


canoe.ca ... **cnews** SEARCH: Canoe Google GO Inside CANOE.CA

LASIK MD VISION Laser Vision Correction **20/20 VISION** ...or it's **FREE** Available exclusively at LASIK MD **1-877-602-2020** Call us for your complimentary consultation

EDMONTON SUN 24 hours **SUN** TRAGEDY STRIKES BALL TEAM **SERVICES** **SUBSCRIBE** **EMPLOYMENT** **NEWS RESEARCH CENTRE** **CLASSIFIEDS** **ADVERTISING**

In Tomorrow's Paper
 Tips to stay fit in 2008 in Cary Castagna's Lifestyle column.
 Find last week's Keeping Fit here.

24 HOURS SUN contests! **CLICK HERE!**

Current Conditions
 Clear
 -3°C
 Full Forecast

SUN NEWS Alberta

Thu, January 10, 2008

Daycare owners, Grits slam funding methods

Shortage of quality, qualified caregivers continues

By **JEREMY LOOME**, LEGISLATURE BUREAU

A decision to fund 81 separate Alberta daycare centres through grants last year proves the province made a big mistake when it eliminated operating grants a decade ago, say operators.

And according to the Opposition, the nature of those grants - which are ostensibly to ensure centres can achieve accreditation under the province's new quality standards program - is such that much of what they'll be spent on would have been covered under the old grant system.

"In many cases, when I'm talking to owners or operators, they're telling me they don't have the time or resources to wade through these grant applications again and again," said Liberal critic Weslyn Mather. "Where we're at right now is that this does not solve the ongoing operating cost issue, which is leading to such a shortage of qualified staff that some daycare centres are closing."

Operating grants were eliminated when Alberta privatized the industry in the early 1990s. Soon after, a glut of private daycares that tried to compete using bottom-line staff costs sprung up, leading to a scarcity of qualified workers.

That's led to parents complaining of shortages for years now in quality, qualified daycares, even as 60% of Alberta daycares have vacancies.

POST ON FACEBOOK
 E-MAIL TO A FRIEND
 PRINT PAGE
 WRITE US
 LETTER TO THE EDITOR

- Home
- News
- Edmonton
- Alberta
- Canada
- World
- Columnists
- Entertainment
- Sports
- Photo Galleries
- Opinion/Comment
- Columnists
- Lifestyle
- Business
- Contests & More
- Video
- Dating

Business Name, C

Find a Business

Find a Person

SEARCH

Featured:

JOIN TODAY!
UNDEFEATED RECORD
SUN

BUY NEW
 LOWEST PRICES
 BEST SELECTION
 ON NEW DODGE
 CHRYSLER, JEEP


Jeep
 CHRYSLER
FIVE STAR SERVICE
 ★★★★★

BUY USED
 HUGE USED
 VEHICLE SALE

Hot Clicks
Traffic Cameras
Blogs
Feature Series



Special Sections:

Snow Scene
 WAG
 Truck Time
 Value Driven
 Colleges & Uni's
 Homes for Sale
 Industry & Trades
 Feel Your Best
 Neighbourhoods
Summer Swimsuits
 Building Dreams
Active Edmonton
 School Report
 Envirovision
 Fore Golf
2008 Auto Preview
 Pets On Parade
 Police Beat
 Autonet Section

Classifieds:

Classified Extra
 Obituaries
 Jobboom
 Autonet
 Dating

SUNshine Girl



On Canoe:

Health & Fitness
 Trends
 Eat
 Sex Files
 DIY
 Gadgets
 Lotteries
 Comics

One prominent operator, who requested anonymity due to an ongoing working relationship with government, said the government's carrot-and-stick approach to quality control is unnecessary.

"This problem only exists because they allowed so many under-qualified operations in the first place," she said. "None of these operators, in my experience, have poor intentions. They're trying hard to provide good service to children. They simply can't afford to hire qualified staff on what parents can afford to pay each month."

The operator said the government seems to be "genuinely trying" to fix the industry but doesn't have the humility to simply admit deregulation was a failure and reinstate the grants.

But a spokesman for Alberta Children's Services said the grant structure - which unlike operating grants does not allow the operator to use public money for staff wages (although top-ups are part of it) or rent, among other items - is what the public has indicated it wants.

"The public has consistently told us that we should be focusing funding on increased wages for staff and for supporting middle-income families," said Cathy Ducharme. "And we know that this grant structure is working, because it is opening up new spaces."

Space isn't the problem, said Mather. Quality is.

"Alberta has regulated child care for only 10% of our children and that's terrible," she said, noting more than 70% of two-parent homes feature both parents working.

"Only Newfoundland and Saskatchewan are worse. What a record for us. What a record of failure for a province as wealthy as Alberta."

Choice is good.

NEW LOTS in West Edmonton's Parkland

DAYTONA HOMES MASTER BUILDER

Value Driven

daytonahomes.ca

VEHICLE SALE ON NOW AT CAPITAL DODGE

NO CREDIT NO PROBLEM

CAPITAL
 CHRYSLER JEEP DODGE

CLICK HERE

Canoe Klix Advertise!

Job finder
 Find job near you. It's fast and easy!

TD Meloche Monnex
 You Could Win 1 of 2 Mercedes-Benz B 200 Turbos. Request A Quote Now!

HR Management
 Comprehensive & powerful solutions to support strategic decisions.

For All The Good Stuff
 MP3 Player, Plasma & ACL Tv, Home theater, digital still cameras

Travel info
 Make travel plans, find travel info Search from 14 search engines in 1.

Got A News Tip? Click Here

Previous story: [Alberta Sunflashes](#)

Next story: [Liberal bent to blogger](#)