

Child care workers advocate for better wages in Queen's Park rally ^[1]

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Source: City News

Format: Article

Publication Date: 30 Nov 2023

AVAILABILITY

Access Online ^[2]

Excerpt

Child care advocates and workers rallied on the front lawn of Queen's Park Thursday, urging the Ford government to hike wages for early childhood educators to help recruit more workers to the sector.

The rally was part of the Canada-wide Day of Action for Early Learning and Childcare. Carolyn Ferns with the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care said hundreds of thousands of families are stuck on waitlists for affordable child care – a crisis being driven by the workforce shortage.

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Ferns said it's not enough to recruit and retain workers.

“When you look at it, the majority of childcare workers don't even qualify for those new wage funds. It only goes to register ECEs, other staff and programs don't get that money. And for here in Toronto, that wage floor is still more than \$1 less than a living wage. So it's not enough to recruit and retain workers in the sector,” said Ferns.

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They are calling for a publicly funded salary scale with a wage grid that starts at \$30 to \$40 an hour for RECEs and at least \$25 per hour for other non registered staff.

“We need them to be able to choose where they are hired based on their passion, not just on where they might be able to pay the bills or begin to pay the bills. We need to change work and childcare to somewhere that they can make a living and make a life,” said Ferns.

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The rally comes as a new report from City Hall warned Toronto would not meet its target for new daycare spaces by 2026.

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Related link: Position paper on a publicly-funded early learning and child care salary scale ^[3]

Region: Ontario ^[4]

Tags: recruitment and retention ^[5]

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