

Childminders to be allowed to smack [GB] ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Childminders will be allowed to smack their charges as long as they have prior parental permission under planned new government regulations, the Department of Education said on Friday.

The new regulations should come into force in 2001, but they will not apply to children's centres, creches, playgroups and kindergardens which receive government funding.

"Basically this is part of an effort to standardize how daycare workers work with children across the board. At the moment every local authority has different standards and rules," a spokeswoman said.

Gill Haynes, chief executive of the National Childminding Association, opposed the legislation.

"In the daycare centres across the board everybody who has anything to do with professional care and upbringing of children is agreed on this issue," Haynes said on BBC Radio. "We know that parents and childminders don't want permission to do things which we all know are bad for children."

In June the government said it would provide money to help parents desperately seeking childminders.

The government said it would spend 4.5 million pounds during 2000-2001 by offering childminders start-up grants ranging from 50 pounds to 600 pounds.

-Reprinted from Reuters

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