

Ontario backs down from proposed daycare changes

Submitted by
Councillor Pasternak

Toronto councillor praises the move as a victory for parents and children

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The Ontario government is backing down from proposed changes to the child care system that parents feared would make spaces less affordable or harder to find.

- **Proposed Ontario daycare centre changes concern local parents**
- **Parents protesting Ontario's proposed childcare changes**

Education Minister Liz Sandals made the announcement Wednesday in question period.

"We have heard the concerns raised, and I want to be clear that the regulations as posted will not be implemented," she said. "Changes will be made and we will ensure that there are options for parents."

Sandals said the government will be "taking another look" at the proposed regulations.

Under the current childcare regulations, children up to 18 months of age are considered infants, 18 months to 30 months are toddlers and over 30 months are preschoolers.

The groupings would have changed under the province's proposal to lower the infant designation to 12 months old and younger, toddlers would be 12 to 24 months old, and children would be considered preschoolers at 24 months.

Critics had said that the changes could raise the cost of child care. The City of Toronto staff were critical of the province's plan, saying in a report that it was contrary to the goal of increasing the affordability and availability of child care.

Toronto Coun. Janet Davis said the decision is a victory for parents and children.

"[The government] must have heard the message, that's good," she told CBC News shortly after Sandals spoke in the legislature.

"This was the wrong direction to take. It would have compromised quality, increased costs for parents and reduced the number of available spaces."

Davis said Toronto alone would have lost 2,000 child care spaces if the province had moved ahead with the proposed changes.

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