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## **PROVINCIAL DIRECTIVE WILL FORCE SIMCOE COUNTY FAMILIES TO PAY MORE FOR CHILD CARE**

*For Immediate Release*

ONTARIO—November 9, 2017-- Families in Simcoe County can expect to pay at least 20% more for licensed child care come January thanks to Provincial policies introduced today by Simcoe County Children's Services staff. Officials from the Simcoe County Children's Services Department met with the region's independent licensed child care owner/operators to deliver the devastating news. Simcoe County staff reported that due to a new directive from the Provincial Ministry of Education, they have no choice but to discriminate against commercial centres in terms of funding. This funding has a major impact on child care affordability and accessibility for all families in Simcoe County, as it helps stabilize the licensed sector as a whole by offsetting some child care centre costs.

The funding cuts announced in Simcoe County today were similar to those announced by the Nipissing District Social Services Administration Board in June. Many child care owner/operators in Simcoe County were reluctant to be interviewed about the specifics of this morning's meeting, after anecdotal reports from their peers elsewhere about being threatened with closure if they spoke to the media or to parents about the implications of the new Provincial policy. The actions of both Municipalities seem to stem from a [Ministry of Education memo dated April 28](#), which appears to detail the Provincial government's plan to cut funding to licensed child care centres that already exist in the commercial sector, so that more families will be directed to centres run by municipalities, and new sites being built into the public school system and institutionalized not-for-profits.

"The Province calls this "prioritizing the not-for-profit sector," but it's a serious blow to the tens of thousands of families across Ontario who trust and rely on licensed centres that are run as small businesses," says Andrea Hannen, Operations Manager with the Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario (ADCO). "If this Ministry of Education directive continues to be implemented across the Province, many more licensed child care centres will be forced to close their doors. Some municipal councils including Peel Region are being proactive and advocating on behalf of parents and small businesses in their communities, so perhaps the Provincial government will be prompted to either re-think its current policy or at least delay its implementation."

"We're hopeful that as both the Minister Responsible for the Early Years and Child Care and the Minister Responsible for Women's issues, Indira Naidoo-Harris will recognize the importance of maintaining the widest range of licensed child care options for Ontario families and will do what she can to encourage the many female entrepreneurs who own or aspire to own their own licensed child care centres," says Kerri Whitaker, Co-President of ADCO. "We've been meeting with senior Ministry personnel on an ongoing basis and remain optimistic that the Minister will take a second look at the situation."

ADCO believes the Government can best achieve its goals of a more responsive child care system and 100,000 new licensed spaces by encouraging the growth of all types of licensed centres, including those run as businesses.

*For further information on the work done by the Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario, please visit <http://www.adco-o.on.ca/>.*

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