

License more daycares, Winnipeg parents urge province ^[1]

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EXCERPTS:

The sudden closure of a Winnipeg daycare centre has parents racing to find new child-care arrangements and calling on the Manitoba government to license more operators.

The province has been cracking down on unlicensed daycares since May, when six young children were found unattended at a St. Vital facility that was not licensed.

Since then, officials have swiftly responded to 11 complaints about unlicensed child-care centres, including Lindsay Stoesz's home-based daycare in Southdale.

"I was really shocked," said Nicolas Piza, whose two children went to Stoesz's daycare.

The province says it received a complaint about Stoesz's daycare.

In Manitoba, daycare operators need a license to care for more than four children.

Stoesz said she was caring for as many as 12 children, but she had three staff members working with her.

"She didn't want to hear about my staff, she didn't want to come to my house or see anything. It was kind of just like cut and dry, like a wall," Stoesz told CBC News.

Piza said he did not have any problems with Stoesz's daycare, and the closure has forced his wife to use up some of her vacation time to stay home with the children.

The province needs to do better, he said.

"Try to work with the unlicensed daycares to get them licensed because there's a big gap between what parents need and what is out there," Piza said.

"I understand they're trying to do the right thing, but I think there's ways to do things that are right ways and the wrong ways," he added. "Coming with a stick is not helping anyone."

Stoesz said she wants to be licensed, but that process can take anywhere between six weeks and six months.

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