

Grits lay out plan for day-care 'crisis': Liberals would provide start-up funding [CA-AB] ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

The Alberta Liberals unveiled the party's plan for child care Monday, with a strategy that includes start-up funding for day cares and free tuition for child care workers who stay in the province for at least three years.

"The key difference with our plan is we're recognizing that there is a crisis and we're making a commitment to increase child care spaces by 25 per cent in our first four years," Liberal Children's Services critic Weslyn Mather said in Calgary.

Mather quoted a 2006 Statistics Canada study that found that while the number of day-care spots doubled nationally between 1992 and 2004, Alberta saw a drop of seven per cent. She was also critical of the government cutting operational funding to day cares in favour of more subsidies in the 1990s.

Mather said the Liberals would provide operating dollars to accredited child care centres, day homes and out-of-school care centres. If party members held power, they would also increase the number of subsidies available to parents and provide financial incentives to centres that offer more labour-intensive infant and toddler services.

"Right now, most of our families do not have options," Mather said. "This area has been neglected for years."

The Liberal policy comes as parents and workers involved in early childhood education speak out about a dire need for child care spots across the province.

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- reprinted from the Calgary Herald

Region: Canada ^[2]

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