

# Parents And Professionals Oppose Proposed Changes In Day Care

BY MARGARET LADE

The furor aroused by proposed expansion of day care services in Ontario shows no signs of abating in the Region of York.

It is not expansion of the service that has aroused the ire of parents and day care personnel alike. It is the method proposed by Provincial Secretary for Social Development Margaret Birch.

The present ratio of eight children to one staff member for full day care is quite high enough, they argue. An increase in ratio of 12 to one would be intolerable, particularly since many centres operate from 7 am to 6:30 pm to accommodate the needs of working parents, and staff hours are staggered.

Those who have worked in the field for many years strongly disagree with Mrs. Birch's statement that "the present child-to-staff ratios under the Day Nurseries Act are unnecessarily small, that they add far more to the cost of these programs than they bring in tangible benefit."

To increase the ratios, these people maintain, would turn the centres into little better than large baby-sitting services.

**LONG WAITING LISTS**

No one questions the need for more day care in York. The regionally operated centres all have waiting lists greater than the enrolment. The Richmond Hill Day Care Centre in St. Mary's Anglican Church has 78 children registered and a waiting list of 205.

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The small centre in Aurora is operating at capacity with 36 children registered and 10 on the waiting list. In Newmarket there are 106 children registered and 165 on the waiting list.

These figures may, however, not be an accurate reflection of the actual needs in these communities, says Dr. Ian Kerr, Assistant Commissioner of Health and Welfare for the region. When people find out how many are ahead of them on the list, they do not bother to leave their names, but make whatever private arrangements they can.

"There are probably several hundred others," Dr. Kerr surmises.

(Judging from the number of advertisements that appear each week in this paper for day care, Dr. Kerr's assessment would appear to be correct.)

**YORK STANDARDS HIGH**

He points out that the changes in day care regulations are not official yet and will not be unless approved when the Legislature reconvenes in October.

Nor is there anything in the proposal as Dr. Kerr understands it that would force the region to change its own regulations.

"The region can set superior standards, but that would be up to region (York Regional Council). It would be a political decision."

York has done very well in the matter of day care services, says Dr. Kerr. It has plans for a new, larger day care centre in Richmond Hill in the civic centre on Vaughan Road, and it is preparing day care facilities in the shell of Markham Community Centre.

"There are many areas in greater need," he said.

In her statement, Mrs. Birch points out that the social services that governments provide have been in the areas of highest need and highest cost: education, health care, etc.

Because of the huge cost and necessarily universal application of these kinds of services, she says, they have been most often financed entirely through taxation and were available on a "free" basis to everyone.

As a result, taxes have grown larger. In Ontario provincial government spending in the social policy field grew eightfold from 1961 to 1971, an average increase of 23 percent every year.

**DAY CARE NOT FREE**

Day care in regional centres is subsidized, but not free, however. Parents pay \$25 a week for one child, \$20 for a second child and \$17 for a third. Subsidies for care are available to those who cannot pay the full amount and might end up on welfare rolls if day care was not available to them.

There are also capital subsidies. In a letter sent out to municipalities earlier this month by Minister of Community and Social Services Rene Brunelle, the Minister announced that the province will pay 100 percent of the capital cost of converting available space in churches, community halls, etc. to day care purposes and 80 percent of the cost of building new facilities.

The Minister also referred to the province's intention to promote programs of "private home care" as outlined in Mrs. Birch's statement.

**SALARIES LOW**

Local day care workers would probably take time off to laugh at Mrs. Birch's reference to "relatively highly-paid professionals" if they were not too busy trying to balance their personal budgets.

Qualified teachers, usually graduates of a two-year course in early childhood education at a community college or similar institution, earn from \$5,650 to \$6,776. The head of a day care unit for the mentally retarded who works four hours a day five days a week earns only \$3,936 a year. Supervisors get \$9,327 (one of these has a master's degree in preschool care, another more than 15 years' experience in the field) and assistant supervisors earn \$7,922 a year.

By comparison a public school teacher in the region in the lowest category (one

year at teachers' college after high school graduation) earns \$5,950, and with annual increases can work up to \$8,690 a year plus cost of living bonus of \$70 a year for each percentage increase above 6.5.

Secondary school teachers with a pass B.A. and a year at college of education have a starting salary of \$8,100 a year.

The assistant supervisor at Richmond Hill Day Care Centre, Gwendolyn Cardwell, accuses the politicians of being "more money conscious than people conscious."

The training given to students is very intensive, says Mrs. Cardwell, but they do not have the status of professionals. "The salaries are disgustingly low for a teacher with two years' training plus years of experience. A road sweeper gets more money."

She accuses politicians of "mouthing platitudes but not saying that they will do something... to them money is a dirty word."

The Richmond Hill centre has, in addition to the supervisor, Johanna Kunze, and an assistant supervisor, three certified teachers, two teachers who are taking courses in early childhood education and one who has no formal training but has had many years of experience in day care.

In addition a University of Toronto graduate who plans to go into early childhood education in the fall is working at the centre through the summer. Students in the courses at Seneca College's Finch and King campuses also come in to do field work for varying periods of time, and students in the child care course at Don Head Secondary come in periodically for a two-week work-study experience.

Another student with an Opportunities For Youth grant who plans to go into early childhood education in the fall is assisting staff during vacation time.

Staff may take vacations, but the centre does not, says Mrs. Cardwell (Mrs. Kunze is on vacation this month). Enrolment does not drop during the summer.

**NEEDS CONSTANT**

"They are coming in every day, we are absolutely desperate," Mrs. Cardwell says. "It would be very damaging to increase the ratio. This is not just a baby-sitting service. You cannot cope with children on a one-to-one basis if you do not have knowledge of what day care is all about. We work in close co-operation with mental health and other services. Parents are made aware of their children's problems much earlier."

These problems, she says, might remain undetected until they became serious if the children were left in the care of people not attune to the normal behaviour patterns of children and to the child as an individual.

The day care centre, says Mrs. Cardwell, is a child-gear atmosphere. Rules are laid down, but the children are free to be creative, to learn new skills, to be individuals.

The centre has received an average of three calls a day from parents seeking day care since school let out in June, she says, and people are "hostile" when they are told about the waiting list.

But they are also apathetic. They cannot be persuaded to petition for more adequate day care facilities.

"They do not want to stick their necks out, to do anything about it," Mrs. Cardwell declares.

The professionals are dubious about the "flexibility of choice" in day care as outlined in Mrs. Birch's statement. She proposes to make funds available to local and voluntary organizations to establish day care programs, removing provisions that in the past have interfered with development of such programs, thus permitting by the parents themselves in the design and delivery of day care services.

**VOLUNTEER CENTRES**

They are particularly concerned about the proposal that where no fees are involved, where no staff is hired and where all the care is provided by parents themselves on a voluntary basis, the arrangement shall be left entirely to the parents and will not come under the Day Nurseries Act.

The plan, says Mrs. Birch, is to encourage more parent and volunteer involvement in all day care programs, and the ministry has increa-

singly been approving staff on the basis of individual competence and experience, rather than by relying on any particular set of professional qualifications.

"We will, of course, continue to require that supervisors of day care centres have specialized knowledge, but once again we will recognize relevant experience rather than relying solely on any professional background," says Mrs. Birch.

"We believe that this more flexible approach to staff qualifications will not result in any lower standard of care, but it will permit much wider involvement by parents and volunteers in day care programs and it will permit voluntary groups to operate programs more economically."

**NEW POLICY SET-BACK**

Mrs. Helen Hill, who operates the Fairlawn Junior School on Yonge Street south of Highway 7 charges that such a policy would set back the standards of day care 20 years.

"If you take on unqualified staff, the children are sold short," says Mrs. Hill. It does not follow that because a woman is a good mother she will be a good teacher when she is placed in charge of a number of very young children.

Mrs. Hill, who has been in the field for 20 years and has a summer enrolment of 100, says that it is most important that the ratio of children to teachers should not be increased, even though it would cut her own staff budget.

The learning atmosphere and the close child to teacher relationship must be kept up, says Mrs. Hill, and this would not be possible under the proposed change in ratio. One teacher for 14 children in a half-day program is not enough for the under-five-year-olds.

Mrs. Hill questions the validity of the two-year study referred to in Mrs. Birch's statement. A recent meeting to discuss its implications took place at the University of Toronto's Institute For Child Study, she says, and of the 150 junior schools and day care centres represented, only one person had been interviewed. The researcher had not observed the school in action.

**SCHOOLS NOT CONSULTED**

The study, she said had been based on research in just 27 centres. A much broader sampling of representatives of day care centres and junior schools have a voice before the proposed changes are made effective.

There is no question of the need for an expanded service, says Mrs. Hill. "The number of children in proper day care is minimal. The others are under the care of anyone."

One of the problems is that, many politicians still think that mothers are working because they want to, foisting their children off on others.

This is totally wrong, says Mrs. Hill. In her experience, the majority of mothers are working because they need the money. This is increasingly obvious in rural and formally rural areas.

Thornhill and Richmond Hill are growing rapidly, she points out, and the need for day care is increasing proportionately. Her school is filled to capacity the year round.

**PARENTS PROTECT**

Parent groups have been organizing throughout the province protesting what they consider a lowering of standards in child care, and one regional newspaper received more than 40 letters from parents and educators. All of these, however, have originated in communities where well organized public day care is available, even though inadequate to meet the demand.

In her statement Mrs. Birch recognizes the growing participation by women in the labor force and declares that the province will continue to regulate the services that are provided while leaving to the parents the choices of the care for their children.

**DISADVANTAGED FAVORED**

She has set priorities. The first is establishment and delivery of day care services to handicapped children with subsidies that will assure that the costs to families will be no greater than the costs of the equivalent services to children who are not disabled (York has two day care units for mentally

retarded children). The second priority will be provision of funds to assist children from low income families and native children in need of day care, providing them with more opportunity to learn and to grow.

The third priority is the local and voluntary organization. Regulations will be revised to ease some existing restrictions, and the Ministry of Education will work with local school boards to convert surplus school facilities to day care use.

Day care centres are required to provide meals for children in their care. This has called for full-equipped kitchens and staff who prepare meals according to dietary standards set out by the Day Nurseries Branch. (Richmond Hill Day Care Centre has a housekeeping staff of three in addition to teaching staff — a cook, assistant cook and housekeeper. They provide a morning snack — some children arrive without having had breakfast — a hot mid-day meal, and an afternoon snack.)

The Ministry, says Mrs.

Birch, is now granting licenses to centres with no kitchens if they have made adequate arrangements for catering.

**CHANGE REGULATIONS**

At present regulations require that whenever more than five unrelated children will be present without all of their parents also being present, the accommodation comes under the requirements of the Day Nurseries Act and must be licensed as a day care centre.

The alternative Mrs. Birch suggests is the voluntary centre with no fees involved and parents and volunteers participating. But the question parents are asking is, how can parents participate when they must work to earn a living, and how can the operators of such centres subsist without a fee?

**PAY "DISGRACEFUL"**

At a recent meeting of the region's health and welfare committee Georgina Councillor Bob Pollock described the salaries paid to some day care teachers as "disgraceful". Now, the day care workers point out, the province is asking people to come forward and provide this service for nothing!

One day care teacher commented, "A single girl should be able to live on her salary on a full-time job, but we can't on what they pay us."

Staff should be approved on the basis of individual competence and experience rather than by any particular set of professional qualifications, says Mrs. Birch. Community college graduates who have the required skills and knowledge would serve as supervisors, but a more flexible approach to staff qualification will permit wider involvement of staff lacking these qualifications.

**NO FORMAL QUALIFICATIONS**

"We will require no formal qualifications for staff in the supplementary after-school programs for six to nine year olds," says Mrs. Birch.

These changes, she maintains, will permit voluntary groups to operate programs more economically.

Ratios for children under 18 months will be raised from three and one-third child to one staff member to four children to one staff member, resulting in a 20

percent saving in staff cost per child.

For children from 18 months to two years the ratio will be raised from four and two-thirds children with one adult to six children to one adult, admitting 30 percent more children to day care centres.

The highest ratio now permitted for children between two and 4 is 11 to one for half-day programs. This will be raised to 14 to one, a saving of almost 30 percent in staff cost per child.

For full day programs for this age group the maximum will be increased from eight to one to 12 to one, a saving of 50 percent per child.

The child-to-staff ratio of 22 to 1 for half-day programs for five year olds will be retained, but the ratio for full day programs for this age group will go from 11 to one to 16 to one, once again, a saving of 50 percent in staff costs per child.

For after-school programs for six to nine year olds the ratio will increase from 17 to one to 25 to one, also a 50 percent saving, permitting, Mrs. Birch says, admission of 50 percent more children to such services.

**TRAINING COURSES POPULAR**

Despite the low pay rates and limited scope for advancement, there has been no lack of applicants for admission to early childhood education programs. In its five years experience, Seneca College has found no difficulty in placing its graduates, and the course introduced last year at Seneca's King Campus is fully enrolled. There are also a number taking part-time courses.

"The response has been very good," says Paul Brilinger, co-ordinator of continuing education at King Campus. He adds, however, that the province restricts the number of students admitted so that graduates are fairly well guaranteed jobs.

**DAY CARE AT SENECA**

Day care centres are in operation at both the King and Fich Campuses to provide students with a practical working setting. The children enrolled are those of staff or students and the centres are under supervision of course directors and qualified supervisors and staff.

Seneca's calendar of

courses describes the early childhood education course: "This program is designed to provide the skills and knowledge necessary to plan and implement a balanced program of learning experiences which will permit the growth of creativity and emotional health in the preschool child; and to enable students to assume responsibility for the preschool child in a nursery school, day care centre, junior kindergarten or special education centre."

**ADVANCED COURSE**

Its course in personality development is for those who will be in charge of older children. Participants must be graduates of the early childhood education course.

It stresses "Factors which determine the child's personality through a concept of the continuum of development tasks which face the child from age six to maturity and through reading current research and relevant pamphlets." This is an evening course. Course director is Dr. Lindsay Weld, and the day care centre is supervised by Rose Tsui.

## THE EXPROPRIATIONS ACT NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL TO EXPROPRIATE LAND

IN THE MATTER of an application by the Minister of Transportation and Communications for approval to expropriate lands being in the Town of Markham, in the Town of Vaughan and in the Town of Richmond Hill, in the Regional Municipality of York, in the Province of Ontario, for the purpose of acquiring sufficient land to accommodate the reconstruction of the King's Highway 11 and portions of certain intersecting roads in connection therewith.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that application has been made for approval to expropriate the land described in the schedule hereto. Any owner of lands in respect of which notice is given who desires an inquiry into whether the taking of such land is fair, sound and reasonably necessary in the achievement of the objectives of the expropriating authority shall so notify the approving authority in writing.

- (a) in the case of a registered owner, served personally or by registered mail within thirty days after he is served with the notice, or when he is served by publication, within thirty days after the first publication of the notice;
- (b) in the case of an owner who is not a registered owner, within thirty days after the first publication of the notice.

THE APPROVING AUTHORITY IS  
Minister of Transportation and Communications  
Parliament Buildings  
Toronto, Ontario.  
M7A 1Z8

Minister of Transportation and Communications  
W. G. Wible  
Director, Right-of-Way Branch.

NOTES:

1. The Expropriations Act provides that,
  - (a) where an inquiry is requested, it shall be conducted by an inquiry officer appointed by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General;
  - (b) the inquiry officer,
    - (i) shall give every party to the inquiry an opportunity to present evidence and argument and to examine and cross-examine witnesses, either personally or by his counsel or agent, and
    - (ii) may recommend to the approving authority that a party to the inquiry be paid a fixed amount for his costs of the inquiry not to exceed \$200 and the approving authority may in its discretion order the expropriating authority to pay such costs forthwith.
2. "owner" and "registered owner" are defined in the Act as follows:
  - "owner" includes a mortgagee, tenant, execution creditor, a person entitled to a limited estate or interest in land, a committee of the estate of a mentally incompetent person or of a person incapable of managing his affairs and a guardian, executor, administrator or trustee in whom land is vested;
  - "registered owner" means an owner of land whose interest in the land is defined and whose name is specified in an instrument in the proper Land Registry or Sheriff's Office, and includes a person shown as a tenant of land on the last revised assessment roll;
3. The expropriating authority, each owner who notifies the approving authority that he desires a hearing in respect of the lands intended to be expropriated and any owner added as a party by the inquiry officer are parties to the inquiry.

### SCHEDULE

All right, title and interest in the following lands:

1. In the Town of Markham, in the Regional Municipality of York, (formerly in the Township of Markham, in the County of York), in the Province of Ontario, being
  - (1) (a) parts of Lot 32, Concession 1, of the Township of Markham, designated as PARTS 1 and 2
  - (b) part of Lot 33, Concession 1, of the Township of Markham, designated as PART 3

on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-186 deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto Boroughs and York South as Plan 64 R-3251

  - (2) (a) part of Block A, Registered Plan Number 7695, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 4
  - (b) parts of Lot 33, Concession 1, of the Township of Markham, designated as PARTS 5, 6, 7 and 9
  - (c) part of Lots 1, 2 and 3, Registered Plan Number 4184, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 11

on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-175 deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto Boroughs and York South as Plan 64 R-3072.

  - (3) (a) part of Lot 6, Registered Plan Number 4184, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 2
  - (b) part of Lot 7, Registered Plan Number 4184, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 3
  - (c) part of Lot 4, Registered Plan Number 4184, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 1

on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-182, deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto Boroughs and York South as Plan 64 R-3143.
2. In the Town of Vaughan, in the Regional Municipality of York, (formerly in the Township of Vaughan, in the County of York), in the Province of Ontario, being
  - (1) part of Lot 34, Concession 1, of the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 14 on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-182, deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto Boroughs and York South as Plan 64 R-3143
  - (2) (a) part of Block H, Plan M-681, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 1
  - (b) parts of Block B, Plan M-681, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PARTS 2 and 3

on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-183, recorded in the Land Registry Office for the Land Titles Division of Toronto and York as Plan 66 R-7006

  - (3) (a) part of Lot 1, Registered Plan Number 3765, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 1
  - (b) part of Lot 33, Concession 1, of the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 2
  - (c) part of Lot 5, Registered Plan Number 3765, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 4

on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-176, deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto Boroughs and York South as Plan 64 R-3103.
3. In the Town of Richmond Hill, in the Regional Municipality of York, (formerly in the Township of Markham, in the County of York), in the Province of Ontario, being
  - (1) (a) part of Lot 36, Concession 1, of the Township of Markham, designated as PART 1
  - (b) part of Lot 37, Concession 1, of the Township of Markham, designated as PART 2
  - (c) part of Lot 38, Concession 1, of the Township of Markham, designated as PART 4

- (d) part of Lots 38 and 39, Concession 1, of the Township of Markham, designated as PART 5
- on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-179, deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto Boroughs and York South as Plan 64 R-3112
- (2) (a) part of Lot 9, registered Plan Number 3806, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 4
  - (b) part of Lot 8, Registered Plan Number 3806, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 5
  - (c) part of Lot 2, Registered Plan Number 3805, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 6
  - (d) part of Lots 2 and 3, Registered Plan Number 3806, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 10
  - (e) part of Lot 1, Registered Plan Number 3806, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 11
  - (f) part of Lot 1, Registered Plan Number 3805, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 12
- on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-181, deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto Boroughs and York South as Plan 64 R-3138
- (3) (a) part of Lot 3, Registered Plan Number 3801, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 5
  - (b) part of Lot 4, Registered Plan Number 3801, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 4
  - (c) part of Lot 13, Registered Plan Number 2383, for the Township of Markham, designated as PART 2
- on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-184, deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto Boroughs and York South as Plan 64 R-3133.
4. In the Town of Richmond Hill, in the Regional Municipality of York, (formerly in the Township of Vaughan, in the County of York), in the Province of Ontario, being
  - (1) (a) part of Lot 123, Registered Plan Number 1984, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 6
  - (b) part of Lot 4, Registered Plan Number 1984, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 7
  - (c) part of Lot 54, Registered Plan Number 3852, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 11
  - (d) part of Lot 21, Registered Plan Number 3852, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 13
  - (e) part of Lot 19, Registered Plan Number 3852, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 14

on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-179, deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto Boroughs and York South as Plan 64 R-3112

  - (2) (a) part of Lots 278 and 279, Registered Plan Number 1960, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 6
  - (b) part of Lot 283, Registered Plan Number 1960, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 12
  - (c) part of Lot 284, Registered Plan Number 1960, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 13

on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-180, deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto Boroughs and York South as Plan 64 R-3105

  - (3) parts of Lot 280, Registered Plan Number 1960, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PARTS 1, 2 and 3 on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-213, deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto Boroughs and York South as Plan 64 R-3613
  - (4) (a) part of Lots 1 and 2, Registered Plan Number 1923, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 1
  - (b) part of Lots 3 and 4, Registered Plan Number 1923, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 2
  - (c) part of Lot 4, Registered Plan Number 1923, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 3
  - (d) part of Lot 5, Registered Plan Number 1923, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 4
  - (e) parts of Lot 11, Registered Plan Number 1923, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PARTS 8, 9 and 10
  - (f) part of Lots 11 and 12, Registered Plan Number 1923, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 11
  - (g) part of Lots 13 and 14, Registered Plan Number 1923, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 12
  - (h) part of Lots 14 and 15, Registered Plan Number 1923, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 13

on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-190, deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto Boroughs and York South as Plan 64 R-3285

  - (5) part of Lots 3 and 4, Registered Plan Number 1987, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 2 on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-189, deposited in the Land Registry Office for the Registry Division of Toronto Boroughs and York South as Plan 64 R-3252
  - (6) part of Lots 44 and 45, Concession 1, of the Township of Vaughan and part of Block B, Registered Plan Number 3576, for the Township of Vaughan, designated as PART 1 on Ministry of Transportation and Communications' Plan P-1698-188, recorded in the Land Registry Office for the Land Titles Division of Toronto and York as Plan 66 R-7115.

This notice first published on the 24th of July, 1974.

