

A wolf in auditor's clothing: Value-for-money audits are part of plans to gut municipal child care across Ontario, says CUPE ^[1]

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Excerpts

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According to child care advocates, experts, and workers, the real purpose of these audits is to justify the closure of municipal child care centres, opening the door for further privatization.

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"These audits have been used to justify mergers, amalgamations, and privatization around the province and it's never been to the benefit of families or workers. And that's by design. The Ford government doesn't care about service quality anymore than they care about actual working-class people. It's just about starving the public sector."

In 2017, KPMG recommended the Region of Waterloo (ROW) close all regionally operated child care centres. Today there are more than 9000 children on child care waitlists in the area.

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"These programs set the standard for care and good jobs. They cost marginally more because they actually pay a fair wage. But that small additional cost buys an incredible upside, with stable staff, thriving centres, and workers who can actually afford to live in the communities they support," said Carolyn Ferns, Policy Coordinator with the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care. "There is a workforce crisis in child care. That's why there are tens of thousands of families who cannot find care. The solution is to raise the floor for all child care workers to the benchmark of these city-run programs."

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"This government just refuses to learn the obvious lesson. Privatization will not help families who need high quality care. Audits will not help workers who need better paying, stable jobs. There are real problems within the child care sector where the vast majority of workers are women, many are newcomers to Canada, and far too few earn a living wage that reflects the true value of their contribution to society. That is why we need more investment in robust, healthy public services."

Related link: Ontario seeks municipal daycare audits, raising cost-cutting concerns ^[3]

Region: Ontario ^[4]

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