed online as being owned by Elm Developments, a builder and developer based in York Region.

Officials associated with the lease did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

An email Gilchrist received from the landlord and shared with this paper notes they are "not able to accommodate" a repayment plan and says "we require the space be vacated no later than Aug. 31, 2022."

"This is an essential service. I have a great program with high ratings; I have families that come to Ajax from Courtice, Bowmanville and Markham," Gilchrist said.

Many parents have spoken up in support of Happy Kids, praising the quality of care, describing the staff as "a second family," and saying closing the centre would be "devastating" for families in the community.

Region: Ontario ^[3]

Tags: child care ^[4]

closure ^[5]

funding ^[6]

Source URL (modified on 29 Aug 2022): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/22/08/gofundme-launched-help-ajax-daycare-facing-closure-end-month>

Links

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