

# Quebec tells day care centres to open longer hours [CA-QC]<sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

See text below.

## EXCERPTS

The Charest government has tabled legislation which promises to make public day care centre hours more flexible for parents. Bill 124 also slashes the size of the bureaucracy which oversees the province's affordable child care network.

Daycare Minister Carole Théberge says child care centres need to make their hours more flexible for parents who work shifts such as in hospitals or shopping malls.

Day care centres in those areas will be solicited to open spots for children on evenings and weekends, Théberge said Tuesday.

Théberge says rather than injecting more money into day care centres, the government is trimming administration for savings of about \$50 million.

"We already put more than \$1.5 billion in those daycare services. I think the need to ask some questions and see if we do have the best practices now and do it the right way. These are questions I will be asking for sure," Théberge says.

Those centres which refuse to offer extended service will lose some government grants to centres willing to stay open late, Théberge says.

The government is trying to improve service for parents, while freezing budgets, says Johanne Lachance of the association of home day care centres. She says it is an impossible combination.

"How can you pretend to improve the quality of services with the same or with less resources?" asks Parti Québécois critic Camil Bouchard.

The government's only option is to begin asking parents to pay more than seven dollars a day, Bouchard says. The minister is hinting that a price hike could happen in less than a year.

- reprinted from CBC News

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

Quebec<sup>[3]</sup>

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

legislation and regulation<sup>[5]</sup>

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