



1-188 Bunting Road
St. Catharines, ON L2M 3Y1
1.800.567.7075
admin@adco-o.on.ca

INDEPENDENT LICENSED CHILD CARE PROGRAMS STEP UP TO SUPPORT COVID-19 FRONTLINE STAFF

For Immediate Release

ONTARIO—March 23, 2020—On Sunday, Minister of Education Stephen Lecce announced that some licensed child care centres would re-open to offer care for the children of essential personnel working on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic. Members of the Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario (ADCO), which represents Ontario's independent licensed child care centres, were quick to offer their facilities and services to support this important effort.

ADCO was part of Ontario's State of Emergency Briefing convened by the Premier's Office last Tuesday and had raised the issue of ensuring that licensed child care was available for essential service personnel, so these individuals could stay on the job. "A lot of ADCO members had expressed to us their concern about ensuring child care was available to support healthcare workers, first responders, and other essential personnel," says Andrea Hannen, ADCO's Executive Director. "Our members wanted to do their part, even though special measures will need to be taken to ensure the safety and health of the children, the child care staff and families involved. We knew it was important to be ready to do our part, because we have a member who has already been involved in Quebec's response to the COVID-19 pandemic."

"Even though nothing had been decided, right after the meeting on Tuesday, we asked our members to consider if they might be able to provide licensed child care to individuals working on Ontario's COVID-19 frontline," says Hannen. "After Minister Lecce's announcement yesterday, we saw a flood of ADCO members offering to help." This morning, ADCO provided Ministry officials with a list of licensees, organized by municipal region, who were willing to participate. "It's just a start, but it spans 14 municipalities and includes over 100 locations," says Hannen.

"Prior to having to close due to the State of Emergency, a lot of ADCO member centres were providing care for healthcare workers and first responders as part of their regular operations. They know how important reliable child care is for these families and appreciate that the Ministry of Education is taking steps to ensure licensed child care is available for them."

-30-

ADCO is the industry association for Ontario's independent licensed child care centres. Independent licensed child care centres are those that are not run by public sector entities such as municipalities or school boards, or by large multi-service agencies such as YMCAs. Independent licensed child care centres account for more than a third of Ontario's licensed child care spaces. Many are run as small businesses, owned and operated by women.

For further information, please contact:
Association of Day Care Operators of Ontario (ADCO)
admin@adco-o.on.ca or 1-877-685-4288, ext. 1.