

Dear Senators and Senate Committee on Government Operations,

What do Police Departments, Fire Departments and School Teachers have in common with Child Care Programs?

None of them are regulated by the Office of Professional Regulation otherwise known as OPR.

Police Departments across the State of Vermont are monitored through the Vermont State Police Support Services including The Internal Affairs Unit and Office of Professional Standards. Fire Departments are monitored by the Vermont Department of Public Safety, Division of Fire Safety. Teachers are overseen by the Vermont Agency of Education, (AOE), and the Vermont Standards Board of Professional Educators.

Child Care Programs are at a minimum regulated and monitored by the Vermont Child Development Division, (CDD), of the Department for Children and Families, (DCF). These programs, (if they are a 2-5 STAR program), are also overseen by Vermont's STep Ahead Recognition System, (STARS), monitored by DCF of the CDD as well as by Vermont's System for Program Access to Resources for Quality Supports, (SPARQ's) which is funded by the CDD and administered by the Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children, (VTAEYC). Programs that are participating in Universal Pre-k, (UPK), are also overseen by their local school district and the Agency of Education. If any of these programs participate in the Child and Adult Food Care Program, (CACFP) , they must report to a sponsor that reports to the federal program before reimbursement is provided to these child care programs for serving nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children. If a program receives child care payments for eligible families from the Child Care Financial Assistance Program, (CCFAP) , the lead oversight agency is the Vermont Agency of Human Services, Department for Children's and Families.

I mention all of the above to give you a glimpse of the oversight agencies we child care programs report to and are observed by. I am not trying to confuse anyone with the acronyms used but if you are, this is just a small sample that we childcare professionals keep track of. This info does not include water testing, lead abatement if your program is in a building built before 1969, fingerprinting/background checks, keeping daily attendance records, evacuation drills, curriculum, observing the children daily and recording if they have a bruise or scratch, parent/provider conferences or the after-hours texts we answer from families, injury reports should a child get hurt in our program, CPR/First Aid, Fire Extinguisher and Furnace Inspections, Medication administration logs if we have to give a child any medication, daily cleaning after we close at 5:00 or 6:00 p.m., speaking with social workers when we make a mandated report of abuse or neglect, the revolving door of Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapists that many of us have in our programs for the best interest of the child/children. The yearly educational trainings that we take after hours and

on the weekends so we do not inconvenience families in our care. Yet we often inconvenience our own families so we can continue in this field.

I urge you to consider that an added oversight agency, licensing fees, and more requirements from professional childcare providers is not in the best interest of our profession just so the Office of Professional Regulation and the Vermont Agency on the Education of Young Children can create five more staff positions. We work long, hours and get up every day to continue caring for the children in our care. Adding a college degree with course loads and less time with our loved ones over a four to six year period will add undue stress to our daily workload. Please vote No to Bill S. 119.

If 2020 Covid taught us anything, it would be that when schools were shut down across this state and country, WE childcare programs were OPEN for all essential persons. We were open because WE already ARE PROFESSIONALS!

Thank you for your time and consideration.

M. Scott
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