Home > Daycare system would have spaces for everyone if PQ forms government, Marois says

Daycare system would have spaces for everyone if PQ forms government, Marois says

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EXCERPTS:

Children were the focus of Pauline Marois's campaign trail Monday with one particularly animated boy showing up at two venues where the leader of the Parti Québecois leader announced daycare for all and tax breaks for middle-class parents of artistic kids.

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With a jungle gym, mini-kitchen and castle as a backdrop, Marois announced at the Centre de la Petite Enfance La Cigogne that everyone will get a spot in \$7-a-day daycare if her party takes the helm Sept. 4.

"All regions are important to us," Marois said, as tiny tots stared from their fenced-in play area at the hordes of journalists and cameras. "But here in Lanaudière, there is a flagrant lack of spaces."

Marois, a mother of four and grandmother to two, started the popular \$5-a-day daycare program in 1997. On Monday she said she now wants to complete the project by adding an extra 15,000 spots on top of those already promised by the Liberals, to bring the total to 250,000 by the end of a PQ mandate. The spots are in such demand, most parents-to-be place their names on a waiting list as soon as there's a positive pregnancy test.

Marois said the cost for the extra spots would be \$177 million, but didn't say how it would be paid for. Costs to parents wouldn't increase, she said.

Region: Quebec [2] Tags: spaces [3]

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