

Child care, a community effort ^[1]

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EXCERPTS:

The Editor,

As a first-time parent in 2003, I worried about returning to work in the midst of a childcare shortage, particularly for infants and toddlers.

Ten years later, and after enrolling three children at Bowling Green Children's Centre, our time has come to say goodbye.

My husband and I learned so much from the talented early childhood educators at Bowling Green. They taught us strategies to deal with challenging behaviour and opened our eyes to the amazing things our children were capable of. They helped prepare us and our children for kindergarten.

And, at the end of every day, they made us feel as if our children were special.

The Society of Richmond Children's Centres is a non-profit organization currently running Bowling Green, Cook Road and Terra Nova Children's Centres. Under the guidance of their dedicated executive director, Nicky Byres, and board of directors, the society provides an outstanding service for our community.

Luckily for Richmond families and businesses, the society is growing and will soon open the West Cambie Children's Centre.

Sadly, 10 years after having my first child, the overall shortage of quality childcare, particularly for infants and toddlers, still exists.

As parents, we don't work to buy fancy cars, Jimmy Choo shoes or go on elaborate vacations. We work to pay our mortgages, afford orthodontics and give our children music lessons. We may work, but we also devote ourselves to our children.

Childcare is not about delegating the raising of our children to someone else. It is about a community of care - one that allows families to be financially stable, keeps skilled and educated workers in the workforce and nurtures our future leaders.

To Byres and the Bowling Green teachers - our heartfelt thanks for all you do. The Pan family will miss you immensely.

Teresa Pan, Richmond

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