



No cuts for your children!

Dear parents,

The Association des garderies privées du Québec (AGPQ) invites you to walk with us on Saturday, May 11 at 11 am. The Walk will start from the Place des Festivals, on Jeanne-Mance Street, between Ste-Catherine and de Maisonneuve.

After 16 years of hard work to improve the quality of the private daycares network and its 10 000 workers, the Minister of Family, Nicole Léger, wants to cut \$15 million, which represents \$28,000 for a private daycare with 80 children.

After fighting for over a year to achieve equity with the CPE within 5 years, our network is now paying the price for the Parti Québécois' improvisation and segregation between the CPE and the private daycares. Imagine, the mother of Quebec's family policy, Pauline Marois, now wants to undress the children of private daycares to dress those of the CPEs.

A few weeks ago, the Québec government reached an agreement with the CPE network, darling of the Parti Québécois. According to this agreement, the CPE will hand \$31 million of the \$222 million accumulated in recent years. That surplus comes from the pockets of Québec taxpayers.

For ideological and political reasons, Pauline Marois prefers to slash the budgets of subsidized private daycares rather than recover the sums needed from the surplus accumulated by the CPEs, who supposedly are nonprofit organizations.

Why the cuts? Not less than 85% of the 15,000 new subsidized places recently announced will be developed in the expensive and overpriced CPE network. Indeed, while the owners of private daycares assume all construction costs (around \$2 million per facility) and receive less direct subsidies than CPE, construction costs of CPE are paid by Québec taxpayers. This is a bill totaling nearly \$500 million.

In addition, private daycares already contribute significantly to the Québec economy by paying GST, QST, property taxes, business taxes, income taxes for which the CPE are exempt by virtue of their sacrosanct status of nonprofit organizations. In addition, they are not taxed on the \$222 million accumulated surplus.

Mrs. Léger will have to get up early to fool the AGPQ and the 50,000 families it represents. After last year's intense negotiations to achieve a level of funding for pay equity between our staff and the CPE within 5 years, there is no way that we will permit the current ruling party to violate this agreement that ensures the sustainability of our network.

Finally, we do not accept the Minister Léger's threat of lowering our funding rate below the CPEs for 4 year-old children, if the \$28,000 per daycare cut is refused. Children who attend our daycares are not worth less than those of CPEs!

We do not believe that the Québec government is negotiating in good faith. Therefore, the owners of private daycares have decided, in a meeting, to close their facilities on Tuesday, May 21. So far, parents prefer a closing day rather than the permanent disappearance of a service.

We reject that the Minister Léger imposes the weight of massive development of CPE on private daycares by reducing the quality of services for children and the working conditions of our educators. The quality of our facilities is not negotiable.

Come out! Bring your pots and pans! The media will be there, so we want a colorful walk! With a big turn up at the walk, we might be able to avoid the closing day of May 21. Make some noise as education begins in daycare!

The Board of the Association des garderies privées du Québec

