

# Shortage of infant daycare spaces causing problems for working parents <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** Wright, Teresa

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## EXCERPTS

Despite government's creation of more infant daycare spaces and a new provincial waiting list registry for these spots, many parents returning to work face an acute shortage of licensed infant spaces and much confusion regarding waiting lists.

Last year, the province launched a new preschool strategy that promised sweeping changes to the early learning system on P.E.I.

A number of private daycares transitioned to provincially funded centres. They charge regulated fees, have certified staff and offer an approved, standardized curriculum.

They are also larger and take in more children than most private centres.

Over the past year, about 102 new spaces for babies under two years old were created as a result of these changes.

That brings the total number of infant spaces in licensed centres on P.E.I. to 210 -- not close to a high enough number for parents looking for spots.

Government also launched a provincial child-care registry to allow parents to get detailed information about centres and put their child's name on waiting lists for those much-coveted spaces. It went live online last spring.

But some parents are finding the registry has not helped in their quest for licensed care for their little ones.

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Carolyn Simpson, early childhood development and kindergarten manager for the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, admits there are issues with the way centres are handling the registry.

"It was never the intent for the centres to have two operational lists. It was to combine them into one and to try and make it as seamless as possible for families," Simpson said.

She said the registry is still in its infancy and that a lot more work will be done to improve access to licensed infant spaces as the province's early years strategy continues to roll out.

Sonya Corrigan, executive director of the Early Childhood Development Association, said the problem isn't the registry. It's the extreme shortage of infant spaces on P.E.I.

"The registry doesn't create spaces," she said. "Really the bottom line issue is the inavailability of enough spaces for people who are wanting child care."

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- reprinted from the PEI Guardian

**Region:** Prince Edward Island <sup>[2]</sup>

**Tags:** spaces <sup>[3]</sup>

availability <sup>[4]</sup>

infant/toddler <sup>[5]</sup>

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**Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/11/09/shortage-infant-daycare-spaces-causing-problems-working-parents>

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