

# Woman protests lack of child care <sup>[1]</sup>

Trained in a trade, mother of three forced to leave job, go on social assistance  
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Access online <sup>[2]</sup>

### Excerpts

When Arleen Kehler decided she wanted to become a plumber, she quickly found success — the single mother of three received several scholarships and was even lauded as a “inspiration for other girls and women interested in the trades” in a profile from First Peoples Development Inc.

Today, she’s on social assistance and has to use food banks after she was forced to leave her job when she wasn’t able to get her children off a two-year wait list and into a school-age child-care program.

“I had to leave my position. It was heartbreaking, not only financially, but mentally as well, because I’ve worked my butt off for this,” she said.

...

Frustrated and with no recourse, Kehler has taken to holding one-woman protests on Portage Avenue. Decked out in her hard hat and work gear, she carries a sign reading: “Woman in the trades can’t work: No child care.”

“They want women in the trades,” she said. “Well, they want us there, we need child care, and that’s the bottom line.”

...

The provincial government is on track to create more than 4,400 school-age spaces, but the level of need continues to grow as the population increases, Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister Nello Altomare said.

“We’re ready to partner with the federal government to include school-aged children,” he said. “That’s going to be something that I will bring up, and I’m sure other provinces have as well.”

...

**Related link:** Ford government exploring more child-care supports for women working in the trades <sup>[3]</sup>  
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Non-standard work and child care in Canada: A challenge for parents, policy makers, and child care provision<sup>[5]</sup>

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