

Landry defends \$5 day care, Charest wants kids in school in Quebec campaign [CA-QC] ^[1]

Author: Wyatt, Nelson

Source: Canadian Press

Format: Article

Publication Date: 26 Mar 2003

AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

Premier Bernard Landry and Liberal Leader Jean Charest kept the April 14 election campaign in the family Wednesday, tackling the issues of affordable day care and working students.

And while they were doing that, Action democratique du Quebec Leader Mario Dumont weighed in on another attention-getter for moms and dads-the health-care system and how to manage it.

All three parties have waged a steady battle for the votes of families in the election campaign.

Voicing concerns about Quebec's high dropout rate, Charest said in Sherbrooke that a strong economy with plenty of jobs doesn't always encourage young people to stay in school.

Charest said that a Liberal government could bring in legislation to legally force employers to limit the hours of part-time work for high school students, if necessary.

"We want an employer who hires a young person to be sensitive to the fact that if a young person works more than 15 hours a week it isn't compatible with full-time study," Charest said at the University of Sherbrooke.

In Baie-Comeau, Landry's concerns were more with the pre-school set.

He defended his government's child-care program, saying it won't be scrapped despite a report suggesting it costs lower-income families in tax benefits.

A confident-sounding Landry said the \$5 daily child-care program will stay for the duration of the Parti Quebecois's next mandate, alluding to electoral victory.

"For five years, it will be \$5," he said. "Agreed?"

The study, by Claude Laferriere of the University of Quebec at Montreal, said the PQ's day-care program doesn't necessarily benefit families with annual revenues between \$25,000 and \$40,000. He said they lose between \$1,300 and \$1,800 at tax time every year by putting their children in the program.

Laferriere, a tax expert, said these families lose their provincial child-care credit and the federal child-care deduction. They also have smaller GST refunds and lower child benefits because their taxable income remains higher even though they're paying less in day-care fees.

- reprinted from Canadian Press

Region: Quebec ^[2]

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