

Day cares demand federal dollars [CA-NB] ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Day care workers in New Brunswick are urging the Lord government to take advantage of millions of federal dollars that have been set aside for child care in the province.

It's been more than six months since Prime Minister Paul Martin was scheduled to sign a new child care deal with the province. New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island are the only provinces without a deal.

Virginia Den Hartog owns Panda Nursery and kindergarten in Saint John's south end. She says early childhood education in New Brunswick just doesn't make the grade when compared with some other provinces.

Den Hartog wants the deal signed so there's money available for materials to help children prepare for school and for staff training. She also says more grants are needed to bump up staff wages from just over \$8 an hour.

Training and Employment Development Minister Margaret-Ann Blaney says training has also been a priority. "We want to do more, we have to do more. These child care workers are incredibly valuable. I mean they're taking care of our children."

Blaney says the government hopes to have a deal signed by April.

- reprinted from CBC News

Region: Canada ^[2]

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