

REGION OF OTTAWA-CARLETON  
RÉGION D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT  
RAPPORT

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Our File/N/Réf.                    03-07-00-0127  
Your File/V/Réf.

DATE                                    28 March 2000

TO/DEST.                            Community Services Committee

FROM/EXP.                         Committee Co-ordinator

SUBJECT/OBJET                    **USE OF SEAT BELTS - REGIONAL CHILD CARE CENTRES**

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### **REPORT RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Community Services Committee receive this presentation for information.**

### **BACKGROUND**

Attached is correspondence dated March 23, 2000 from Catherine Louli to Committee Chair A. Munter, asking that the Committee consider investigating the possibility of introducing seat belts on vehicles used for day trips with regional day care centres.

Chair Munter has requested that this information be placed on the Agenda for the 6 April 2000 meeting.

*M. J. Beauregard*

Attach: (1)

Alex Munter  
Chairperson of the Community Services Committee  
RMOC  
111 Lisgar street  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K2P 2L7

March 23, 2000

Mr Munter,

I am writing this letter to request of the Community Services Committee to investigate safety rules to make sure that children in day-care centres are safely transported whenever they leave the centre on planned outings.

My daughter Emma attends one of the RMOC day-care centres – Saint Luke's. Almost 2 years ago Saint Luke's gave notice of a day trip to a local pumpkin patch. My spouse and I agreed to the day trip. The morning of the trip we arrived at the day-care and asked the providers where we should wait so that we could help in buckling in her car seat. My daughter was 2 years old and just under 30 pounds. The day-care informed me that there would be no use of car seats as there were no seatbelts on the bus that had been booked to take the toddlers and the pre-schoolers to the pumpkin patch.

As you may be aware all children under 45 pounds are required to be in car seats when in a vehicle. It seemed incredible to me, that the day-care would not provide a vehicle that could accommodate a car seat.

My spouse phoned in to his work and alerted his employer to what was going on. He got the morning off and took our daughter to the pumpkin patch. He is lucky his employer immediately understood what was happening. Ever since that day I have tried in vain to start a discussion on the need for vehicles equipped with seat belts to be used for day-care centres for their day trips. At a minimum this should be considered for the 16 or 17 regional day-care sites.

In my research on this topic I discovered that only 1-day care centre, the Glebe day care centre, has a bus with seat belts and can accommodate car seats. This is remarkable. Is it coincidence that in an affluent community we have a day care centre that has their own bus with the necessary safety features to transport children? The company most other day care centres use is Laidlaw. When I asked Laidlaw if they had buses that had seatbelts they said only in the 2 front rows but not the other rows. When I asked what it would cost to equip the busses with seat belts I was informed that there had never been a request for seat belts.

Emma is lucky, she has 2 parents and we juggle our schedules and have good employers that allow us to take time off so that our daughter can enjoy day trips like the other children. I was not and continue to not be able to sacrifice the safety of my daughter because no one (outside of the Glebe day care centre) thought of the safety implications of transporting toddlers and pre-schoolers without car seats.

Considering the recent events in Quebec, perhaps the services committee would consider investigating the possibility of introducing seat belts on vehicles used for day trips with Regional day-care centres.

Respectfully submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louli', written in a cursive style.

Catherine Louli

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