

Cash for trikes 'bewilders' day cares [CA-NS] ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

The Community Services Department handed over \$1.3 million in funding for early childhood education yesterday, but it wasn't welcome news to many of the province's day-care directors.

South End Community Daycare director Valerie Blaauw said she was bewildered that most of the money is going to buy gym equipment at a time when non-profit day cares are struggling to keep their doors open.

"We're starting to wonder, are they really interested in supporting the child-care system?" she said yesterday.

Yesterday's announcement sees \$1.3 million in grants for promoting children's physical activity, programming for special-needs kids, providing information to families seeking child care, and speech and language programs for family-resource centres.

Most of the money - \$726,000 - is earmarked for gym equipment such as skipping ropes, balls and tricycles.

Blaauw was one of the directors representing 40 licensed, non-profit day cares who met with Community Services Minister David Morse to ask for \$1.3 million, but were told the province only had \$400,000 left in a \$2.2-million federal pot for child care.

Morse yesterday renewed a pledge to pay up. "I am looking forward to fulfilling my commitment, over the next few months", he said.

- reprinted from the Daily News

Region: Nova Scotia ^[2]

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