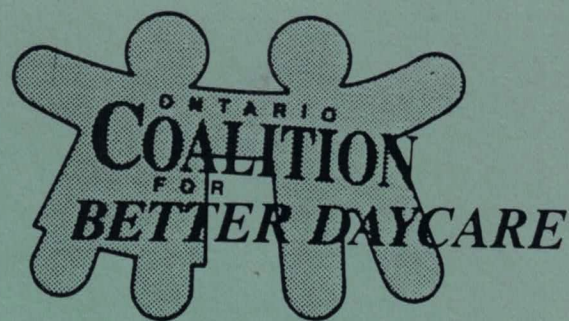


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1260 Bay St., Toronto, Ontario, (416) 766-4691

Summer, 1986

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Hot Summer News

Recent dribbles from Queen's Park, not even a bona fide "leak", will barely rouse you from your beach chair or back porch. The dribbles provide the story line for the continuing saga known as the upcoming Provincial Review.

Word has it that the Liberal network has renewed the saga, and the first installment in September will be called the "White Paper" - original title! A series of public hearings across the Province will follow the opening show. Seriously, the most recent word hot off the telephone (July 18) is that the Planning and Priorities Committee of Cabinet has approved the proposed policy and that the Child Care Unit is busily preparing a White Paper that will be released by the end of September. Most likely, the Government will appoint a panel which will conduct hearings across the Province.

Once again, it will soon be time to dust off your press lists, stir up some interest, and get ready to show videos, give specific examples and encourage parents to speak out.

Lobbying on the part of local coalitions and daycare supporters has been effective, so the Queen's Park grapevine reports. While Treasurer Robert Nixon is well known to favour tinkering with the tax route to provide more dollars for childcare, there have been indications (mostly from Treasury staff) that they are aware of the pitfalls of this approach. One convincing factor for Nixon is that tax credits would not necessarily improve the lot of his rural constituents, nor families that are not being indirectly subsidized in various municipal centres. Kudos to those who landed the calls to the Ministry!

Premier Peterson's staff appear to promise something for everyone; that is, some tax incentives for employers who choose to provide work-related childcare, direct funding to raise salaries while keeping fees down, movement from means-testing to income-testing to determine eligibility for subsidy, and capital money for expansion. What is not clear is whether these tidbits constitute a fancy hors d'oeuvres spread or a substantial full course

meal. Watch closely for announcements in the Fall.

It is interesting to note that Cabinet and at least some of its committees continues to meet over the summer. Sean Conway, now that Separate School funding is proceeding, is rumoured to be more interested in daycare than ever before. Curious, because his position on daycare is very unclear.



Daycare and the ComSoc Estimates

On June 17, the Social Development Committee of the Ontario Legislature began the Ministry of Community and Social Services Estimates for 1986-87. The Estimates provide an opportunity to debate the budget allocations, and to raise questions.

Over the several days of hearings, members debated the Estimates, and raised questions. With research assistance from the Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare, both opposition parties made childcare a major focus of the debate.

The transcripts of the Estimates provide a formal record of the Minister of Community and Social Services' responses to hard-hitting questions. Childcare was a prominent topic, and the answers given to the Committee by the Hon. John Sweeny indicate where the province may be heading on child care policy.

From the draft transcripts of the hearings, we have excerpted the following comments made by the Minister about childcare.

Long Term Strategy:

"My colleagues and I are now developing a long-term strategy to address our future needs. I remain committed to building a system which is affordable, accessible, and features an equitable distribution of resources throughout the province. Affordable childcare should not be viewed as a welfare service, but as a crucial social service which permits women full and equal participation in the workforce.

My hope is to develop a long-term model and then to implement it in stages. This affordable approach will permit a responsible solution to the challenges." (June 17)

On Accessibility and the Municipal Role:

"There is no doubt whatsoever that there are communities in this province which have a pretty good supply of spaces...

The difficulty is that there are other areas of the province where there are no places at all...

.....Part of that is the responsibility of the fact that it is at the present time discretionary on

municipalities as to whether they will take up the subsidized spaces which are offered....

The whole cost-sharing arrangement that we currently have with the municipalities is a very important part of the review that is underway... we are obviously going to have to come up with a different arrangement. Some people are suggesting that it should be mandatory...." (June 19)



Income Testing:

"We want to move to income testing for two reasons. The first reason is that it is less intrusive than a needs test. All you have to do is to ask people what their total income is.... The difficulty we have at the present time.... is under the present cost-sharing between ourselves and the federal government which is a 50/50 cost-sharing. We are not allowed to use the income test when we use the commercial space for subsidy purposes...

I suspect that we will move towards income testing for at least part of our population..... (July 19)

Estimates: continued

On Parental Leave and Tax

"....We are also looking at incentives so that maternity leave can be of a longer duration or that the incentives available to parents are such that they can look at that as one of the options.

Again it comes back to that one issue. We want to end up with a system where the range of options is available to parents - where they might want to take advantage of tax system, an extended leave system, some form of formal system or some form of informal system, - so we have as many ranges as possible....

The conclusion we are coming to is that the our final proposal is going to have to consist of a number of components. No one system is going to work and the tax system is going to have to be a part of that....." (June 23)

On a Direct Grant:

"We are looking at direct grants in our new proposal of whatever it is - \$4 or \$5 a day per child." (June 26)

Daycare and CAP

"We are already clearly on the record publicly that our overall direction is to move childcare away from a welfare mode to a public service mode... We are not completely in agreement that we should take it out of CAP. CAP at the moment is the only cost-sharing programme that we have...

That does not mean that at some time in the future we will not have another cost-sharing programme. I simply want to share with you why we are reluctant at this time to be the initiators of pulling out of the CAP proposal. It is that we like the openness of it. We are not sure that we can get anything that is better... it gives us a lot more options than we think anything else would." (July 19)

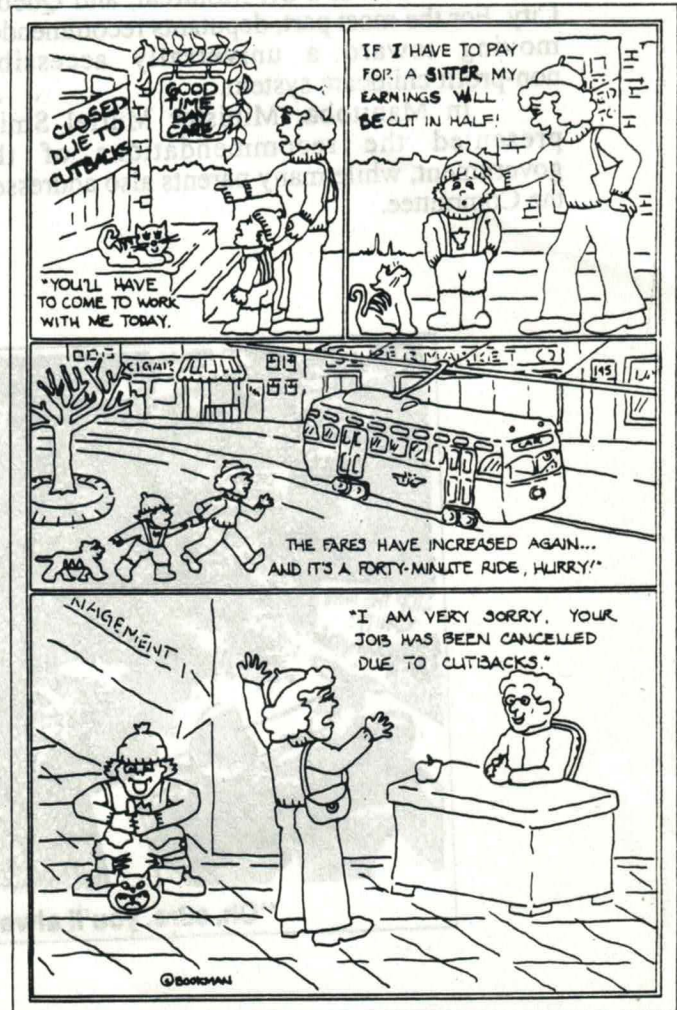
On the Indirect Subsidy:

"I can say to you right now that we will do everything in our power to see that no daycare centre has to close down because of this, and where this is a case of genuine hardship we will work out some kind of accommodation with the municipality.

However, I do want to be on record as saying that those municipalities that really are not pulling their fair share of the load are going to have to do more than what they have been doing." (July 23)

On Informal Care:

.....There is a great unknown with respect to the informal system. We are not suggesting by any means that it is all bad or that there are not a lot of young kids who are getting good daycare in that system. The fact is we simply do not know. Therefore, we want to move in our [provincial policy] review to providing more options to parents to choose something else if they have a sense it is not the best thing for their own kids." (June 23)



What Canada Told the Committee

The Canadian Daycare Advocacy Association coordinated participation in the public hearings of the Special Committee on Childcare which were held last Spring. Through the organizing efforts of local groups, daycare parents, staff, trade unions, women's groups, local government and many individuals, the Canadian public loudly and strongly voiced the childcare issues that affect them.

A thumbnail sketch from different parts of the country begins to measure the pulse of public opinion.

In Quebec, the official government position was to boycott the hearings. However, many parents and daycare workers caught the attention of the media as they addressed the Committee in Val d'Or, Montreal, and Quebec City. For the most part, deputants recommended moving toward a universally accessible non-profit childcare system.

In Manitoba, Minister Muriel Smith presented the recommendations of the government, while many parents also addressed the Committee.

In the Prairies, as elsewhere, Committee members often asked pointed, and difficult questions of the deputants. Ross Belcher, PC-Fraser Valley, seemed to be conducting a poll on whether or not the government should pay parents (mothers?) with young children to stay home. Other members of the Committee were noticeably absent for much of the hearings.

Short notice, and loose organization on the part of the Special Committee notwithstanding, parents and daycare workers in PEI managed to appear and present a strong case for daycare.

In Newfoundland despite a snow storm, high energy was mobilized at hearings held in Corner Brook and St. John's.

In Ontario, the OCBDC videos kept the Committee's attention from London to Kingston, Dryden to Toronto, and Hamilton to Thunder Bay. Parents and workers in the North emphasized the problems with the removal of the indirect subsidy, while interest groups as varied as the United Steel Workers of Ontario and the Ontario Association of Children's Aid



What Canada Told The Committee: continued

Queen's Park Update Flash Bulletin

Societies called for direct funding for quality, accessible childcare.

In the North West Territories, the Status of Women and single parent support groups organized 200 submissions. The successful letter writing campaign and testimony about the problems of unregulated care by babysitters and even extended family members provided grist for the mill to the Committee.

In Saskatoon and Regina, the press provided good coverage. However, many parents were unable to attend because they were busy at the height of the planting season.

In Alberta, many deputants supported the recommendations of the Katie Cooke Task Force. They also highlighted the problems with limited training requirements that exist under Provincial regulations.

Originally unscheduled due to organizational problems, parents in Vancouver and Victoria in British Columbia spoke once they were able to confirm attendance (organization was a continual problem across the country) An information picket outside Hotel Vancouver caught the attention of the press - stealing airtime from Expo.

In the Yukon, the Childcare Association helped to organize deputants even though hearing were held only during working hours.

It is important to remember that the hearings are the first series of overtures from the Special Committee. It will be interesting to note whether and how public opinion influences the recommendations that the staff of the Special Committee are currently preparing.

A draft report is due in September.

Just as this newsletter is being finalized, the Legislature struck the Select Committee on Health. This 11-member committee chaired by Robert Callaghan, Liberal-Brampton, will consider the role of the commercial, for-profit sector in the provision of health and social services and will recommend what role the government should assume. It is expected that childcare centres and nursing homes will be among the major topics to be considered.

An interim report will be forwarded to the Legislature not later than six months from the first meeting, scheduled for early August. A final report is expected not later than September 1987.

The terms of reference include: the collection of relevant data from appropriate ministries and preparation of preliminary data analysis. The analysis will contain information on structure, regulatory mechanisms, funding, government expenditures, current government policy and future plans. It is expected that the data will also consider the issues of quality, accessibility and staffing. Input from public hearings and testimony of expert witnesses will be secured.

For more information call:

Debbie Deller

*Clerk of the Select Committee,
(416) 963-2977.*



A "Hub" For Every Neighbourhood?

Action Day Care developed the idea of the Neighbourhood Hub Model in 1979, as a model for delivering comprehensive childcare services.

The recent announcement by the Liberal Government of "Hub" models in two key NDP ridings raises some speculation about the political plums.

True "Hub Models" provides high quality, flexible licensed care for families. Wawa and Sault Ste. Marie only loosely approximate the Action Daycare Hub Model.

Perhaps the two projects mark the beginning of policy that acknowledges the right of all Ontario residents of universal access to comprehensive services.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services has recently announced two "Hub Model" projects in Northern Ontario, each at a capital cost of \$400,000 of 100% provincial dollars.

The Sault Ste. Marie Day Care Services Cooperative Inc. will be expanded into a "hub model" (including a toy lending library, resource centre for parents, and registry for private home daycare) with a central administrative building. The project, which will provide a total of 48 new childcare spaces in both group, and private home daycare as well as unlicensed care, is estimated to provide 15 short-term construction jobs and 15 long-term staff jobs.

The Wawa Parent-Child Play centre, currently a drop-in centre, will be expanded into a "hub model", providing a total of 40 new spaces. Fifteen short-term and 14 long-term staff positions will be created. The Wawa "Hub" will offer both licensed and informal care, with an emphasis on unlicensed care.

While the daycare community can celebrate the expanded services, serious

concerns remain about the proposed "registry for private home daycare." According to Ministry spokespeople, the registry will list both supervised licensed private home daycare, and informal babysitters. The Province argues that informal care is well-suited to the needs of families in the region, despite the serious questions about quality which daycare advocates have raised about unlicensed care.

Wawa and Sault Ste. Marie, the two northern communities selected to receive these rich political plums are only two regions. What plans does the province have to ensure that every neighbourhood is well served with the childcare it needs?

We believe that every neighbourhood needs a Hub Model to provide and coordinate comprehensive childcare services. Now that the Ministry has shown its commitment to Wawa and Sault Ste. Marie, we hope they will be receptive to requests from regions all across the province for equal funding for expansion of real Hub services.

Early Primary Education Report

In the Early Primary Childhood Education Project, daycare is like a whale. It skims the surface and occasionally can be spotted when it comes up for air.

The Early Primary Education Project (EPEP), which examined primary education up to Grade 3, was initiated by the Ministry of Education in 1984 to examine early education in Ontario. After many deputations and consultations and much deliberation, the Project reported this Spring.

In a nutshell, the recommendations which EPEP poses for education are strong and progressive. Broader recommendations, under which daycare falls, are vague and unclear.

The impact that EPEP may have on Ontario's pre and primary schoolage children is difficult to gauge. In general, the chief recommendations provide for increased access to preschool programmes, coordination with other Ministries and agencies and a strong emphasis on parent involvement - all laudable goals.

The Family

One of the most disturbing aspects of the report is its almost schizophrenic view of the family. It veers from seeing the family as a tower of strength, to an institution barely able to take on its historic socializing role.

More useful than the either/or view of the family is to see the contemporary family in change. Families are adapting to many new circumstances as they struggle to raise the next generation.

The report notes "certain types of living conditions common today deprive both parents and children of companionship, producing feelings of isolation in parents and severely limiting the socializing experience of children", and examples to which they refer are highrise apartment buildings, suburban developments, isolated rural communities, and homes where the first language is other than English or French. The authors argue that families in these situations "find there are very few affordable programs that are designed specifically for young children."

The answer? More affordable programs?

No.

"Families....need better access to information about programs and services that will respond to the needs that they are experiencing." This response is highly inadequate. Information about service is only useful if affordable and accessible service exists.

Progressive Changes:

The recommendations regarding changes to education are quite clear and generally progressive. The major direction involves making the provision of junior kindergarten mandatory throughout the Province, requiring that teachers in kindergartens and primary grades have special qualifications. Provision of all-day senior kindergarten is being investigated.

EPEP proposes that kindergarten and primary years should operate in an integrated,



Report: continued

"family grouping" basis. The report also recommends staggered entry to kindergarten and child-based programme evaluation.

However, projections become murky when the report strays from the nuts and bolts of what has traditionally been provided under the auspices of the Ministry of Education. The report states that deputants supported "universal access to preschool alternatives." One guess is that it means junior kindergarten. If the report meant support for universal access to daycare or nursery school, it is hidden.

What About Daycare?

Ambiguities remain about daycare. EPEP is very clear in its support for family-oriented programmes which aren't daycare, ("preschool programmes, drop-in centres, counselling clinics, crisis intervention centres, parenting education, toy lending libraries - the list goes on")

Examples of model initiatives do not include licensed childcare programmes working in school settings, despite the fact that the Toronto Board of Education has over 100 programs, and has mandated cooperation between daycare and school programs. Other school boards are also actively developing similar programmes.

The report avoids dealing with licensed settings and highlights informal arrangements - registries, recreation programmes, and the like. EPEP often refers to the "extended day" (brightly identified as "universally accessible daycare" by a Ministry of Education spokesperson) suggesting both licensed and unlicensed programs.

The report talks a great deal about cooperation and coordination with daycare but recommends nothing for equality of access to services. In addition, it doesn't offer anything new in terms of employment for ECE graduates.

While no-one should have anticipated that non-certified people would suddenly be able to become classroom teachers, we hoped for something a little more creative than a recommendation that ECE graduates work as teaching assistants, or staff in the fuzzy "extended day" - both options currently are open to ECE graduates.

On a positive note, the report lists good recommendations for bridging teacher and early childhood education training.

New Models for Education:

Although EPEP is very clear that the school must broaden its direction beyond the traditional class room wall, it is unsure how to accomplish this. It has yet to come to grips with the issues in services like daycare.

For all the talk about cooperation, and the need for high quality daycare, school and daycare will never have a relationship based on equality until each receives full direct funding. As long as daycare is dependent on parent fees, it will always be at a disadvantage.

For those who worry that EPEP means education will take over daycare - have no fear.

The Ministry of Education has yet to creatively address the issue. As daycare advocates, it is now our task to think seriously about how we want education and daycare work together under a system of direct funding.

about how we want education and daycare to best work together under a system of direct funding.



Rural Childcare Initiatives

The following account by Pat Morgan describes one rural community's response to the lack of childcare.

It raises questions for daycare advocates: when do we support unlicensed childcare? does the Day Nurseries Act model best fit rural communities and their particular childcare needs? What is the role of trained staff in informal care?

These and other questions raised by pilot projects will be examined in the next issue of the Newsletter.

Between 1975 and 1984, eighty-four children aged 1 - 15 years were killed on Ontario farms. Of these deaths, 37 children were under 5 yrs, 20 were aged 6 - 10 yrs, and 27 were aged 11 - 15 yrs. Even these figures may be too low, as not all farm deaths are reported to the Farm Safety Association which collects and publishes them. There are no records for the number of children injured or handicapped.

Agriculture is a unique industry - the only one where children are raised in the workplace. The driveway that children ride their trikes on is the same place where tractors are driven. Children play hide and seek in the barn around animals, chutes, elevators, chemicals, and other dangerous materials. In the city, children are not found in factories or office buildings, yet there are no other options for farming families.

For all these reasons, and many more, childcare is essential in rural Ontario.

In many farming families, women hold down paying, off-farm jobs. According to a 1984 report to the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, 69% of farm women in Ontario held off-farm jobs. The Farm Labour Survey points out that of the 80,000 census farms, only 11,000 or about 14%, hired outside labour. The majority of farms rely on family labour.

While parents work, who takes care of farm children?

Last year, the Northumberland Rural Child Care Corporation, a non-profit corporation, received a small summer student grant, which hired three students to provide childcare for farm children. The success of the



Rural Childcare Initiatives

Northumberland project has resulted in the development of additional childcare programs in Lambton, Dufferin and Temiskaming.

The Northumberland project has grown in 1986. In addition to two Coordinators, four students have been hired under a second grant to provide care for children. At-home farm women are also being sought as caregivers. The use of farming women as caregivers will mean that the program can run year-round, a goal to which we are working.

The Northumberland Childcare Corporation will be providing caregivers with three days of orientation. Their course will include first aid, craft ideas, information on farm safety, child development and growth, and financial and tax information. Equipment and craft supplies are available for caregivers. Each student is equipped with a kit of tapes, puzzles, craft supplies, books, first aid, and other materials to help them educate, entertain, and keep farm children safe.

While the program mainly serves families needing full-time care, we are able to accomodate some part-time care as well. Hours are as flexible as possible. Farms with pick your own fruit may want help until the patch closes at 8 or 9 pm. A dairy farm may ask for help as early as 7 am so that milking can get done, and seeding begun.

The development of childcare in rural areas will open up a new employment option for ECE graduates. Some of us see a future where childcare centres are set up in rural areas according to the type of farming. For example,

in a tobacco area, childcare is need for the 6 - 8 week planting season. In a dairy area, care is needed during hay harvesting. Fruit farmers need care during picking times.

Community facilities, such as community centres, and churches can be used as space. All the childcare program needs is a core of people full of ideas and committment, a strong belief and a determination to make it work.

The rural childcare project was originally set up to serve farm families only. This year, all rural familes have access to the service. We have high hopes that the program will be successful.

We believe that our children are our most valuable resource - we know they are our most precious possession. We want to keep them happy and safe in rural Ontario.

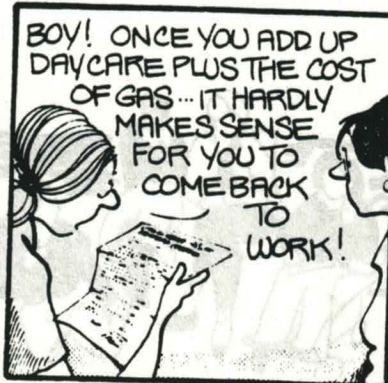
For further information, contact:

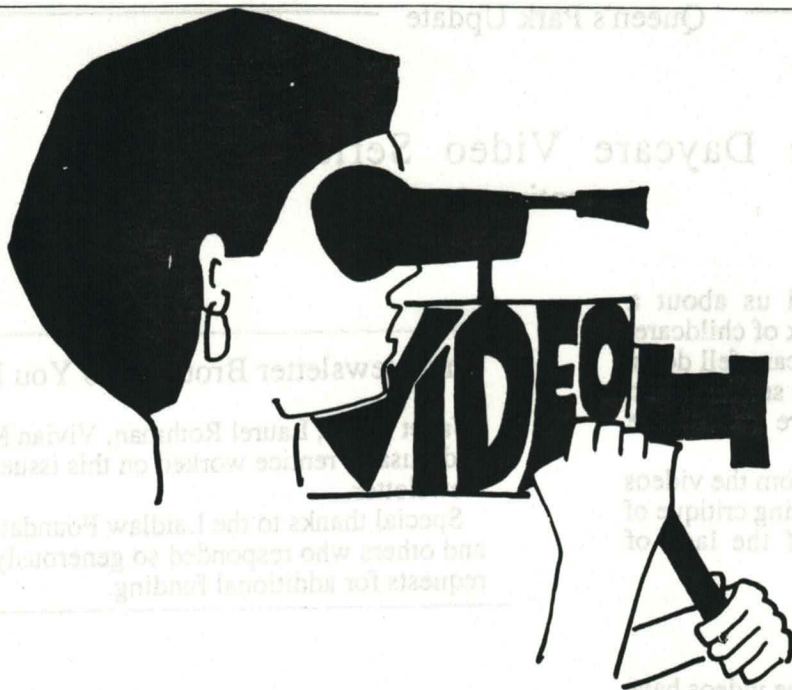
Pat Morgan

Northumberland Child Care Project

Box 1511, Brighton, Ont., K0K 1H0

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The Daycare Video Series

The videos in the brand-new series produced by the Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare, in collaboration with local coalitions across the Province, were shown with great effect, to the members of the Special Committee on Childcare, as they toured across the Province.

Originally designed to provide an opportunity for communities which the Committee was not visiting to tell their daycare story, the videos quickly grew into impressive organizing and mobilizing tools. In addition to meeting their original goal of representing the childcare situation in ten Ontario communities, they now constitute an important audio-visual resource for local advocacy groups, and will serve as a key public education tool in the outreach work of the Coalition.

The Video Series:

Ten local communities explored the various issues in Ontario's childcare crisis. In addition, an eleventh video synthesizes the Provincial picture by examining the problems of affordability, accessibility and underfunding.

The Coalition video crew visited and filmed children, parents, daycare staff and other members of the community in Bracebridge, County of Leeds-Grenville, Emsdale, Guelph, Hamilton, Haliburton, Hearst, Huntsville, Marathon, Parry Sound, Sarnia, Sioux Lookout and Windsor. Everyone we met was generous with their patience, time and stories.

Not surprisingly, communities across the province face similar problems and have a lot in common. One factor which stands out is the enormity of the childcare crisis which cuts across social and economic barriers. The combination of underfunding, accessibility and affordability creates similar dilemmas for parents and staff from north to south.

Highlights

Across Ontario, parents, children and staff face an enormous array of problems. Some of the highlights touched on in the videos include;

A mother in Guelph recounts her story as a factory shiftworker. She had great difficulty finding a babysitter who could reliably accommodate her work schedule. Her sitters kept cancelling at the very last minute - sometimes at 8:00 in the morning. Because of her childcare problems, she was fired from her job.

In Hamilton, daycare workers tell about staff exploitation. Because of extremely low wages, several workers have taken on second jobs in order to supplement their salaries. One woman works as a driving instructor, another as a cashier, who at \$9/hr earns much more at her second job than at her first.

The Daycare Video Series: continued

A rural farm mother told us about a community tragedy caused by lack of childcare. On one farm, a boy without childcare fell down a chute in the family barn and was smothered in the wood shavings. Good daycare could have prevented his needless death.

These and other vignettes from the videos come together to present a devastating critique of the personal and social costs of the lack of childcare in Ontario.

Distribution:

We are keen to ensure that the videos have as wide a distribution as possible. Enclosed with this newsletter is a promotional flyer about the videos. Feel free to make copies of the flyer, and post them wherever possible.

The eleven videos are available after September 1, for sale or for rental from the offices of the Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare.

To order, please see the order form attached, or contact us by phone at (416) 766-4691.

This project made possible by a grant from the Ontario Women's Directorate.

This Newsletter Brought To You By.....

Janet Davis, Laurel Rothman, Vivian McCaffrey and Susan Prentice worked on this issue of the Newsletter.

Special thanks to the Laidlaw Foundation, OPSEU and others who responded so generously to our requests for additional funding.



Best Conference Ever

The Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare's Fourth Annual Conference and Lobby is shaping up to be our best yet.

The Conference will take place from Friday to Monday, October 24-27, in Toronto. There are a number of new and exciting events at this year's conference. One of the highlights of the weekend will be Friday evening's panel presentation, "A Daycare Mosaic".

The panel will represent daycare from three perspectives: Jamie Kass, from CUPE 2204 will discuss a local service provider's point of view; Ruth Rose Lizee of the Katie Cooke Taske Force will assess daycare nationally; and Sheila Kamerman, a renowned authority on international childcare policy will speak cross-nationally.

This very timely event should prove extremely informative as we await the imminent release of the report from the Special Parliamentary Committee in November

Another significant first for the Coalition will be the Saturday opening address by the Honourable John Sweeney, Minister of Community and Social Services for Ontario. His presence signals the high priority being given to childcare by the provincial government and reinforces the importance and legitimacy of our Coalition. Again, this address will be extremely timely as the "White Paper" on provincial childcare policy is expected to be made public sometime in the Fall.

The workshop lineup for Saturday is interesting and varied. There will be something of interest for everyone. A brochure with complete workshop schedules will be forwarded in early August.

On Sunday, Coalition members are welcome to attend an afternoon Council meeting. At that meeting, we'll be hold a lobby preparation session, assisting us in the Monday lobby.

But it's not all work and no play! On Sunday night a Chinese banquet and entertainment will cap the weekend, and put us in good spirits to tackle the job of Monday's lobby.

This year's lobby, will be an individual lobby of MPPs. Small groups of lobbyists (a safe mixture of veterans and newcomers) will meet each MPP in his/her offices and report back to a debriefing session where a summary of answers can be prepared for a news conference. A group meeting with the Cabinet will be part of the day's events.

All in all, the Conference is one you simply can't miss. See you there!

Preliminary indications are for a full Conference, since 50% of tickets are already sold as we go to press.

Be sure to register early to reserve your spot.



Niagara

Community childcare issues in the Niagara Region were explored at a public forum in St. Catherine's on May 22. The forum was designed to provide an opportunity to air opinions and concerns publicly around the issue of childcare and to highlight particular issues in the region.

The evening was taped and edited by Omni Productions.

In June two community representatives showed the video to the Special Committee on Childcare in Ottawa.

Background:

Early in February, the Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare approached the Social Planning and Research Council of St. Catherine's and Thorold (SPRC) to help maximize public participation in the Special Committee on Childcare. In response to this, the SPRC contacted community groups and organizations to begin planning a public forum on childcare.

With a planning committee representing Port CARES, Niagara Children's Services Committee, Regional Social Services, Niagara College of Applied Arts and Technology, the Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare, the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services, and SPRC the forum was organized. With wide participation assured by the effective organizing of the planning committee, the Forum was off to a good start.

The Forum:

Seventy-five people attended the two-hour meeting. A panel presentation focussed on three questions: the meaning of universally accessible childcare; how to ensure quality care; and, the role of the Province. Audience questions and interest focussed on availability, need and demand, and who was responsible for the provision of childcare.

The central themes which emerged from the forum are highlighted in the Niagara video.

Chief among them is the fact that quality childcare and adequate core funding is essential; that widespread obstacles (including lack of transportation) exist as barriers to accessibility; and, that extended hours and 24-hour childcare is necessary, given the economic base of the region. Also emphasized were low worker wages, the limited development of programme support, and the problems of subsidy.

Wrap-Up:

Parents and providers were nearly unanimous that quality childcare should be the right of every child. Forum participants argued that the federal government must take leadership both morally and financially to encourage the development and maintenance of quality childcare, and to provide adequate funding to the Province for childcare.

The final conclusion of the evening was that spending money now on childcare is a sound investment for our future.

Interested individuals in the Niagara Region should contact:

*Milicia Kovacevich,
Social Planning and Research
Council,
(416) 682-2297,
or
Joy Kennedy
Port Cares,
(416) 834-0515.*



NorthWestern Ontario

Organizing in north-western Ontario is going well.

Despite the worst blizzard of the year, an air-sick camera man with a sprained foot and an allergic reaction to painkillers, nervous interviewees, and malfunctioning camera equipment, we managed to get a Marathon video. This tape, though short on analysis, describes Marathon's realities -- the struggle of a new non-profit daycare centre to survive.

In addition to the videos in Marathon and Sioux Lookout, daycare organizing in Northwestern Ontario has been very busy. Lots of participation and enthusiasm was generated for the Dryden and Thunder Bay hearings. If nothing else, the Special Committee knows that Northwestern Ontario is deeply concerned about the loss of the indirect subsidy, that parents believe municipal and non-profit daycare is high quality care which must be stabilized, and that more and comprehensive services are needed.

One difference we see in the daycare debate is the extent of the news media coverage. Daycare, in one form or another, has been on the news at least two or three times a month for the past six to eight months. Despite journalists' weariness in trying to find new angles, daycare continues to be a regular topic. This has to have some filter-through effect.

Future plans include an extensive survey of daycare programs in northwestern Ontario, and holding regional forums of parents, advocates, workers, administrators and politicians to develop a regional strategy.

We have just received word that Secretary of State, Women's Programmes has approved our grants.

For more information, contact:
Marg Phillips
Thunder Bay Advocates for
Quality Childcare
(807) 344-7979 - bus.
(807) 623-9067 - home

Windsor

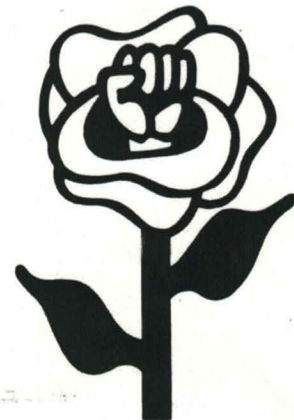
In May, the Windsor Coalition for Better Day Care met with the Honourable Bill Wrye to discuss the inadequacies of our childcare system, and the role of the Ontario government in improving it. The Minister assured us that there are a number of programmes underway which will address our childcare concerns.

Unfortunately, he told us he could not reveal or discuss these measures, as they are still before Cabinet and are therefore confidential matters.

We stressed the urgency of immediate action, particularly with the directive from the federal government to end the indirect subsidy and implement actual per diems by January 1, 1987 - a measure which is threatening centres across the province with closure. Mr. Wrye was unable to give us any indication about when the new policy will be implemented, nor what assurances are possible in the face of the loss of the indirect subsidy.

Mr. Wrye told us that his government is committed to the childcare issue. Commitment is not enough - action is what we need!

For more information, contact:
Michelle Schreyer
Windsor Coalition
(519) 255-5223



Red Lake

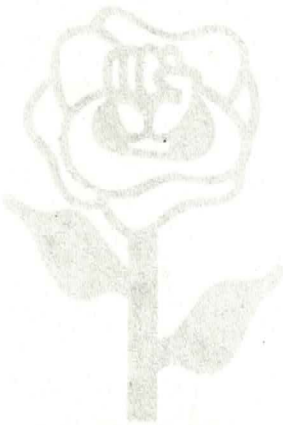
The daycare centres in Red Lake, Balmertown, and Ear Falls have received ComSoc funding to develop publicity materials to promote their services.

Daycare advocates are designing a poster and a 24-page handbook for parents illustrated with professional photographs and children's drawings. The booklet will be ready for distribution in the fall.

The publication explains the goals and benefits of group daycare, and answers questions every parent asks when enrolling a child in care. This public education is important, because in northern communities, many people still don't understand what daycare is, and what the service offers to families.

This project represents a cooperative effort to boost public relations and address, in a positive way, the chronic problems of declining enrollment at the centres in our area.

*For more information, contact
Holly Rupert
(807) 727-2510*



Hi & Lois



The Daycare Video Series

Produced by the Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare
1260 Bay St., Suite 700, Toronto, Ontario (416) 766-4691

In the Spring of 1986, the Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare in collaboration with local daycare coalitions across the Province, produced a video series to represent the childcare experiences of families in Ontario.

The following videos are available, for both sale and rental, from the Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare.

To obtain a video, please see the order form on the back.

This project made possible by a grant from the Ontario Women's Directorate.

**Child Care: Myths and Realities:
Ontario**

Parents, daycare staff, and experts from across Ontario argue the need for a comprehensive childcare system and examine the attitudes and opinions which work against universal childcare.

**Daycare Desperation:
Guelph**

Looks at the high cost of childcare and how parents deal with the issue of affordability.

**The Bottom Line:
Hamilton**

Examines the impact of low staff wages and lack of benefits on the quality of childcare that daycare staff are able to provide.

**Pour Sauver Notre Garderies
Hearst**

The only daycare centre in the francophone town of Hearst is threatened with closure. Parents, staff and community members talk about why the centre must be saved

**Child Care Realities in Rural
Resort Ontario**

Reviews the lack of childcare in the Districts of Haliburton, Muskoka and Parry Sound. Examines the differing needs of rural families and how communities have responded to that need.

The Daycare Video Series

**Who's Sharing the Caring?
Childcare in Windsor**

Parents talk about the difficulties of finding and affording good daycare. The video also takes a look at the experience of daycare staff in a profit-making centre, and what that means for parents and children.

**Time for Change
Sarnia**

A look at the childcare situation in Sarnia.

**Searching for Something Better
County of Leeds Grenville**

A look at the lack of licensed daycare in a rural area and the effects of reliance on informal childcare on families.

**The Sioux Lookout
Daycare Centre**

An overview of childcare problems in Sioux-Lookout.

The Marathon Daycare Centre

A look at the childcare needs of a northern Ontario community.

Order Form

Rental: Please enclose \$5 shipping charge per video (\$10 for rush orders)
Purchase: Please enclose \$25 per video

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Postal Code: _____

Names of videos ordered: _____

Return to: Ontario Coalition for Better Daycare 1260 Bay St., Suite 700, Toronto, Ontario
(416) 766-4691

Calendar

November 15-22 **10th Annual Children's Book Festival: Where Books Come From.** Two kits, "Where Do Books Come From" and the **Our Choice/Your Choice Catalogue** (a buying guide to the best Canadian children's books) have been produced to introduce children to the ins-and-outs of book production. Each kit costs \$15 or both for \$25 from: The Children's Book Centre P.O. Box 1265 Station F, Toronto, Ont. M4Y 1T0

(416) 597-1331

Thursday, November 27, 1986. **Alliance for Children, Interdisciplinary Seminar: "Family Support Services in Ontario: The Dimensions and Challenges in Providing an Adequate Safety Net for Children and Families with Special Social, Economic and Health Needs."** MacDonal Block, Queen's Park, Toronto: \$75 For more information, contact Alliance for Children Suite 401, 234 Eglinton Ave.E. Toronto, Ont. M4P 1K5 (416) 480-0710

November 24, 25, 1986. **Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) Fall Seminar** featuring several seminars of interest to child care advocates on Tuesday, November 25th. Registration is \$53 for full seminar; \$38 for a single day. For further details, contact: OMSSA Box 40, Inglewood, Ont. L0N1K0 (416) 846-3930

Sunday, January 25, 1987

Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care, Council Meeting Location to be announced.

May 24-29, 1987

Sharing Through Play - Toy Libraries Around the World. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, Ont. The 4th annual conference on Toy Libraries. For details: OISE Conference Office 252 Bloor Street West Toronto, Ont. M5S 1V6

(416) 923-6641

