

Waitlist Fees in BC

Presentation for the Provincial Child Care Council

June 8, 2017

Presentation Outline

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- Data/Statistics
 - Parent Child Care Survey
 - 2016 Report: A Growing Concern Child Care Fees in Canada's Big Cities
- Fees Charged
- Provider Profile Questionnaire
- Legislation/Legal Opinion
- Consumer Protection Act
- Discussion

Overview

Challenge

- Securing child care: insufficient spaces to meet demand.
 - Child Care Providers create waitlists to manage demand.

Waitlist Fees

- Fees may be charged to parents to place child's name on a waitlist, or to register a child in a space.
- Waitlist fee may or may not be refundable or used towards future child care fees.
 - Parents may never access the space.
- Families with multiple children have increased costs to place multiple children on multiple lists.

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Fee Types

Waitlist/Administration fees

- Charged to put the child's name on a list in the event a child care space for that child becomes available.
- Often associated with expenses related to maintaining and managing a waitlist.

Registration fees

 Generally paid when the child is enrolled in child care and may be applied to first month's fees.

Consultation

Information was collected from:

- Cross jurisdictional scan of Canadian Provinces and Territories.
- Child Care Resource and Referral Programs
- Provincial Child Care Council

Provinces/Territories

- Only Ontario, Manitoba and Nunavut have taken steps to address waitlist fees:
 - Ontario banned waitlist fees in 2016
 - Manitoba introduced an online child care registry, un-refundable waitlist fees may not be charged; and
 - Nunavut child care providers do not charge waitlist fees

Data/Statistics

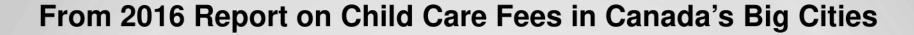
- Data on child care waitlist fees received from:
 - 2015 Parent Survey
 - 2016 Centre for Policy Alternatives Report: A Growing Concern: 2016 Child Care Fees in Canada's Big Cities.

Parent Child Care Survey

Results from 2015 Parent Child Care Survey

- 77% of respondents did not have to be waitlisted to secure a spot in their current child care arrangement.
 - Of those on a waitlist: 11% were in immediate need of care and 12% were waitlisted, but not in immediate need.
- Nearly half (47%) of respondents said they were not asked for any requirements in order to secure a place on the waitlist.
- 18% were registered on two waitlists.

2016 Report



Almost all Canadian cities (70%) report maintaining waitlists

- Percentage of centres maintaining waitlists in BC:
 - Vancouver 96%
 - Burnaby 80%
 - Richmond 74%
 - Surrey 25%
- Percentage of centres charging waitlists in cities in BC:
 - Vancouver 47%
 - Richmond 29%
 - Burnaby 27%
 - Surrey 6%

Fees Charged

Waitlist Fees

- No verifiable data on waitlist fees charged and how those fees are used by child care providers.
- Anecdotally, fees charged range from \$15 to more than \$100 per child.
- Families placing multiple children on waitlists, have additional costs to pay for fees at multiple centres.
 - Parents have reported paying as much as \$300-\$400 in waitlist fees to over 8 different child care centres.



Data pending from Provider Profile Questionnaire

Questions asked to all Providers in receipt of CCOF

Waitlist Fees

- To place a child on your waitlist, what is required of parents?
- If you charge a fee/deposit to place a child's name on your waitlist, do you
 provide parents with a written explanation of the refund policy for the
 fee/deposit?
- If you charge a fee/deposit to place a child's name on your waitlist, is the fee deposit refundable?

Registration Fees

When registering a child for your program what are required of parents?

Does paying for a waitlist fee constitute a pre-payment?

Question: Does paying for a waitlist fee constitute a pre-payment?

 If yes, can s. 19 of CCALA be applied to require child care providers to provide parents with a waitlist fee refund policy

Findings:

- Section 19 does not provide remedy for parents paying waitlist fees;
- Section 19 does not require a refund to be issued, but only a refund policy to be created and provided;
- A fee to be put on a waitlist does not fall within the criteria in s. 19 of the CCALA (does not = a prepayment for services);
- Difficult to characterize being put on a waitlist as a service; and
- May be protection for the parents who do not have waitlist fees refunded under the Consumer Protection Act

Consumer Protection, Act

- Consumer Protection BC does not regulate child care.
- Consumer Protection usually refers parents back to MoH or MCFD if there are issues.

Potential application of "Future Performance Contract"

Signed contracts re: waitlist fees; if breach of contract,
 Consumer Protection may offer assistance.

No signed contract

 Child Care Providers who do not have contracts and take a waitlist fee may be considered to be in breach of the Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act. Page 13 of 14

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Asked to All Providers in Receipt of CCOF						
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Questions Asked to All Providers in Receipt of CCOF	Family providers			Group providers		_
	Yes	No	Blank	Yes	No	
To place a child on your waitlist, parents are required to: Pay a						
fee/deposit	170		1,508	564		
To place a child on your waitlist, parents are required to:						
Register at a program affiliated with an institution (school,						
church, employer, etc.)	15		1,663	77	934	
If you charge a fee/deposit to place a child's name on your						
waitlist, do you provide parents with a written explanation of the						
refund policy for the fee/deposit	327	442	909	760		
If you charge a fee/deposit to place a child's name on your						
waitlist, is the fee/deposit: Refundable if parents choose to take						
their child off the waitlist	95		1,583	155		
If you charge a fee/deposit to place a child's name on your						
waitlist, is the fee/deposit: Refundable if the child is not						
enrolled because a space does not become available	106		1,572	233		
If you charge a fee/deposit to place a child's name on your						
waitlist, is the fee/deposit: Refundable once the child is enrolled	55		1,623	65		
If you charge a fee/deposit to place a child's name on your						
waitlist, is the fee/deposit: Deducted from the first month's						
child care fees when the child is enrolled	186		1,492	221		
If you charge a fee/deposit to place a child's name on your						
waitlist, is the fee/deposit: Not refundable regardless of the						
circumstances, because the fee/deposit is only to hold a space on	62		1,616	295		
When registering a child for your program, parents are required						
to: Pay a registration /administrative fee	422		1,256	1,848		
When registering a child for your program, parents are required						
to: Pay the first and last month's child care fees	119		1,559	286		
When registering a child for your program, parents are required						
to: Register at a program affiliated with an institution (school,						
church, employer etc.)	16		1,662	68		
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Notes:						
There were 3,119 group and 1,678 family providers that participa	ated in the F	Parent Surve	ey.			