

N.S. parents struggle to find child care for kids with disabilities ^[1]

Province is working on 'inclusion policy and practice framework,' spokesperson says

Author: Aalders, Celina

Source: CBC News

Format: Article

Publication Date: 28 Mar 2024

AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

Excerpts

Courtnee Peddle is a working, single mother of two who has spent years trying to find inclusive child care for one of her sons. But after being turned away time and time again, she's realized it may never work out.

...

"I cry a lot for my kids in that aspect," she said. "It's nobody's fault that their brain is wired the way it's wired. But society has decided that we can't accommodate them, or if we are going to accommodate them, they all have to go together in an institution."

...

With no other options, Peddle said she has resorted to paying for individual caretakers like babysitters, costing her significantly more than she would pay for a space in a licensed child-care facility.

To make ends meet, she said she works three part-time jobs in health care and retail, sometimes paying friends or neighbours to spend the night at her house while she picks up a night shift at the hospital.

...

In February, officials from Ottawa and Nova Scotia announced an update to their joint plan to make child care accessible at an average cost of \$10 per day by March 2026, as part of a \$605-million deal signed in 2021 between the two governments.

In addition to lowering costs, creating more spaces and a new benefits plan for early childhood educators (ECEs), the funding is going toward an inclusive early learning and child care strategy. That will include a "provincial inclusion policy and practice framework" for ECEs, according to Krista Higdon, a spokesperson for the Department of Education.

...

Wee Care is a non-profit centre with a limit of 75 children from ages four months to six years old. Towler said they're at capacity, and currently serve at least 19 children with various disabilities. But over 500 families are on their waitlist.

...

Mullins, who works full-time, said Nash attended his school's after-school Excel program, until he was asked to leave because staff did not have the resources to look after him.

...

Mullins said her son has also been turned away from several other child-care centres because of his disabilities and behavioural challenges.

"If these facilities are going to offer these services, it should be a legal requirement that they're inclusive to everybody," she said. "He has just as much a right to safe care ... as does a neurotypical child."

Related link: Alberta parents of children with disabilities say they're running out of daycare options ^[3]

Region: Nova Scotia ^[4]

Tags: accessibility ^[5]

disability ^[6]

inclusion ^[7]

<https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/24/01/alberta-parents-children-disabilities-say-theyre-running-out-daycare> [4]
<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7853> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/accessiblity> [6]
<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/8951> [7] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/8952>