

# Toronto faces child care 'crisis' due to full-day kindergarten: Mammoliti <sup>[1]</sup>

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## EXCERPTS:

York West Councillor Giorgio Mammoliti held a public meeting Tuesday night to address the "crisis" facing the city's child care system due to the implementation of full-day kindergarten by the province.

"There's a crisis going on right now," Mammoliti said. "Full-day kindergarten poses a particular problem with providers."

After conducting a site-by-site analysis to determine the impact of full-day kindergarten, city staff reported that licensed spaces in the child care system could decrease by 23 per cent or 7,284 spaces if no additional funding is available.

Elaine Baxter-Trahair, general manager of Toronto Children's Services, explained that the loss of four- to five-year-olds for child care operators would create vacancies in the preschool program.

That, in turn, would lead to a loss in revenue and may result in higher fees for parents of kids aged one to three to help offset the cost.

Currently, about 80 per cent of funds allocated to child care in Toronto is provided by the province.

"The problem is those resources are insufficient," said Baxter-Trahair, noting there are still more than 20,000 children on the wait list for a child care space. "There's considerably more need than there is service at this time."

Late last year, Toronto Council requested the province provide \$27.4 million in one-time capital funding to assist child care providers in renovating space vacated by those attending full-day kindergarten to accommodate the younger children. Another \$27 million was requested to help cover fee subsidies for younger children and transitional funding to stabilize the child care system.

While Mammoliti said he supports full-day kindergarten, the funding gap must be addressed by the province and asked those in attendance at the meeting to contact their MPPs.

"Most of them have been silent on this," he said. "We have great providers who are in limbo. This is a community that's going to be hit the worst in the City of Toronto."

York West MPP Mario Sergio did attend and addressed the crowd.

"The reason why I'm here is to listen to you," said Sergio, adding he would take the comments and questions back to the premier.

But he said he fully supported full-day kindergarten, which would give young children in Ontario a better education as well as help parents save about \$6,500 per year per child.

"It's the transition period that's causing this problem," said Sergio, noting part of the problem is also due to lack of federal funding for child care.

He added the province is still committed to making full-day kindergarten work and is not on the chopping block.

"Once full-day kindergarten is fully implemented, we shouldn't have this problem anymore," Sergio said.

But Effie Rassias, who was representing the Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care, said there's a situation now that needs to be taken care of with 49 per cent of four- and five-year-olds having access to full-day kindergarten this coming September.

If there is no additional funding soon, she feared the closure of day care centres across the city.

"With day care centres collapsing, what are they going to do? What are they going to do with younger children? How about people who can't afford day care?" she said. "It's going to be drastic." Tuesday's public meeting was the second of two held in the city. The first meeting was hosted at Victoria Village Public School.

The coalition recently began a social media campaign where parents can send emails directly to their MPP by visiting [www.childcaremattersome.ca](http://www.childcaremattersome.ca) <sup>[2]</sup>

-reprinted from Inside Toronto

**Related link:** Information about the current state of child care in Toronto <sup>[3]</sup>

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**Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/12/03/toronto-faces-child-care-crisis-due-full-day-kindergarten-mammoliti>

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