

# Grad students miffed about child care aid exclusion <sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** Boutilier, Alex

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## EXCERPTS:

Graduate students' societies say they're "shocked" to find out Ottawa City Hall is refocusing childcare funding to undergraduate and high school students.

The move means that some masters- and doctorate-level students who counted on the provincially funded, city-administered subsidies will have to shoulder the full burden of childcare costs.

"We are in a knowledge-based economy, and these student parents are trying to improve their lives and the lives of their families," said Anna Goldfinch, vice president of Carleton's Graduate Students' Society. "It's completely unfair for them to be penalized for pursuing that."

The city's policy changed in September 2012, according to Ottawa's General Manager of Community and Social Services Aaron Burry. It now reads that students, excluding those enrolled in masters or doctoral courses, are eligible for funding.

Despite that language, Burry said graduate students are still eligible for a subsidy based on availability - but students in undergraduate and high school courses are of a higher priority for the limited funds.

But in an email provided to Metro, a city childcare subsidy administrator said graduate students currently receiving the subsidy have been "grandfathered" only until the end of April 2013, and that those students would not be eligible for funding in the future.

That means Carleton doctoral student Samantha King will have to put her neuroscience degree on hold.

"I would have essentially take a leave from school, and stay home until Liam, who is my oldest, went to school," King said.

King, who has two children, said dropping her work now would likely mean she would have to start her research from scratch, putting her behind a number of years.

-reprinted from Metro Ottawa

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