

Officials close day care centre for not meeting standards [CA-AB]^[1]

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See text below.

EXCERPTS

A Red Deer day-care centre is being forced to close for failing to comply with Alberta government standards that protect child safety.

Alberta Children's Services has refused to renew the operating licence for Kidz Incorporated Day Care, meaning the 45-child facility will close on July 29.

Mark Hattori of the Central Alberta Child and Family Services Authority said the day care's operators were repeatedly warned by provincial inspectors to address certain problems, "but we'd see them again and again."

Among them were inadequate staff-to-child ratios, use of unqualified staff and improper supervision of children, said Hattori.

Repeated failures in these "critical areas of compliance" led his department to conclude the safety and well-being of children was being disregarded, said Hattori.

The operators were informed about the licence non-renewal on Monday.

"Any time so many families are affected, it's a difficult decision," said Hattori, "but we'd hate to see a tragedy or unfortunate circumstance happen."

Several parents who have children at the centre have complained that two weeks isn't enough notice to find reliable care.

Corey and Linette Miller said they spent three months looking for a placement for their son before settling on Kidz Incorporated, which is a block from their home.

Jennifer Charlton was taken aback and wanted more details about the infractions.

"They should tell us the whens and wheres," said Charlton, who never felt anything was amiss with her son's care.

Hattori said the decision to pull the centre's licence was not made lightly.

Provincial staff worked for months with the operators to try to resolve various problems.

By the time 12 non-compliance incidents accrued in "broad critical areas of care," Hattori said the department had to act.

- reprinted from the Canadian Press

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