

Day Care is for Everyone!



It's for Everyone

At times we still think of childhood the way it was, on the farm in large houses with big families, all of which provided the child with the opportunity for exploration and imaginative play. But growing up in Ontario in the 70's is a much different experience. We now have city living and small families, and too often they restrict children in their opportunity to play and experience.

It's for children

In Ottawa-Carleton, day care comes in different shapes. There are municipal and private centres, co-operatives, and full-day, half-day, and after-school programs. Some are large, some small, some specializing in children of a certain age group, some with anyone from 6 weeks to 5 years. But one thing they all have in common is providing children with the opportunity to experience a new environment and a chance to meet other children and adults. As children are eager, inquisitive and fascinated with discovery, a good day care program will stimulate their social, emotional, physical and intellectual development. They learn to depend and trust adults other than their parents, and often gain a certain kind of independence.

It's for parents

Women are slowly changing their view of themselves and their children and are looking for help in their task of raising a family. One of the alternatives now open to parents is day care. And good day care with trained staff, plenty of space, proper equipment, and parent involvement can be the best resource a parent can hope for. It is a place for inspiration when in need of new ideas for toys and games; somewhere to communicate with people raising children of the same age; an opportunity to gain a much better understanding of children and how to relate to them. Such sharing brings new insights for parents and can help many women to understand the problems that come from the narrow definition of their role as mothers.

It's for our whole community

Day care has long been accepted in cases of family crisis or as a preventive measure when parents are considered "unfit" to raise their children. It is time, however, to think of day care not as a "substitute for", but a "supplement to" today's family. As Margaret Mead once said "We now expect a family to achieve what no other society has ever expected an individual family to accomplish unaided. In effect, we call upon the family to do what a whole clan used to do." Day care is an

important service that can help today's family accomplish all the tasks it must perform and a service that can only improve the quality of family life.

The Ottawa-Carleton Day Care Association is a non-profit association of twenty-one day care centres in the Ottawa-Carleton region. We represent the mutual concerns of our member agencies, staff and parents.

At this time the growth of day care in the province of Ontario is jeopardized by a moratorium on day care expansion. The rationale for this is restraint on public expenditure, however, the total expenditure on day care amounts to only .3% of the provincial budget. Cutting back on such a small item will not balance the budget. Day care service is in dire need of expansion, not restraint.

We hope that this paper will inform you of the importance of day care for our children and community. We hope you will join us in our protest against present government policy that threatens Ontario's day care.

Day Care services are as varied as the children in the programs. Some are run by the municipality, others by private citizens (profit and non-profit-making), and still others are set up as co-operative ventures. Day care centres can be found in church basements, old houses, office buildings, or in a new building of their own. The clientele can include students, professionals, as well as blue collar workers. Staff training, experience, and involvement in the operation of centres can vary. And of course, there are different day care programs (infant, toddler, pre-school, after 4, day camp) for different needs and ages. The first three often overlap, and in some day care centres, grouping of all ages occurs for certain periods during the day.

While different concepts, abilities and activities are stressed and developed at different ages, most of these can be adapted to suit the needs of any age group. Keeping all these things in mind, let's look at some typical programs:



Infant programs

Some infant centres take children as young as 6 months. Programming has to be flexible as babies follow their own schedules for sleeping, eating, and playing. The staff-child ratio is highest at this age so individual attention to meet the child's physical, intellectual and emotional development can be provided. A lot of time is spent with children exploring their surroundings through touch, sight and sound. The child learns to walk, talk and becomes more independent while enjoying a secure relationship with the day care staff as well as the family. When this happens the child is ready to move into a Toddler Group.

Toddler Groups

The staff of a toddler program usually has training similar to those in an infant program (Early Childhood Education (E.C.E.) or the equivalent). In the toddler group, which may have children as young as 15 months and as old as 3½ years, there is an increased emphasis on social skills such as sharing and taking turns with toys, using language to express feelings, and play acting with dolls, dress-up clothes, etc. A wider range of materials is used at craft time, and the attention span is longer while sitting in circles, singing and story-telling. As the child's physical co-ordination increases, more room is needed for large muscle activities such as climbing, and riding tricycles, and, the children are able to go on longer outings.



Preschool Programs

The staff usually has kindergarten training or E.C.E. for this age group ranging from 2 to 5½ years. In a preschool program, (some of which are operated in conjunction with kindergarten) concepts of size, shape, color, and number become more refined as reading readiness skills are introduced. Puzzles and other toys requiring motor skill co-ordination are more complex and the children's art progresses from scribbling to recognizable pictures. Activities started one day will often carry over several days as well as at home if the parents are interested. Large blocks may be set up as a grocery store, with other activities and materials supporting this theme (books, songs, crafts, play money, a visit to a store). Programming at this age may be highly structured - every one doing the same thing at the same time, or completely unstructured with children flowing freely through the activities and areas, with the only



limitations being snack and lunch times, and the rest periods. Most programs have a bit of both, but the underlying philosophy which will also affect how much and when discipline is administered, is very much a reflection of the staff. If the centre has an active, co-operative group of parents, they too will influence how a program is run. As with all ages, it is very important that the child feel emotionally secure in the day care surroundings so that confidence is gained to explore and learn from the environment.

Family Home Day Care

Family day care refers to care of children from infants to ten years of age in a home other than their own. Care is offered in a home environment by a care-giver supervised by a field worker from a licensed agency. The number of children cared for in each home is few - no more than two under the age of 2, three under the age of 3 - with a limit of five children (including the care-giver's own pre-school children).

The care-giver is encouraged to maintain a stimulating, safe and warm program, promoting the social, emotional, physical and intellectual well-being of the child. Hours are somewhat flexible for the mutual convenience of the parent and care-giver. A central agency usually provides support, such as some play equipment, craft materials and workshops for care-givers.

After-four Programs

After-4 programs are extensions of day care for those children up to the age of 9 who need a place to go after school until their parents are finished work. Qualified workers provide activities for the child as well as a place

A Good Day Care Centre.

Would you know a good centre if you saw one?



to relax, and someone to talk to. These programs usually provide full day service during school professional development days, holidays and some even offer lunch-time programs.

Day Camps

Day Camps are open during the summer months when school is closed. The children, 6-9 years, can be enrolled for one session or for the entire summer, so the staff have to be creative. Often the counsellors are university students or experienced staff of an after-4 program. Activities may include an all-day excursion by bus to a zoo or park, trips to museums on rainy days, visits from travelling musicians, puppeteers, etc., as well as crafts, drama, and games.

In all of these programs, volunteers are used to complement full-time trained staff, especially when an outing or a special activity is planned. In some centres parents are also encouraged to visit and help out when their time permits.

No Two Alike...

No two day care centres are the same. When choosing a day care centre for your child it is important to go and visit. Do talk to the staff about their thinking on child care and disciplinary practices. Watch how they interact with children, and see exactly what the atmosphere of the centre is like. Above all - take your child and see how they like it.

What the Ontario Government is doing to Day Care.

Running on Empty.

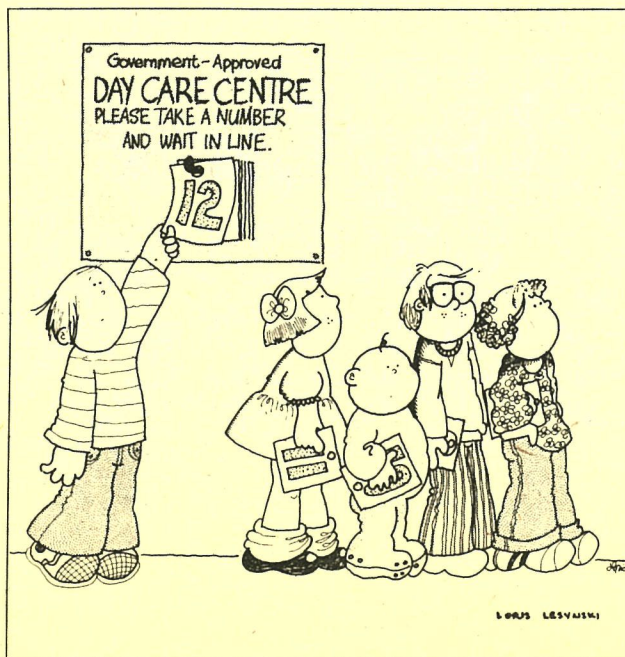
On October 11th, 1977 the provincial government announced a freeze on all day care expansion in the province until April 1st, 1979. This means no increase in the number of children served, no increase in average attendance, no programme changes resulting in staff increases.

This move is associated with earlier statements that total day care agency budgets would be limited to an overall 8% increase.

These announcements mark the latest in a series of government restraints in the social service sector. However, as a method of budgetary savings to the taxpayer, day care cutbacks would appear to be very ineffective - only .3% of the total provincial budget goes to day care expenditures (Public Accounts of Ontario, 1976); and almost half of this amount is redeemable from the Federal Government in a cost-sharing agreement.

In view of the reality of the present state of day care in the province, budgetary cutbacks are the last thing we need. The province seems to have ignored the 200,000 children of working mothers **alone** who need day care. presently the province has only approximately 25,000 licensed day care spaces. Thus, only one in ten children who may need day care in fact receive it.

The recently reported case of an illegal day care centre in Toronto where 39 children were in inadequate facilities with only one adult, will be encouraged to continue because there is no licensed spaces available for these children. Illegal day care is on the increase in the Ottawa



area as well. These cases highlight the need for expansion in day care, not restrictions.

These latest government actions also eliminate any possibility of relief for parents of average incomes who are not eligible for subsidy. Ontario is the only province in Canada that still employs a 'means test' to determine eligibility for day care subsidy. An immediate need for these families is a realistic ceiling on day care costs with the government picking up the difference between this 'user share' and the actual cost of the service.

At present, parents who are not subsidized are required to pay \$2,200 to \$2,600 a year for pre-schoolers (aged 2-5) and \$4,000 to \$5,000 for infants and toddlers (aged 0-2½). It is generally agreed that parents should pay part of the day care costs but it is surely not feasible for a great number of parents to pay the full cost of care as required by the current system.

With day care programmes limited to an 8% spending increase, existing services will ultimately decrease in quality. Food, diaper service, most programme supplies, fuel and hydro are rising at a much higher rate. The Anti-Inflation Board has recognized the extremely low salaries earned by day care workers by approving increases in 1977 of up to 12%. But, with revenues restricted to 8%, it seems very unlikely that centres, given the increase in other budget items, will be able to afford even a cost-of-living raise.

The 1978 budget for some Ottawa-Carleton centres has been held to a 1-2% increase. There will be **no** salary raises in these centres this year. Day care workers will continue, through low salaries, to subsidize day care costs.

Many basic and important changes must take place in order to provide the quality care our children need. The provincial government must take this responsibility. We need:

- quality day care accessible to all who desire it.
- appeal procedures in cases of inadequate or denied subsidies.
- adequate salaries for day care workers.
- a less cumbersome bureaucracy to administer day care.

What Your MPP Thinks.

The Ottawa-Carleton Day Care Association interviewed the six members of provincial parliament in this area in order to understand their individual as well as party policies on day care. A questionnaire was used for these interviews as a basis for discussion. The questions reflected concerns over inadequate day care spaces, the provincial moratorium on expansion, low staff salaries, and high fees to parents.

Claude Bennett, Conservative MPP, Ottawa South:

"You give me one of the projects within the social field - don't go into the other fields - stay in the social field of the responsibilities of government. You tell me which one we should knock down to give you more money, and I'll pit you against the one you're knocking down; and between the two of you, you fight it out. You get into the cock-fight, don't put me into it, and the survivor succeeds..... If there is a need for universal day care, then someone ought to open up a business."

Reuben Baetz, Conservative MPP, Ottawa West:

"Good quality care should be recognized as the right of all children... If we don't provide that care, and do it on the basis of a right, then we'll pay a very big price down the road... Was it (the moratorium) strictly for financial considerations? If it was, I as a member of the governing party of Ontario would have a great deal of heart-burn about that, because adequate day care for our children is such an essential part of our society and our way of living that funds must be found for it. Also, the amounts involved, when you compare it to the expenditure involved in other sectors of government, day care is just a miniscule kind of thing, and if we are trying to cut back on day care as a major effort to balance the provincial budget, then I think we are barking up the wrong tree."

Albert Roy, Liberal MPP, Ottawa East:

"It is very difficult to get the government moving and make day care a higher priority than it is. More money for day care isn't going to require a higher level of taxation, but a re-allocation of priorities... If you want to encourage people (day care workers) to remain in what I consider to be a very worthwhile profession, certainly you shouldn't discourage them by cutting back or having the salary increases not the same as everyone else."

Evelyn Gigantes, NDP MPP, Carleton East:

"The Province should be building up day care services now!... Day care should be accessible to all children. I do support universal day care... that day care is economically unfeasible is baloney... There was \$2.6 million that was allocated to day care in last year's budget that the Minister said that the municipalities shouldn't ask for. I know that to be a lie. They were told they couldn't have it. So the whole situation of salaries for day care workers is getting misrepresented at the provincial level."

Sidney Handleman, Conservative MPP, Carleton:

"If you make the cadillac available, then everyone will choose it... You ask me about the moratorium, I am not even sure that there is a moratorium.... Government responds to those who scream the loudest."

Michael Cassidy, NDP MPP, Ottawa Centre (Provincial Leader):

"I don't support the moratorium. It doesn't make any sense at all. We provide mixed housing in communities and then don't provide child care for working parents... we can't cut back, we have to protect what we have... child care should be accessible as an article of faith... Salaries for day care workers have been among the lowest paid of any service occupation in the province."

For further information on what your MPP said, please contact the Ottawa-Carleton Day Care Association, at 235-1696. Typed transcripts of these interviews are available.



Day Care
is for
Everyone

What You Can Do

The government of Ontario needs to know what you think of the present day care policies. Please write to:

Hon. Keith Norton
Minister of Community and Social Services
Queen's Park
Toronto.

And express your views!

Phone, write or drop in to the day care centre nearest you and pick up a petition to take around to your neighbours and friends.

Anyone interested in good quality day care can become a member of the **Ottawa-Carleton Day Care Association**. You can participate in committees (we have an ongoing parent's committee and are setting up a worker's committee) and can attend special seminars and workshops on day care issues.

We would like to continue to distribute a regular newsletter to our member centres and interested individuals. To do this we need a newsletter committee. If you are interested in joining, please call 235-1696.

Ontario's Day Nurseries Act:

All Act, No Action.

Every day care centre in Ontario must be licensed under **The Day Nurseries Act**, provincial legislation administered by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. This Act sets forth minimum standards for premises, equipment, staff and program of a day care centre. It is designed to ensure that each centre meets the physical, social and personal needs of children. Every child must have access to play equipment, time for sleep, outdoor exercise, social interaction, and individual attention during each day.

Before a day care centre can open, it must meet safety and hygiene standards of the local fire and health departments. The provincial day care consultant visits the proposed site and determines how many children of each age group can be served, the number and qualifications of program staff, and the necessary layout and equipment. Once everything meets with the consultant's approval, the licence is granted and the centre can begin providing service.

A licence to operate a day nursery is in effect for one year, renewable after inspection by the provincial day care consultant.

Day care funding:

The Day Nurseries Act also legislates public funding for day care. The decision to provide funds for day care is a municipal, not provincial, responsibility. No municipality is required under the Act to establish day care service. The Act outlines procedures for cost-sharing between the municipality (20% of the cost), the province (30%), and the federal government (50%). A publicly-supported day care centre enters into a contract (a purchase - of - service agreement) with its local municipality. The centre agrees to provide care for a certain number of families eligible for financial assistance from the local department of social services.

Built-in problems

Obviously there are problems inherent in **the Day Nurseries Act**. As funding for day care is limited, only the minimum standards of equipping, staffing, and programming for a day care centre can be maintained. This system encourages the status quo - essentially legislating against expansion and improvement of programs for children, discouraging innovation and development.

because day care funding is given after the service has been provided, centres are seldom able to accumulate the necessary funds for renovations, new or replacement equipment, or additional staff. Although the Act does make provision for obtaining capital "grants" from the province for starting or renovating a day care centre, this avenue of funding is closed in times of economic restraint.

Day care administrators are unable to predict how much and when money will be available for expenditures as their estimates are based on "projected" attendance. Staff, food, maintenance, medical and program supplies must be paid for before any income is realized. This can easily lead to deficit situations.

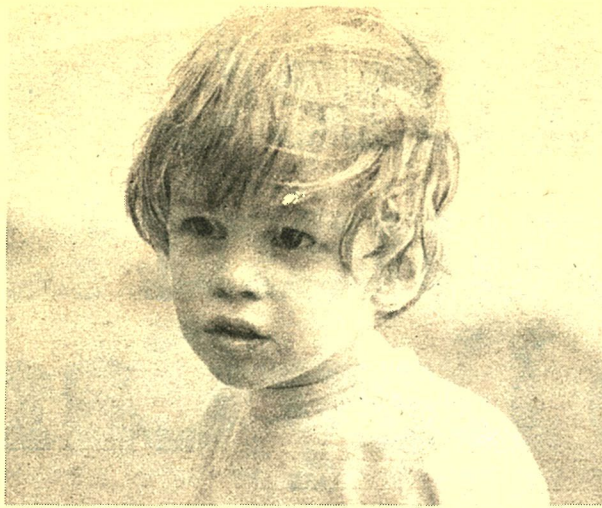
Another problem that constantly faces day care providers is that "every" level of government has the power of veto over day care spending. Once a municipality has fixed the amount it is willing to spend on day care services, the provincial or federal government may refuse to cost-share any portion of this amount.

You get what you pay for

All services for children in the province, including day care, now come under The Children's Services Division of the Ministry of Community and Social Services. There are changes currently being proposed to **the Day Nurseries Act**. One proposal is to re-name the legislation to the "Children's Day Care Act".

Other changes include the authority to license, regulate, and inspect private home day care agencies; an increase of the maximum age of children served from 10 to 12 years; a provincial standard for financial assistance by local municipalities; and several other changes dealing with the expansion of services for handicapped children.

These are not major conceptual changes in what the Act is designed to do. They will simply extend the jurisdiction of the Act to cover more groups of children in a greater variety of settings. This can be a step only if it is matched with an expansion of government funding. The current level of day care spending is not sufficient to meet the needs of children presently served under the Act. If the present day care dollar is expected to stretch to cover additional programs, it can only result in a reduction in the quality of care.



Day Care Centres

in Ottawa-Carleton

WEST:

Anne's Daycare, 265 Carruthers, 729-4695
 *Bayshore Day Care, 230 Woodridge, 820-2300
 *Bel Air Village, 2112 Bel Air, 225-6851
 Borden Family Day Care, 170 Chesterton, 224-1411
 *Carleton-Memorial Day Care, 740 Melfa, 226-1953
 Churchill Day Nursery, 724 Churchill, 722-0505
 *City View Day Care, 6 Epworth, 224-1022
 Elsie Stapleford Day Care, 1000 Teron Road, Kanata, 529-5151
 Esther By Child Care, 1550 Caldwell, 729-3242
 Foster Farm Day Care, 1065 Ramsay, 829-8939
 *Nepean Child Care, 1339 Meadowlands, 235-3087
 *River Parkway Preschool, 2101 Algonquin, 729-3129
 *Village Day Care, 983 Carling, 725-2066
 Woodroffe School Age Program, 207 Woodroffe, 729-9890
 Woodvale Day Care, 205 Greenbank, 828-9718

Centre:

*Centretown Co-operative, 94 James, 238-2610
 Florence Day Nursery, 79 Florence, 232-4101
 *Glebe Parents' Day Care, 690 Lyon, 233-9268
 *James Street Day Care, 163 James, 234-0018
 St. Anthony's Children's Centre, 414 Booth, 232-4308
 St. Luke's Infant Care Centre, 320 Elgin, 234-3617
 *YM/YWCA Day Care, 180 Argyle, 237-1320

South:

*Capital Day Care, 1230 Bank, 733-8208
 *Captain Kid Day Care, 1755 Russell, 521-0155
 *Carleton University Day Care, Loeb Bldg., 231-6312
 Dr. Ernest Couture Day Care, 2105 Riverside, 731-2980

East:

*Andrew Fleck Child Centre, 195 George, 234-2422
 *Captain Kid Day Care, 119 Mann, 235-4014
 Charmain Craven Day Care, Jasmine Cresc., 746-9286
 *Gloucester Family Home Care, 1551 Cyrville, 746-9471
 Jardiniere Tournesol, 194 McArthur, Vanier, 745-2729
 Les Petits Bouts De Choux, 40 Cobourg, 238-7197
 Lower Town Day Care, 333 York, 238-1398
 New Edinburgh Day Nursery, 200 Crichton, 745-8005
 Newin Day Care, 275 St. Laurent, 745-6459
 *Overbrook Day Care, 149 King George, 746-7762
 St. Gabriel Day Care, 55 Appleford, 749-2556
 *Sandy Hill Day Care, 300 Wilbrod, 237-5232
 *Sunflower Co-operative, 160 Chapel, 237-0945
 York St. School-Age Program, 310 York, 235-6919

*members of the Ottawa-Carleton Day Care Association

Contributors:

Jane Bertrand
 Chris Chilton
 Melinda Feldman
 Trish Green
 Carol Hay
 Cindy MacLoughlin
 Petra Pupp
 Cathy Smallwood
 Lorne Starkman
 Chris Wihak

For further information on any article in this paper, please contact The Ottawa-Carleton Day Care Association at 235-1696. The views expressed in this paper are not necessarily held by every member of the Association.

For information on day care: Call the Ottawa-Carleton Day Care Association at 235-1696
 Department of Social Services at 563-2851.

Day care
through the years:

Women And Children Last.

Historically, day care has been a supplemental service to families in "special need" - families where the women had to work because their husbands were absent through desertion, death, illness, insanity or imprisonment. These families were poor and were often shunned by the more affluent classes and their children were perceived as potential delinquents. Within the traditional family were role expectations for men and women. The man was considered to be the breadwinner and the decision-maker; the woman's responsibility was to raise the children and care for her family in the home. The history of day care must be examined within the context of this traditional family structure.

After World War I....

Canadian women left widowed by the First World War forced a recognition of the needs of single parents. In 1920, the government responded to this situation by passing Provincial "Mothers Allowance" legislation. This completely ignored the option of providing adequate child care so that these mothers had the sanctioned choice of working. The provision of mothers allowance was perceived as replacing the need for day care; so expansion of day care virtually ceased.

World War II

From 1942 to 1946, care for children up to the age of fourteen was provided under the Dominion-Provincial Agreement. The second World War was on and cheap female labour was required while the troops were away. Women were expected to return to their homes after the war. However, many women chose instead to protest against the proposed cutbacks in day care services. This action by women produced some response by government. The Dominion-Provincial Agreement was removed in 1946 and the Day Nurseries Act was instituted. However, the Act brought no financial commitment to day care and the need for expansion of day care facilities was not addressed.

The Sixties

The Act was amended to its present form in 1966. This allowed for subsidization of day care costs for parents in need. However, the definition of "need" was limited to the parents' inability to meet the costs of the service. Since the needs of other parents to utilize day care were not considered, the view of day care as a "special needs" service was enshrined in legislation.

What about now?

Project Day Care, announced in 1971 by the provincial government, allocated \$10 million for the construction of new centres. As well in 1974, \$15 million was provided to municipalities, Indian Bands, Associations for Mentally Retarded, and approved corporations.

These funds, however, were not available on an ongoing basis. More importantly, the allocation of these funds was related directly to the needs of the economy, and the creation of "make work" projects in a time of high unemployment.

We now face a freeze on all day care expansion until April 1st of 1979 with no promise from the provincial government that the situation will improve after that date.

In times of economic recession women are seen only as "secondary wage earners". Women are encouraged to return to their traditional position in the home as day care services are cut back. Services that would finally enable women to fulfill their aspirations outside of the home are neither supported nor provided by the Ontario government.

