

Half of licensed day cares fail inspection [CA-NS] ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

More than half of Nova Scotia's child-care centres did not pass all of the provincial standards for licensing, the New Democrats say. Marilyn More, the party's community services critic, released inspection reports from 2004 and 2005 from the Department of Community Services on Thursday. The reports, obtained through access to information requests, show 51 per cent of the 302 centres received temporary operating licences on the condition that they address specific violations. For example: - 77 didn't meet the child abuse registry screening requirement - 67 didn't meet criteria for staff first-aid training and recertification - 41 had expired fire inspections - 27 had improper environments (lack of toys or unsafe space) - 11 didn't meet staff-to-children ratio Many child-care centres didn't pass in a number of areas, according to the NDP. More said the Conservative government is not doing enough to inform parents of the condition of child-care facilities in the province. George Savoury, senior director of Family and Children Services for Nova Scotia, said most of the problems found during inspection are not serious enough to merit closure anyway. "We would only have two to three centres at any point in time that we would be looking at in terms of quality of care," he said. More would like to see the inspection reports for all day-care centres posted on the government website, so parents can find out the specifics of their child's day care for themselves.

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