

Parents forced to lower expectations [CA] ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Tania and Tim Shia were looking forward to today's Conservative budget and the pledge of a \$1,200-per-child allowance to help with the costs of raising their 2-year-old daughter and five-month-old twins.

But the Toronto couple were shocked to learn that social policy experts have crunched the numbers and say they and other modest-income families with net incomes of between \$20,000 and \$40,000 might get less than half of the promised payment for kids under age six.

...

These families may also lose some of their income-tested benefits like the GST credit and the Canada Child Tax Benefit if the Tories don't exempt the allowance from the definition of net family income, said Caledon Institute president Ken Battle.

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Even though the family hasn't had to use daycare in the past and isn't planning to in the immediate future, they believe the money would be better spent on a universal child-care program.

"But if they are going to be handing out income support to families, I hope they find an intelligent and coherent way of delivering it rather than spending it so incoherently," said Tim Shia, a jazz musician who takes home about \$20,000 annually.

A spokesperson for Social Services Minister Diane Finlay said families will have to wait until later today to learn how the allowance will impact them.

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It could be even worse for Rexdale single parent Chantelle, who has three boys under the age of 7. The Humber College nursing student, who is living on an \$18,000 student loan, could get as little as \$474 per child under age 6, according to the Caledon analysis.

Chantelle, who didn't want her last name published, said she, too, would prefer child-care centres to cash.

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About 1,180 spaces in Peel, 1,400 in York, 593 in Durham, and 400 in Halton are also at risk. In Toronto, where centres were planned for low-income neighbourhoods, the neediest families will suffer if multi-year child-care funding disappears in today's budget, said Toronto Mayor David Miller.

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The Tories say they won't turn their backs on parents who need regulated child care.

They have broadened their election promise of tax breaks to employers to include grants to non-profit and community groups and are promising more study before launching the initiative.

- reprinted from the Toronto Star

Region: Canada ^[2]

Ontario ^[3]

Tags: budget ^[4]

public opinion ^[5]

funding ^[6]

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/06/05/parents-forced-lower-expectations-ca> [2]
<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7856> [4]
<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/budget> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/public-opinion> [6]
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