B.C. celebrates Child Care Month

VICTORIA – The B.C. government is proclaiming the month of May as Child Care Month to celebrate the work of thousands of caring and committed child-care operators and early childhood educators throughout the province.

B.C. will celebrate Child Care Month in many ways. On May 11, the annual Child Care Awards of Excellence – honouring child-care professionals, organizations and local governments who have demonstrated outstanding service to children and families – will be held in Vancouver.

On May 17, B.C. will celebrate Child Care Provider Appreciation Day, which acknowledges the valuable service child-care providers deliver – and the significant contributions they make to children’s development – through local appreciation events.

Every day, child-care providers are helping children climb on jungle gyms, introducing the joy of music through songs and reading children’s stories that pique young imaginations. Child-care providers offer babies, toddlers and children safe, high-quality care environments where they can learn through play.

Aboriginal child-care centres provide cultural programming – such as singing, drumming and language-learning opportunities – to help connect Aboriginal children to their cultural roots.

The child-care and early learning system is actively supporting parents of young children to work or go to school, providing more than 100,000 licensed child-care spaces throughout the province. Parents can decide from a range of child-care options that meet their needs, including group child care (centre based), family child care (based in a family home), preschool, before- and after-school care and care in their own home.

B.C.’s network of child-care and early learning supports also provides thousands of jobs, currently employing more than 12,000 licensed early childhood educators and nearly 5,000 early childhood educator assistants.

British Columbia has 34 post-secondary training institutes offering early childhood education programs.
Quotes:

Mary McNeil, Minister of Children and Family Development –

“Many families depend on child care so that they can pursue career and education opportunities, knowing their children are safe and well-cared-for.”

“During Child Care Month – and throughout the year – we thank the child-care community for providing young children with a wonderful and healthy early learning environment where they are encouraged and inspired to grow, learn, socialize with other children and have fun.”

Colleen Kensit, operator of Peter Pan Preschool and Daycare in Victoria –

“I am very fortunate to have such a fulfilling job, where I can engage with children and see their smiling faces every day. My favourite part of the day is interacting with the children, watching their creativity and imaginations grow.”

“Child Care Month is terrific because it recognizes and values our profession and all of the hard work we do. Many professions are recognized for a day, but it’s nice to be recognized for an entire month!”

Wayne Robertson, chair of Provincial Child Care Council –

“Child-care providers across the province provide such a valuable service to children and families, and often are so cherished that they become an extension of the family. I am pleased to be part of the celebrations during Child Care Month to recognize these outstanding individuals and the significant work they do year-round.”

Quick Facts:

- There are over 5,000 licensed child-care facilities in communities across B.C.
- Approximately 55 per cent of licensed facilities are group child care and approximately 45 per cent are family child care.
- In Budget 2011, government provided $365 million over three years for full-day kindergarten for five-year-olds. This is improving early learning while reducing child-care pressure on families.
- In addition, the government made a regulation change last year increasing the maximum capacity of after-school child-care programs, resulting in the creation of more spaces.
- The Ministry of Children and Family Development will invest $296 million on child care in 2012-13, a 40 per cent increase since 2000-01.
- Child-care subsidies are available to support low- and moderate-income families, helping approximately 50,000 children and their families every year.
Parents looking for child care in their community can get help through their local Child Care Resource and Referral Program (CCRR). CCRRs offer quality child-care referrals, resources and support in over 400 B.C. communities.

Learn More:

- If you are a parent and you want to find available child care in your neighbourhood or you’d like more information on the child-care subsidy program, go to: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/parents.htm
- If you are a child-care operator and would like more information on funding and services offered through the government, go to: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/providers.htm

Contact: Shae Greenfield
Media Relations Manager
Ministry of Children and Family Development
250 356-1639
250 508-8403 (cell)

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