



## ***Funding cuts to Québec's Centres de la petite enfance (Early childhood centres) / Coupes dans les centres de la petite enfance***

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MLA for Vachon and Official Opposition's spokesperson for Employment, Solidarity and Family issues, Camil Bouchard strongly opposes the Charest Government's intention to reduce by an additional 60 million dollars the funding to Québec's CPE system.

The Minister Carole Théberge, responsible for Family, Elders and Status of Women, is constantly repeating that quality child care is a priority. However the cuts she has been implementing for close to three years now prove an obstacle to increasing the quality of care and services delivered to the children. "Has the Minister already forgotten the findings of the Grandir en qualité study?" asks Bouchard.

"Since coming into office, the Minister has cut close to 200M dollars in funding to child care: 70M in direct funding, 104M from parents' pockets by increasing child care fees from 5 to 7 dollars, 8M from Family Child Care Provider income and 10M in the form of a tax for good administration. And now, there would be an additional cut of 60M. Absolutely unacceptable!" says Bouchard.

CPE have no margin left to apply these new budget cuts. Indeed, staff remuneration is set through a national wage scale, cuts in teacher positions are inapplicable without foregoing teacher/child ratio and already the CPE's are getting minimum funding for administration and maintenance.

The parent boards (2/3 of the boards are parents) have already reduced to a minimum all spending. "If the Minister were administrator in a CPE, where would she cut? Would it be the food, the quality of care or the business hours? Those are the choices the parents are left with" concludes Bouchard.