

Daycare Association denounces report of sliding scale for \$7/day child care ^[1]

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EXCERPTS:

Quebec's Public Daycare Association says it is shocked that it was never consulted about the possibility of drastically changing the payment system for universal daycare.

For the past decade parents have paid \$7/day, per child, for a spot in daycare facilities across the province.

Gina Gasparini said her Association met many times with provincial Family Minister Francine Charbonneau over the summer and while many topics were discussed, there was never a hint that Quebec would alter from having one fixed price for all.

"This is a real tragedy, it really is, because we've worked over the last few years really, really hard to put together a universal child care system, and that's what distinguishes us from all the other childcare systems around the world," said Gasparini.

"We're universal, and this is going to take that element away."

The budget approved earlier this year by the National Assembly increased prices slightly for daycare, with a scheduled increase of 30 cents planned for Oct. 1, 2014.

But according to one report, the provincial is planning to implement a sliding scale, with the price of daycare rising according to family income.

"The fact that they want different parents according to their revenues to pay different fees means that the system is no longer universal. Just the way our healthcare system is, our education system is universal and the childcare system needs to stay that way too," said Gasparini.

Several opposition politicians spoke out against the notion of a sliding scale for daycare, including Quebec Solidaire leader Francoise David and PQ critic Agnes Maltais.

Maltais called it an attack on the middle class, and the breaking of a Liberal promise to index the fees and do nothing else.

David said asking parents to pay more according to their means was irresponsible and unjust.

Family Minister Francine Charbonneau refused to comment. A spokesperson said the department is waiting for recommendations from the committee that's reviewing government programs.

But in an interview last week, Charbonneau did not rule out the possibility that the subsidized daycare system would undergo changes under the Liberal government.

"Right now everything is on the table. everything."

Region: Quebec ^[3]

Tags: funding ^[4]

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