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Letters To The Editor  
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On January 27<sup>th</sup>, the Toronto Star reported on Provincial consultations to modernize the Day Nurseries Act (DNA). This legislation regulates licensed childcare in Ontario and has not had a major update since 1980.

With the introduction of full-day learning for four-and five-year-olds, many of Ontario's daycares are concerned about their ability to continue operating. This is largely due to aspects of the DNA that make it uneconomical to offer services for our youngest children.

ADCO represents both commercial and non-profit child care operators. We're committed to quality, but know that without minor amendments to the DNA, licensed care for children under 3.8 years old will become unavailable or unaffordable in many communities. We have some concerns related to some of the initial ideas offered about serving this youngest age bracket, but believe that by working together, parents, operators and government can develop solutions that will preserve access to high quality, centre-based care in all communities.

To not do so will result in higher parent fees, up to 20 – 25% per day, which reflects the true cost of caring for the youngest children. Moreover, many small centres will close, as most families won't be able to afford such a sharp increase in costs. This could leave many rural communities with no regulated childcare options at all and could substantially lower the number of spaces available in larger urban areas.

When regulated, licensed options aren't readily available, working families are forced to turn to unregulated illegal street corner care. The Government, to its credit, is consulting with licensed child care programs, Early Childhood Educators and parents to find practical solutions that will ensure continued access to licensed child care. Choosing not to rise to this challenge will mean the end of regulated childcare in Ontario for working families and the middle class.

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