

Some Alberta daycares close for a day to protest government funding program ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

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Excerpts

Two daycares in Calgary closed Tuesday morning as the Association of Alberta Childcare Entrepreneurs began staging “rolling closures” to protest the federal and provincial government’s child-care funding program.

In a news release, the association said the government’s “insufficient funding” and “restrictive policies” have created a strain on the industry.

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Daycare operators take issue with the terms of an agreement between operators and the provincial government, whose deadline falls on Jan. 31.

The arrangement is the third edition of an agreement signed in November 2021, which was a product of the federal government’s vision to bring the cost of child care down to \$10 a day by 2026 through a publicly funded system.

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Alberta’s Children and Family Services Minister Searle Turton had previously said the agreement has helped create 20,000 new licensed spaces, enrolled 40,000 more children and employed 9,000 early childhood care workers in the province.

While additional funding made daycare cheaper and encouraged more parents to re-enter the workforce, some for-profit operators found the conditions of the agreement restrictive.

For the first year, child-care providers could raise parental fees by three per cent. Last year, the government absorbed the increase, forbidding operators to raise prices for parents.

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However, the regulations that have followed government assistance should be expected, said Christopher Smith, a member of the National Advisory Council to the federal Ministry of Families, Children and Social Development, told Postmedia in an earlier interview.

“If private businesses are going to be receiving public funding. . . they’re also going to have to accept some regulation of the fees that they charge,” Smith said.

But some operators say the compensation for cost increases hasn’t kept up with inflation. And those opting out of the agreement won’t be able to access the provincial subsidies previously available.

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“The premier will be requesting a meeting with the federal minister to discuss this further and to urge the federal government to consider changes to the framework that would support operators facing inflationary pressures.”

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Region: Alberta ^[3]

Tags: funding ^[4]

child care closures ^[5]

Source URL (modified on 31 Jan 2024): <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/24/01/some-alberta-daycares-close-day-protest-government-funding-program>

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