

London, Ont. ranks among worst Canadian cities for licensed childcare coverage: report ^[1]

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Excerpts

London, Ont. is a “childcare desert.”

“Three or more children are competing for the same space,” says Morna Ballantyne, executive director of Child Care Now (formerly Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada), Canada’s national child care advocacy.

A new report, by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) shows London in the bottom-quarter of major cities in the country when it comes to childcare coverage.

“What’s shocking is that the situation has not improved that much over the last 20 years,” adds Ballantyne.

Best cities in Canada to raise a family, according to one study

Ontario releases list of where new \$10-a-day child-care spaces will be

This is how much Ontarians have to make per hour in different regions to cover living costs

Southwestern Ontario will benefit from province’s new budget

The study lists all Canadian cities with more than 6,500 children who are not yet in kindergarten, and all provincial/territorial capital cities.

While cities like Montreal have 72 per cent of children covered, in London, only three of out of ten children are able to get a licensed childcare spot. It has forcing parents to make tough decisions.

“They either withdraw from the paid labor force in order to be able to look after their children, or place their children in unlicensed unregulated child care — which is, you know, shown to be of much less quality,” says Ballantyne.

She adds there is, “all kinds of risks involved when you place your child in unregulated child care.”

In recent years, there has been a huge drop in fees, but Ballantyne says it’s not a widespread solution.

“There are many families that don’t have access to licensed child care and therefore can’t actually benefit at this stage from the greatly reduced fees,” she says.

So how do you water this desert? Ballantyne recognizes there’s not enough money coming from higher levels of government, but she’d like to see the municipality step up to find solutions.

“Look within the city where there are possible locations for licenced child care centers and do whatever it can to support the creation the establishment of centers,” says Ballantyne.

She’d like the city to figure out strategies to improve the working conditions and compensation for staff.

Region: Ontario ^[3]

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[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/23/05/london-ont-ranks-among-worst-canadian-cities-licensed-childcare> [2]
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