

Field of child care still under stress [CA-YK] ^[1]

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See text below.

EXCERPTS

This is an open letter to Health and Social Services Minister Sue Edelman.

On behalf of the child care field, thank you for your government's contribution of \$50,000 in order that child care facilities may work to improve their playgrounds to meet the new safety standards. The distribution of this \$50,000 has created a problem within the child care field which we would like to bring to your attention.

According to our understanding of your letter, \$25,000 is to go to dayhomes with a ceiling of \$500 per dayhome and \$25,000 to daycares at a first come, first serve basis.

First, despite your government initiated Playground Advisory Committee's recommendations that daycares and dayhomes follow CSA Playground Safety Standards, you opted for Made in Yukon standards for dayhomes which are less rigid than CSA standards. Your allocation of monies does not reflect the costs imposed on daycares to renovate their playgrounds.

Secondly, according to our figures, your government's commitment to the 16 daycares in the Yukon equates to \$39 per child. Your government's commitment to the dayhomes in the Yukon is \$79 per child.

Thirdly, YCCA has continually urged government to look at child care on an overall basis. It should not matter to parents whether they opt for a daycare or dayhome, the regulations should be the same. Conversely, funding should be the same to reflect the responsibilities of the job.

This continual division of the field is disheartening. We have asked governments for years to stabilize the child care field. We have been brought to a crisis level to which few daycare directors do not feel comfortable with the future of their operations. We have pleaded for worthy wages and training opportunities. Government response? Continual reduction of monies over the last 20 years.

As one daycare director explained, Our playgrounds are important, but they are not the crisis issue. My leaking roof is my crisis issue this week.

Where are they coming from? Another director's response, My crisis is whether or not I'm going to be able to pay my staff - every month!

Imagine what it would be like if child care did not exist. What if we just went on strike? Quit?

Judi Wengzynowski, YCCA co-chair and Michele Campbell, YCCA co-chair
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Region: Yukon Territory ^[2]

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