

Daycares need to improve access for disabled ^[1]

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EXCERPTS:

New Brunswick's Association for Community Living says the province needs to improve its daycare and early learning program for children with disabilities.

A recent report has 14 recommendations to improve access to daycares. Researchers heard from 150 daycare staff, and 75 families.

"To be told, 'I'm sorry, we can't support your child or we don't want your child,' can be very devastating for families," said Ken Pike, the director of social policy with the New Brunswick Association for Community Living.

"Economically it often means that one parent needs to stay home."

Pike, the co-author of the report, says many parents told them it was impossible to find a spot for their disabled son or daughter.

Pike said they also heard from frustrated daycare workers, who want to be inclusive but don't feel they have the necessary resources.

"They felt they needed a lot more education and training and they really struggled with hiring support workers," said Pike.

"These are typically minimum wage positions and so there is sometimes a lot of turnover and just difficulty finding qualified people who wanted to work in the sector."

The recommendations from the report include long-term, stable funding, higher wages for support workers and improved training.

Pike says after meeting with provincial government representatives, he's encouraged changes are coming.

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Region: New Brunswick ^[2]

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