

No early child care deal, Dryden predicts [CA]^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Social Development Minister Ken Dryden predicted Friday there would be no quick deal on a national child care program.

"There won't be a deal today but we're getting there," Dryden said as he sat down with representatives from the provinces and the territories at a hotel in Vancouver.

Dryden said the different governments have made substantial agreements on many points but there's a long way to go.

Child care advocates who rallied outside the hotel said any agreement should include quality care, public accountability, public funding and not-for-profit delivery.

"We've been talking about building on the foundation that we've already got," said Debra Mayer, chairman of the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada.

"Parents shouldn't be paying more than 20 per cent of the actual cost of child care, and the reality is that for many families, child care costs more than their mortgage or their rent," she said in an interview with CBC Newsworld.

"We're not expecting that every child in Canada is going to be in full-time child care centres.

"What we are talking about is a system that is open and available to families, and that they can choose the extent to which they want to use it."

Dryden has \$5 billion set aside over five years to help start up the child care program.

But Quebec and Alberta have served notice they want to decide how to spend their share of the money.

- reprinted from CBC News

Region: Canada^[2]

Quebec^[3]

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