

# Stouffville daycare centres ignore provincial closures

While hundreds of day care centres across the province planned to close yesterday (Friday) to protest provincial government cutbacks, it was business as usual for Stouffville area child care agencies.

None of five centres surveyed by *The Tribune* closed their doors in support of the Ontario-wide stoppage. While all expressed concern for the possible effects of the proposed slashing of subsidies and grants to day care operations, only one local centre took action. The Children's House Nursery School and Day Care Centre declared Friday a "day of mourning" and sent two staff members to take part

in a rally protesting the cuts at Queen's Park. Shari Litman, the supervisor of the non-profit centre, said staff and children attending the facility planned to picket the municipal offices and stage a march up Main St.

"It wouldn't be feasible for our staff or the parents (of children attending the centre) for us to close," said Litman. Litman, who said roughly 25% of her clients currently benefit from provincial subsidization, said the centre was encouraging parents to join the protest. She also expressed concern that cutbacks in grants to centres would jeopardize salaries of employees. But she said she doubted the

cuts would cause her centre to consider closing. "We're not greatly affected by subsidies."

Eniza Maaboob, administrator of the privately run Dickson Hill Day Care & Nursery, agreed that inconveniencing kids and parents wasn't the proper way to express concern over provincial cuts. She said the cutback issue has led to confusion and over reaction. "People are either misinformed or just flying off the handle," she said. She said it was her understanding the cuts would only involve subsidies given parents who had found work through the previous provincial government's Jobs Ontario program. "But even

the ministry contact I talked to wasn't sure. It's confusing."

Maaboob said while she has concerns, she agrees with the cutbacks. She suggested the issue is likely to polarize non-profit and private centres. "Non-profit centres get more grants, and a lot of their money goes into administration. We are a private centre and the money all goes back into the kids." She said of the 25 full time children attending her centre, 25% were subsidized, while two are children of Jobs Ontario-employed parents. She said she would try to accommodate parents affected by cutbacks.

Kim Clausen of the non-profit Ballantrae Child Care Centre said she never considered closing for the day. While she said she's concerned about the effect the cutbacks will have on her centre, she planned to wait and see what form they take before reacting. "We have no idea how it will affect us." Around 20% of her 40 clients currently receive government subsidies. Stouffville's Chick-A-Dee Nursery School, a private facility with a 40% subsidization rate, also refused to shut down. Heather Preece said cutbacks are a fact of life today, and that her centre will react as necessary. "If he (Mike Harris) is going to do it, he's going to do it," said Preece. "I'm sure it will affect everybody, but I'm still not sure how it's going to work."

Stouffville's My First School Day Care centre is unaffected by the cutbacks because it is a private centre with no subsidization.

- Bruce Stapley

### ADVERTISING CORRECTION

Eaton's Get the Holiday Mix insert, which appeared in this newspaper Wednesday November 15, 1995. Please note the following: Page 37: Stonewashed cotton denim pants should be priced at \$49.99. Page 42: Girl's Fisher Price leather booties with buckle \$22.99 will be available November 29. Also in our Men's Gift Book: from November 22 Page 7: Polo Sport fragrance bonus size should read 11ml not 50ml. Page 13: judo-style terry velour robe price should read \$79.99. Page 21: Russel Athletic top show at top left corner will be available Nov. 24. Inadvertently, the errors listed appeared in our advertising. We sincerely regret any inconvenience or confusion to our customers.

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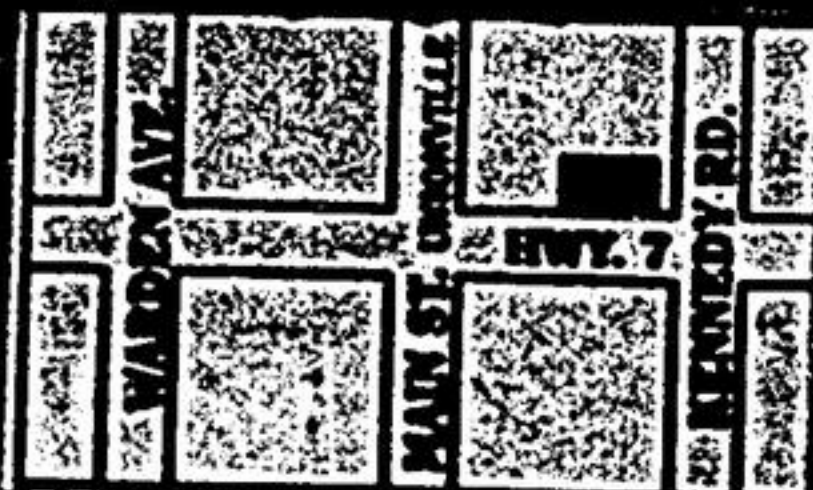
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