

Cheques don't cut it: parents ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Angry parents confronted the Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development Diane Finley Wednesday at a Barrhaven park as she celebrated the fifth anniversary of the Universal Child Care Benefit.

The benefit is a \$100 cheque to Canadian families per month for every child under six years old. But for some parents, that's not enough.

"It really doesn't go far. I don't notice it," said Angela Saghbini, a 25-year-old mother who crashed the anniversary celebration.

The Carleton University graduate struggled for months trying to find a daycare that would take her son while she was earning her degree. With limited spaces available, she had to pay her mother's friend to watch her son while she had to limit her studies to part time.

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Protester Diane O'Neill approached the minister after her speech and asked when she could expect universal funding for childcare to support families.

"That would be up to the provincial government," said Finley. "I suggest you ask the McGuinty government that question because it's his government."

But Shellie Bird, coordinator for Code Blue for Child Care, thinks it's up to the federal government to work with the provinces to make day care more affordable for parents.

"The province can't do it alone," said Bird. "The McGuinty government is moving on full-day learning...and they are really trying to address genuine need in the province of Ontario but the reality is they can't do it themselves."

- reprinted from Metro Ottawa

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