

Nova Scotia short on abuse screeners: More staff needed for checks, Children's Services official says [CA-NS] ^[1]

Author: Jackson, David

Source: Halifax Herald

Format: Article

Publication Date: 26 Jul 2005

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

Making sure potential child abusers are not working at day care centres, schools and other organizations that deal with children is overwhelming the Community Services Department.

Roughly 16,000 checks of the child abuse register are needed for employees and volunteers who work with kids.

Two department employees are working full time at updating and searching the register, said George Savoury, senior director for Family and Children's Services in the department.

They'll work overtime and occasionally get someone else to help but a third permanent person should be added, Mr. Savoury said.

Employees at licensed child care facilities are among those who must be screened.

The provincial NDP released information last week showing that 77 day-care centres didn't meet the screening requirements at the time they were inspected this year or last year.

Mr. Savoury said 34 centres didn't meet the requirements as of Friday.

Department policy states that no one listed on the child abuse register can be hired at the 378 licensed child care facilities in the province.

Mr. Savoury said there's a check when a new employee starts and every three years afterward.

Mr. Savoury said requests for register checks increased to almost 16,000 people last year from about 10,000 in 1999.

"There's a growing and growing practice and, I would say, policy requirement that organizations are putting in place that if you work with children, they want a search done of the child abuse register," he said.

Department employees who work with children are screened, as are workers at agencies under the department's jurisdiction.

Other employers, like school boards, may also do screening, and Mr. Savoury said volunteer groups also request checks.

Marilyn More, the NDP's community services critic, said adding to the staff overseeing the register is the least the department could do to further support child care centres.

"They've created a catch-22 where they're suggesting that child care centres are in violation if they're not up to date on those checks, and yet they haven't adequate staff to deal with those checks, so what are the child care operators supposed to do?" she said.

Last week, the NDP released day-care inspection reports obtained under the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

Of 302 centres inspected this year or last, half were operating on conditional licences because they didn't meet department standards on the day of inspection.

- reprinted from the Halifax Herald

Related link: Half of licensed day cares fail inspection [CA-NS] ^[2]

Region: Nova Scotia ^[3]

Canada ^[4]

Tags: quality ^[5]

health ^[6]

staff ^[7]

legislation and regulation ^[8]

needed-checks-childrens

Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/05/07/nova-scotia-short-abuse-screeners-more-staff-needed-checks-childrens> [2]

<https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/05/07/half-licensed-day-cares-fail-inspection-ca-n-s> [3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7853> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7864> [5]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/quality> [6] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/health> [7] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/staff> [8]

<https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/legislation-and-regulation>