

The daycare provider suggested I re-birth my son ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

The third article in a Slate occasional series, *child care over there* ^[3] that asked parents from around the world to describe their child care experiences.

EXCERPTS

Name: Tova Marr

Country: Austria

Occupation: Administrator

Partner's: occupation: Engineer

Children: A son, age 3.

Hi, Tova. What are your work hours?

I work 38.5 hours a week and my husband works 37.5 hours a week.

Who takes care of your son when you are at work?

Originally he went to a private day care, but he was kicked out because of his special needs. Long story short: After about a year at daycare, our son started to act up. They initially said it was because I work too much. Then they said he had ADHD. I had a child therapist visit the daycare who assured me that he is just very spirited. After a few months, without my knowledge, the daycare had him analyzed and one morning, they gave me a letter saying he has Asperger's. Tears and many specialist visits later, it was determined that he has developmental delays and when he turns 4, a firmer diagnosis will be given.

It became clear that he would be eventually kicked out of daycare. Around November 2013 they said there was a possibility they would have to let us go in the spring. So I decided to be proactive and sought out another private daycare. We gave it a trial run for a month, and it cost us valuable time and energy. Towards the end of the trial, it became clear that he was not going to adjust quickly. So, the new daycare provider suggested I re-birth him because I had had a c-section and ergo he missed out on a pivotal part of birth (she believed the same thing about women who have epidurals). Apparently I didn't just work too hard, I messed his birth up too!

Whoa. That is the craziest thing I've ever heard. Is that a common belief?

The rebirthing thing isn't a common belief here, but the daycare seemed very popular. The plan was to restrain my son for 45 minutes while he screamed and then release him into my arms. It would recreate birth. I told her that unfortunately we were too busy that morning and then hoofed it. We never returned.

So we went back to the old, slightly less terrible day care. Finally in the spring they told us we had to leave, as they had threatened. We are about to start a new one just downstairs from our new apartment. It is public and amazing with child specialists on-site. I CANNOT WAIT!

Why did you opt for private care instead of public care at first? Is public care harder to get into?

It usually is easier to get into a private one and they will take younger kids. It is a real challenge finding a place in a public one and for kids under two.

How much does it cost?

The private daycares are subsidized by the state, so we paid about 300 euros a month [\$393 USD]. Public daycares are state-sponsored, so on average they cost 60 euros a month [\$79 USD]. Bear in mind that average salaries are around 1,300 euros net a month [\$1,706].

What happens when your son is sick?

I shake my fist angrily. Our place of employment allows a few days off a year for family sick leave. Otherwise I take a sick day or my husband does.

Do you live near family that can help you take care of your son?

My in-laws live here six months of the year. Usually we wouldn't ask my mother-in-law to help as much as she has. Our regular daycare time (before they hated our son) was 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and then our nanny would pick him up and take him home. Towards the end of his stay, they brought us down to part-time hours. And for the past six weeks, my mother-in-law has come by to take care of him three times a week until the nanny comes at 1:30.

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Read online at the Slate ^[2]

Region: International ^[4]

Tags: work/life balance ^[5]

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