



Letter to Parents - Pressure tactics

Montreal, November 1st, 2011,

Dear Parents,

The current political context leads us to use pressure tactics on the Québec government on November 10. We understand that the context is difficult for all of you. We therefore ask for your support, since it is in the interest of your children. To this end, we have posted on the website of the Association des garderies privées du Québec (www.agpq.ca) the media interventions of our president, Mr. Sylvain Lévesque. Subsidized private daycares are living with inadequate subsidies to meet their operating costs and to give a decent wage to our educating staff. For too many years, financial resources have been insufficient to provide quality educative services that meet our demands and values for your children. This is unacceptable in the context where we have to comply to the same rules and obligations to the ones of the CPE. Our children, our parents and staff are not second class citizens! We refuse to decrease the quality of our services as the minister James is forcing us to do so.

For several years, the government has recognized the under-funding of subsidized private daycares but took no concrete action to eliminate it. We remind you that a baby receives \$ 6.90 a day more in a CPE than in a private daycare, also a child of 18 months or more and a child with special needs receive \$ 3.30 a day more in a CPE than in a private daycare, that is only for the cost of care and education used to provide direct services to children (educating staff salaries, food, educational materials, etc.). These differences, coupled with other direct subsidies such as exemptions from municipal taxes and the refund of 50% of the GST and PST, total a shortfall of \$ 200 000 per year for a subsidized private daycare of 80 places, including 10 babies. The same government that put in place a pay equity between women and men also unfairly treats a group of children, parents and workers of the same network. As far as we are concern, you don't pay less taxes than those who send their children to a CPE. On October 15, we gathered 4000 people to march against this injustice, the minister has not bothered to contact us to reconsider our underfunding or even acknowledge our presence. We therefore have no other choice but to use more draconian pressure tactics. By her statements and her belligerent attitude against our network, Minister James has taken our daycares hostage and will therefore suffer the consequences of her attitude. We will fight until justice prevails.

Our mission is to ensure quality services to children and their families, good working conditions for our educating staff and long-term sustainability of our daycare network, we must act. Desperate times call for desperate measures! Throughout the history of Quebec private daycares have never reduced our operating hours or close our facilities. We hope the minister will listen and will act responsibly in the interests of the children and parents in Quebec.

The opinion seems to be growing in our favor, the entire network, including educators from CPE, describe the behavior of Mrs. James as vindictive. Therefore, in response to the minister's statement that she intends to reduce our grants if we put our plan in place, the AGPQ has reviewed it's game plan. Quebec parents can now blame the minister for her irresponsibility and her inability to handle the situation positively. In this new environment, private daycares will modify their annual calendar of 13 closing days to replace a few vacation days by study session, starting on November 10. All parents will be notified in advance of the closures to come. In total, there will be three closures until the end of the year. We are determined to go all the way while remaining open to negotiate with the Minister, provided, of course, to

set clear targets and timelines. It is vital that you understand that this funding will go directly to the benefit your children and without it we can no longer afford to maintain the excellent level of care and education you have been accustomed to.

We invite you to call your local MP to complain about the attitude of the minister and make sure that they understand that your children are not second class citizens and deserve the same level of funding as all the other children.

Thank you!

Association des garderies privées du Québec