

# Quebec day-care system 'mediocre': expert [CA-QC] <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

See text below.

## EXCERPTS

Quebec's \$7-a-day day-care program is often seen as a model of affordability by families across Canada, but the system is "mediocre" and needs more funding from parents and government if it is to have a positive impact on children, says a prominent Quebec child-care expert.

"We can improve quality through better caregiver training and smaller ratios (of children to caregivers)," said Christa Japel, a professor in the faculty of education at the University of Quebec at Montreal.

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Ms. Japel and her colleague Nathalie Bigras launched their most recent book on Quebec's day-care system last week.

Japel said the book, titled *La Qualité dans nos services de Garde Éducatifs à la petite enfance* (The Quality of our Day-care Services) is in some ways a response to a controversial book published last year by well-known Montreal pediatrician Jean-François Chicoine called *Le bébé et l'eau du bain* (The Baby and the Bathwater).

Mr. Chicoine's book struck fear into the heart of many a Quebec parent because parts of it could be interpreted to suggest that parents were doing their children irreparable harm if they put them in day care before the age of two.

The new book by Ms. Japel and Ms. Bigras is partly a summary of global research on the impact of day care, and partly guidelines on how to evaluate quality child care. There is a distinct lack of research and information of this kind published in French, Ms. Japel said.

"But we also wanted to demystify this scare that many parents got when they read about that book (by Mr. Chicoine) that made them feel that you mess up your kids permanently if you put them in child care before the age of two," she said.

Ms. Japel said she considers the quality of Quebec's day care system to be "mediocre" overall and she argues parents who can afford to do so should be contributing more financially to improve the system and poorer parents should pay less or nothing at all.

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- reprinted from the Montreal Gazette

**Region:** Canada <sup>[2]</sup>

Quebec <sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** quality <sup>[4]</sup>

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