

Child care cash not enough, says Peel [CA-ON]

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EXCERPTS

A \$5.3 million boost from Queen's Park and Ottawa that will pay for 400 new subsidized child care spaces in Peel is not nearly enough to meet the huge demand here.

That's the assessment of Peel Region social services authorities who say the cash, while welcomed, "...ignores the impact that population growth has had on demand," for child care services in Mississauga and Brampton.

In fact, it would take at least \$10 million from senior levels of government to address the current need here, said Peel Region Chair Emil Kolb. A chronic funding shortfall has left 2,164 children in Peel on a waiting list for subsidized child care, said the Region's Social Services Commissioner David Szwarc.

Kolb said the need for subsidized child care in Peel has never been greater.

In a letter to Community and Social Services Minister Sandra Pupatello, Kolb said Peel's population is growing by about 25,000 people each year and many are low-income families who need help paying for child care.

"With one in five children (in Peel) in poverty, the need for subsidized child care has never been greater," said Kolb.

Regional Council will send a letter to the ministry demanding more money to meet the need in Peel.

Peel's \$5.3 million will pay for 330 new subsidized child care spaces and another 70 spaces for children with special needs.

Some of the cash will also be used to reduce user fees for families in need and to hire four new child care workers.

- reprinted from the Metroland