

# Denying day-care dough just dumb [CA-ON] <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

See text below.

## EXCERPTS

Short-sighted. Cold-hearted. Out of touch. I suggest those descriptions apply to anyone who thinks the city should "send a message" to Queen's Park and refuse to cough up \$450,000 to get \$1.6 million in day-care money from the feds.

Council will likely wrestle with this decision Monday.

Last month, board of control recommended council turn its back on the day-care dollars. Though the cash flows from the feds, the province has its hand on the faucet -- and, in effect, is saying it'll turn off the tap unless municipalities kick in 20 per cent.

The province argues the 20 per cent add-on, or about \$450,000 for London, is based on an 80/20 cost-sharing agreement left over from the former Tory government. Critics dismiss it as a cash grab.

The position of London's board of control is that the province has been asking municipalities to pay more and more while Queen's Park is shelling out less and less, and that enough is enough.

It's likely the news that London businesses pay the highest tax rates in Ontario will add ammunition to the day-care debunkers.

That's worrisome.

Provincial downloading is a problem. And it's clear the municipalities need to send a message to Premier Dalton McGuinty that they're not going to take it anymore.

But this isn't the time to do it.

I can't read minds. But I suspect that many of those who oppose giving dollars for day care are making some misguided assumptions.

Like the reader who harrumphed her disapproval in this paper in a letter to the editor and wrote, "Taxpayers should not be responsible for the babysitting services of other people's children."

I suggest newspapers should not be responsible for disseminating the views of those whose brains stopped functioning sometime around 1958.

Many people still cling to the assumption that anyone who puts their child in day care is a lazy, lax and selfish parent.

Working parents, the argument goes, are simply greedy. And their money-loving lifestyle is contributing to the moral decay of new generations.

I can almost hear the refrain: "We didn't have any doggone day care back in my day!"

Well, times have changed.

For most families in today's economy, day care isn't a luxury -- it's a necessity. And if we fail to support it, we're simply stealing from our future.

- reprinted from the London Free Press

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