

Child-care shortage criticized [CA-ON] ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

See text below.

EXCERPTS

The provincial government has the cash to solve the daycare crisis, but thousands of kids still languish on waiting lists or in substandard care, says the NDP children's critic.

Only eight per cent of the province's kids are in licenced, regulated daycare, even though 70 per cent of Ontario mothers work outside the home. Windsor alone could use at least 1,000 more child care spaces, especially for infants, toddlers and special needs kids, say local child care advocates. The shortage is forcing desperate parents to depend on unstable, untrained and expensive babysitters, they say. Meanwhile, the province has a \$30-million pot of unspent money and another \$844 coming from the federal government starting April 1 that has been earmarked for kids.

"They haven't said a word about that money, how they'll spend it or whether they'll match the federal funds" said Shelley Martel, the New Democrat MPP from Sudbury.

A coalition of New Democrats, unions and child care experts -- part of the Stepping Up for Child Care campaign -- met Thursday at the CAW Local 444/200 union hall to call on the province to dramatically increase funding to child care. That money should be spent on licensed, non-profit daycares, parental subsidies and family resource centres that would give babysitters access to things like a toy exchange and expert advice.

Region: Ontario ^[2]

Tags: funding ^[3]

availability ^[4]

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