

# Thousands of Que. kids at unlicensed daycares <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

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## EXCERPTS

Many Quebec children are being cared for in daycares that are either illegal or don't have the necessary permits, according to an investigation by CBC/Radio-Canada.

The investigation by the French-language program Enquete found between 15,000 and 20,000 unlicensed daycare spaces in the province. The figures were drawn from Quebec tax records.

While Quebec is known for its generous \$7-a-day system, a shortage of spaces has created a high demand for private daycare spaces.

People are allowed to run a daycare in their home without a licence and without government oversight as long as there are six children or fewer. Once beyond that, government regulations kick in for everything from hours of operation, services provided and maximum children allowed.

While it is not known how many of the 20,000 spaces are illegal, government inspectors have tracked down many unlicensed daycares operating with more than the six children allowed.

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Two years ago, inspectors made a surprise visit to a home daycare at a home in Deux-Montagnes, west of Montreal.

The woman operating the daycare was supposed to have only six children in her care. Instead, she had 18.

When inspectors arrived, the owner allegedly tried to hide some of the children near a hedge.

According to the government, the daycare operator was filing tax receipts for all 18 children.

Julie Senkus, whose child attended the daycare, said the provincial government should do a better job of watching out for problems.

"I think that an organization like Revenue Quebec, when it receives a dozen tax receipts for the same daycare, should have sounded the alarm," she said.

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-reprinted from CBC News

**Region:** Quebec <sup>[2]</sup>

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