

Child-care wait list shows new rules work [CA-ON] ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Strange as it may sound, the news that London will have a wait list for child care actually represents progress. The wait list exists because more families are eligible, not because there are fewer subsidies.

Hundreds more families are receiving child-care subsidies and almost 400 new spaces have been created in London because of the McGuinty government's investments in early learning. London gets \$4.9 million more each year for child care than it did prior to our election in 2003. That money can be used for fee subsidies to support more families.

...

We've set up a working group that includes municipalities which is looking at how the new eligibility rules are working across the province. I look forward to hearing back from this group shortly, and working with London and other municipalities to continue to improve how we help parents pay for child care.

While many hold up the Quebec child-care model, where everyone pays the same amount as one to follow, in Ontario we've chosen a more progressive system in which those who need child care the most get it for free, a sliding scale is used for those needing a little help, and those who can afford it pay the market rate.

We know there is a link between poverty and limited access to child care -- without it, it's difficult or impossible for many to go work.

That's why we've already created 22,000 new spaces across the province and are moving ahead with a plan for full-day learning for four- and five-year-olds.

While opposition parties continue to oppose child-care initiatives, and the federal government has abandoned it all together, our commitment will not waiver. Our government will continue to make progress to help families in London and across Ontario access child care and help our children reach their full potential.

- reprinted from The London Free Press

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