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Daycare declines to take Ottawa nurse's son over other parents' COVID-19 fears



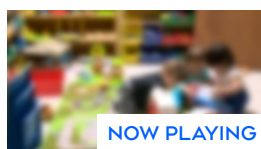
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Daycares decline family over COVID fears

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OTTAWA -- An Ottawa nurse whose son was refused daycare over COVID-19 concerns has been flooded with offers from members of the community to take care of him following CTV News Ottawa's story yesterday.

After our story aired on CTV News at Six, a number of viewers wrote in saying they would be willing to look after two-year-old Grayson Marchand.



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Kristen Martin has been facing another challenge during the COVID-19 pandemic besides her work as a nurse, trying to find a daycare that will take her two-year-old son.

"She just expressed concerns to us that other parents at the daycare were worried about my job and perceived exposure to COVID-19 and their child's risk of contracting it through my two-year-old son," said Martin, mother of two-year-old Grayson and a nurse in an Ottawa hospital emergency department.

The home daycare Grayson attended shut down when COVID-19 hit. Martin said the provider recently told her it might not reopen after the pandemic, over concerns associated with the virus and those who are right in the middle of it.

"It was really hard to take," Martin said. "Personally, I felt stigmatized, and it's hard having my child be excluded because of what I do for a living when I'm really just out there trying to help people."

The family found another daycare provider, who said she had a spot for Grayson but the next day sent Martin and her husband, David Marchand, a text saying that while she had no problem with Grayson attending the daycare, most parents would not be comfortable.

The text read, in part, "I have two children in my care who have very low immune systems. While I think the risk is very low, they don't feel the same way. I am so very sorry and wish there was something more I could do to help."

CTV News is not naming the daycare providers. They have not responded to requests for comment.

The City of Ottawa has opened emergency daycares for children of essential workers, including front-line health-care workers and first responders. Grayson's name has been on the waiting list for weeks.

The city of Ottawa says 73 children are currently attending the emergency child care centres with 92 kids on the waiting list.

Until they find a spot, Marchand will remain off work, which is taking a financial toll.

"We've always worked with infectious diseases including tuberculosis, measles, flesh-eating bacteria so why is it only now that I'm being refused care for my child?" said Martin.

Marchand said others may be facing the same situation and they wanted to share their story to create awareness.

"As professionals, they're taking the highest degree of precautions and protocols to make sure everybody's safe," said Marchand. "She doesn't want to bring that back to our family. Not only that, we care about every other [child] at the daycare as much as ours, you know?"

Martin and her husband say they're grateful and will be conducting interviews to find the right fit for their family. They say other healthcare workers have contacted them saying they've





experienced the same thing.

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Kristen Martin, a nurse, and her husband David Marchand say they are struggling to find a day care provider for their two-year-old son, Grayson, after some parents expressed fear about possible transmission of COVID-19. (Photo courtesy of David Marchand)

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