



Early Learning and Child Care

MONTHLY E-NEWS

JUNE 2024

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A Message from Sarah Whiteford, Assistant Deputy Minister

The start of summer offers many opportunities to celebrate the diversity of Manitoba communities. On May 28, 2024, a special historic ceremony recognizing Pride Month took place inside the Legislative Building, featuring music by the Rainbow Harmony Choir. This was the first time Pride has been celebrated inside the Legislative Building, celebrating diversity, inclusivity, and the rights of members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community.



A groundbreaking Pride celebration at the Manitoba Legislative Building on May 28, 2024

June is also Indigenous History Month and National Indigenous Peoples Day is on **June 21**. These are important moments to reflect on the history and contemporary contributions of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples, and to celebrate the vibrant and diverse Indigenous cultures in Manitoba and across Canada.

Early learning and child care programs play an important role in introducing diversity and inclusion concepts to children, celebrating our unique difference, as well as our individual and collective strengths. Facilities across Manitoba are creating safe and inclusive environments, where all children and their families have a sense of belonging.

The Manitoba government has a [policy statement on gender diversity and inclusion](#) for both children in early learning and child care programs and students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 schools. Work is also being initiated to consult on the creation of an Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Policy Framework.



In recognition of these celebrations and the important changes we are working together to support, our department staff recently took part in a variety of learning and engagement activities throughout the month of June. These opportunities included visits to early learning and child care facilities, professional development and training, and volunteering. It has been a wonderful month of learning and connection.

ELCC Staff came out on Friday, May 31, June 7 and 14 to support the UofM Rainbow Garden with a big helping of elbow grease! Left to right: Terry Smith, Child Care Coordinator; Nicole Goderis, Child Care Coordinator; and Eden Tomczyk, Supervisor, Licensing and Compliance



Moving Forward on Child Care Priorities

Canadian Centre for Child Protection 'Commit to Kids' Abuse Prevention Program

The department has partnered with the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (C3P) to deliver an online child sexual abuse prevention training program for all child care staff in Manitoba who work in licensed infant, preschool, nursery, school-age, and home-based programs. The program is intended to create a model for early childhood educators to help detect and prevent child abuse in Canada.

Beginning May 9, 2024, the training program will provide access to a suite of online course material, as well as supporting digital and print resources, to identify possible child abuse in children from infancy to 12 years old. Upon completion of this new, mandatory training, child care professionals in Manitoba will be better equipped with the necessary knowledge and tools to proactively mitigate the risk of child abuse.

The program includes the "Commit to Kids" Child Sexual Abuse Prevention certificate program, delivered in eight online modules, as well as the "Commit to Kids" Foundational Information for Safeguarding Children from Sexual Abuse online course, and a variety of printed resources that will be distributed to child care facilities at no cost in the coming weeks.

Two additional resources developed by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection were recently distributed to support the child care sector and ensure staff are comfortable responding to highly sensitive situations with care and confidence. These resources included "Sensitive Topic Considerations for Staff" and "Sexualized Behaviour in Children."

The Child Abuse Prevention Training has been developed in a partnership among the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, the Province of Manitoba, and the Government of Canada, with funding provided under the Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement.

To learn more about the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (CP3), visit their [website](#).

For details about the CP3 program and its implementation in your facility, view the [circular](#).

UPDATE

\$10-a-Day Child Care for School-age Children for Non-school Days

As per Budget 2024, \$10-a-day child care for school-age children on non-school days will be implemented for 2024/2025; however, it will not occur for summer. Details on the implementation timing, processes, and supports will be provided later in fall 2024.

The Child Care Subsidy Program continues to be available for eligible families to ensure that cost is not a barrier to quality early learning child care. Please continue to share information about the program with families. For more information, visit the [Child Care Subsidy Program](#).

Spotlight on Success

Shaughnessy Park Hosts Successful Celebrations

Located in Winnipeg's northwest quarter in Burrows-Keewatin, Shaughnessy Park Day Care is situated in Shaughnessy Park School and provides care for approximately 83 children each day. This year, the Centre organized a special Family Day over spring break, followed by a Mother's Day celebration in May.

Understanding time is a factor for working families, the centre allowed families to come at any convenient time throughout Family Day, with a snack station available for parents to enjoy a cookie and juice with their child while they completed their art projects. The families were excited to be able to take home their completed projects.

Spring break activities included a carnival with games, prizes, face painting, and candy floss, as well as "Dinosaur Adventure Island" with a genuine paper mâché volcano powered by vinegar and baking soda.

"What a wonderful experience," said Miranda Lashuk, Executive Director, "The children's faces were filled with excitement when they experienced the island erupt with foaming bubbles. The vibrant colours were amazing to see."

For Mother's Day, Shaughnessy Park created an art gallery featuring all of the beautiful art the children had created during the year. The children made welcome signs, and decorations and balloons were hung up by staff. Mothers were welcomed to come in and make 'floating tea cups' while their children served refreshments and cookies. Each room in the centre displayed art materials such as bird houses, canvases, lanterns, and more. Lashuk notes that these small events have a powerful, positive impact on kids, bringing together both home and child care in a positive way.

"Children are so excited to have members of their family there to share a few hours at the centre with them."



Children and families celebrate Spring Break and Mother's Day at Shaughnessy Park Daycare.

Enhancing Outdoor Play

All children love having a safe and vibrant green space in which to play, and time outdoors is proven to enhance mental, physical, and emotional well-being. Home provider Jean Sangalang used funding from the [Quality Enhancement Grant](#) to convert her backyard into a safe, high-quality play space for the children in her care.

Sangalang constructed a wooden play structure surrounded by artificial turf, along with a number of smaller structures including a play kitchen and areas for sensory play. A pergola and deck provide a shaded rest area and a place for activities like story and circle time, as well as lunch and snack breaks.

“Through the quality enhancement grant, I have transformed my backyard into a play area that perfectly aligns with my childcare philosophy,” says Sangalang, “Providing high-quality and safe childcare services to the children enrolled in my facility.”



Jean Sangalang's Home Care Outdoor Play Space, funded through the Quality Enhancement Grants

The backyard upgrade has also created more efficiency for Sangalang's day-to-day work, leading to a more productive and enjoyable childcare environment for the children and the provider.



“The backyard was designed with safety as a top priority and includes a transparent roofed deck that provides good shade, keeping the children safe from heat exhaustion and sunburn. We've also implemented additional safety measures such as playground mulch and secure fencing. The covered deck also allows us to continue our activities even if it rains, providing a safe and uninterrupted play environment for the children.”

Sangalang says that children and parents have given positive feedback on the improvements to the outdoor play area, and noted the beneficial impact on the children's mood, behaviour, and overall well-being.

“I am a firm believer in the significant benefits of outdoor play for children's development, and this transformation is a tangible testament to that belief.”

Jean Sangalang recently won the Exceptional Family Child Care Provider Award for 2024 at the Manitoba Child Care Association's annual awards ceremony.

If you would like to share some of your facility's success stories, email us at CDInfo@gov.mb.ca with the subject line "Success Story." We will continue to feature some of the interesting and innovative projects in future editions!

Meet the ELCC Team

Maxine Lam, Senior Policy Analyst

I graduated from the University of Manitoba in 2015 with a Master's Degree in Community Nutrition. That led to The Breakfast Club of Canada, where I worked closely with schools in Winnipeg, Northern Manitoba, Northern Saskatchewan, and Ontario.

I've always worked in inner-city communities, often working with kids as a lifeguard or volunteering. Creating relationships with people in those communities fueled my passion for children's health and well-being and brought me to study community nutrition. My master's research project was looking at the sustainability of school nutrition programs in Manitoba, in partnership with the Province. In that experience working with government, I saw that I could make a positive impact on the things that I care about most.

My journey with the child care sector began as a new mom looking for child care and at the same time going to work for the Early Learning and Child Care Division. It'll be two years in July now, actually.

I'm enjoying my work with our federal partners, but it's still new to me. Prior to this, I've never really had to sit down and negotiate anything, so being part of those conversations with Canada and really learning about the work that goes into our [Federal Agreements and Action Plans](#) is fascinating. It seems daunting at first, intimidating, but working through that has been great and our leadership team has shown me the ropes.



Maxine Lam, Senior Policy Analyst, Early Learning and Child Care

I have a five-year-old and a two-year-old. We enjoy traveling and we're really excited for our first road trip this summer. We have a huge extended family here in Winnipeg and we get a lot of support from them.

Being a new mom, I want to mention (and I was telling this to my friends) my appreciation for the professionals in the sector. Much patience, dedication, and extra time are needed to really foster the kids in their programs. People don't realize the time it takes for educators and caregivers, the extra effort it takes to make a parent and a family feel welcome. We often take for granted the work that goes into creating that safe environment. I'm just very grateful for that.

Listening to MANITOBA'S EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

To celebrate ECE Week, we reached out to CCAs and ECE IIs and IIIs across Manitoba to get their thoughts on what a career in early childhood education means to them. For the next few months, we'll continue to feature some of the educators we heard from!

...**KASSIDY ALLARD, CCA**
Li Pchi Pwayson, St. Laurent

"I love being an ECE because of the intrinsic rewards of shaping minds, fostering a love for learning, and being a part of their growth journey that make this profession deeply fulfilling."

Announcements and Reminders

ECE Named Indigenous Educator of the Month

"When you do what you love, and love what you do, it brings out the best in you."

– Cheryl Lynn Dyck

This May, **Cheryl Lyn Dyck**, ECE II at Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Child Development Centre in Winnipeg, was named as the first ever Early Childhood Educator to receive this recognition! Read her [interview with Indigenous Excellence](#).

The [Indigenous Educator of the Month](#) series celebrates Indigenous educators in Kindergarten to Grade 12 and early childhood education, and aims to promote careers in education for students and youth. Since 2010, an Indigenous Educator of the Month has been recognized each month from September to June by Education and Early Childhood Learning's Indigenous Excellence Division. Beginning in 2024, this important recognition was expanded to include Early Childhood Educators. If you are interested in nominating someone, or if you would like to put your own name forward, please contact Wanda Spence at 204-945-4653 or email wanda.spence@gov.mb.ca.

Retirement Benefit Changes

Changes have been made to support more flexibility in the retirement benefit program that will allow child care professionals to continue supporting the children and families in their programs, should they wish to do so.

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning offers a retirement benefit program available to eligible employees who work in a licensed, non-profit child care centre or a licensed family or group child care home in Manitoba. The employee or licensee is eligible for a one-time payment equal to four paid days for each year they have worked in licensed child care, up to 10 years (maximum of 40 days).

This program had a condition that the retiree could not return to work at the same facility for at least six months after retirement. In response to sector feedback, effective July 1, 2024, this condition will be removed from the retirement benefit form. This means recipients of the retirement benefit can return to work at their centre at any time after retirement. Individuals will continue to only be eligible to receive the benefit one time. The removal of this condition also applies to any retirees who received the retirement benefit in the last six months, meaning these individuals are also permitted to return to work at any time.

Manitoba was the first province outside of Quebec to introduce pension and retirement benefits for the early learning and child care workforce. This change not only supports recruitment and retention efforts but enables smoother leadership transitions, with former Directors able to provide mentorship following their retirement.

Learn more about the Early Learning and Child Care Retirement Benefit and how to apply by visiting: [Registered Pension Plans and Retirement Supports for Manitoba's Early Learning and Child Care Workforce](#).

Summer Safety Resources

With summer here, facilities are encouraged to review the early learning and child care summer safety information on supervision, field trips, water safety, and sun safety, as well as enhancing their program and neighbourhood outings. Distribute these information sheets to staff and/or post them as a reminder and for quick reference throughout the summer:

- [Count Your Children Information Sheet](#) (PDF)
- [Sun Safety Information Sheet](#) (PDF)
- [Water Safety Information Sheet](#) (PDF)
- [Experiences and Outings Information Sheet](#) (PDF)
- [Field Trip Information Sheet](#) (PDF)

Please refer to all health and safety regulations and remember that proper planning and supervision are critical to ensuring everyone's safety. If you have any questions, please contact your child care coordinator.



2024/2025 Wage Grid, Effective July 1, 2024

As announced on May 3, 2024, Manitoba and Canada are providing a total funding contribution of \$10.9 million to support an increase to the Wage Grid Supplement effective July 1, 2024. This increase provides a 2.75 percent increase to the overall revenue generated per space and supports a 2.75 percent increase to the Starting Point and Target wages on the Wage Grid.

The increase to the Wage Grid Supplement effective July 1, will be included in the July 1 operating grant payment to facilities.

For more information, view the [2024/2025 Wage Grid](#) and view the [circular for centres](#) and the [circular for homes](#) for additional details and access to implementation resources for your facility.

TIP
The [Board Guidelines Wage Grid Implementation Tool Kit](#) has been updated to include the increase in base operating grants effective April 1, 2024, and the increase to the Wage Grid Supplement effective July 1, 2024, to assist funded centres and nursery schools when preparing their annual budget.

Help keep Board of Directors contact information up-to-date: To support communication efforts with our sector, please ensure that Board contact information and email addresses for all board members are entered and up-to-date in the [Child Care Online: Record of Board of Directors](#) section.

Employment Opportunities Added to Manitoba Child Care Search

Recent updates to the [Manitoba Child Care Search](#) include a new feature added to help support workforce recruitment efforts. As of June 24, 2024, a new information field about current employment opportunities at your facility has been added to the Manitoba Child Care Search weekly update request sent each Monday. If your facility has staff vacancies and you choose to include this information in your weekly update, Manitoba Child Care Search will show that your facility is currently recruiting CCAs and/or ECEs. Prospective candidates will be directed to your facility contact information to learn more about the potential employment opportunities.

The Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act: Declaration Due

The [Public Sector Compensation Disclosure Act](#) requires annual information about funding received from Government, including funding provided to support wages.

Eligible facilities are required to comply with the provisions of the Act, including the Declaration form, which should have been signed and returned to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Learning as of **May 31, 2024**.

If you have **not** yet submitted the form, please do so as soon as possible, or contact elccfinance@gov.mb.ca for further direction.

For details of this requirement, view the [circular](#) or download the [declaration form](#).

ECE Week Celebrations

It's not too late! Would you like to share some of your facility's ECE Week photos? Email us at CDInfo@gov.mb.ca with the subject line "ECE Week 2024" and you could be featured in our next edition!

Early Learning and Child Care Division Update

Minister and Deputy Minister Celebrate Week of the Early Childhood Educator

To acknowledge and celebrate the thirty-third annual Week of the Early Childhood Educator (April 28 to May 4), Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister Nello Altomare and Deputy Minister Brian O'Leary visited staff from the Early Learning and Child Care Division on the afternoon of April 30, 2024.

"Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning is privileged to have such a diverse team that includes the expertise of certified Early Childhood Educators, serving in roles ranging from licensing, inclusion, policy, IT, and senior leadership," said Deputy Minister O'Leary. He added that our department was proud to recognize Manitoba's early childhood educators during this special week of celebration.



Clockwise from 12 o'clock: Signe Hanson, Executive Director, Capital and Space Expansion, Susan Emerson, Executive Director Provincial Operations, Deputy Minister Brian O'Leary, Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister Nello Altomare, Nneka Onyenekwu, Executive Director, Funding and Financial Assistance; Maria Verbrugge, Child Care Coordinator, Jon Bitton, Child Care Coordinator, Susan Emerson, and Deputy Minister O'Leary; Esther Ezekwem, Child Care Coordinator and Minister Altomare; Brigitte A'Bear, Manager, Child Care Subsidy, Jiefang Zhao, Subsidy Clerk, Minister Altomare and Deputy Minister O'Leary; Matthias Rust, Director, Strategic Policy and Intergovernmental Relations and Deputy Minister O'Leary; Crystal Simmons, Policy Analyst and Minister Altomare; Minister Altomare and Lisa Ludwig, Manager, Licensing and Compliance; (centre image) Minister Altomare, Jan Ranson, Supervisor, Licensing and Compliance, and Terry Smith, Child Care Coordinator.

Staffing Updates

We continue to welcome new staff into our division to support Manitoba's priorities for early learning and child care and support career growth and development of existing staff:

Samantha Holt has joined the Provincial Operations Branch as an Inclusion Support Program Coordinator with the Diversity and Inclusion unit, providing services to the Westman region. Samantha brings more than ten years of experience with Child Development Services in the Department of Families, Children's disABILITY Services, and holds a degree in Human Ecology.

Christine Hildebrandt, based in St-Pierre-Jolys, will transition within Provincial Operations Branch from the Licensing and Compliance Unit to the Diversity and Inclusion unit as Bilingual Inclusion Support Program Coordinator providing service to the Eastman area.

Ifeoma Okeke joined the Funding and Financial Assistance Branch as Financial Clerk on Tuesday, May 21. Ifeoma brings over eight years of private sector experience in accounting and financial reporting to ELCC. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting, and Master of Science degree in Finance and Investment Management.

Afolabi 'Fola' Adejumo joined the Funding and Financial Assistance Branch as a Financial Intern as part of the 12-month Leaders in Training Program (LTP) on Monday, April 29, and will spend the next six months with ELCC. Fola has over 20 years of experience in government, NGO, and private sector financial management with organizations such as the World Bank, and has previously served as a Fiscal Policy Advisor to the President of Nigeria. Fola holds a Bachelor of Science in Accounting, a Master of Science in Economics, a Master of Business Administration, and a PhD in Economic and Management Sciences.

Nadine Gosselin joined the Division as Executive Assistant in the Assistant Deputy Minister's Office on May 21. Nadine has extensive experience in the Manitoba government,

having worked as an Administrative Assistant and Executive Assistant for close to 20 years, including positions with the Bureau de l'éducation française, Education Administration Services, and the Assistant Deputy Minister's Office in the System Performance and Accountability Division. She holds a Diploma in Accounting, and operated her own francophone family child care facility for seven years.

Elizabeth Olorunfemi joined the Capital and Space Expansion Branch, Capital Development Unit as Policy Analyst on June 3, 2024. Elizabeth holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics, a Master of Science degree in International Business Economics, and is a certified Project Manager Professional (PMP). She brings over a decade of experience in financial and consultation work in the public and private sector.

Fehintola Akinbamidele joined the Policy and Planning Branch, Workforce Development Unit as Senior Policy Analyst on June 3, 2024. Fehintola holds a Bachelor of Science in International Law and Diplomacy and a Master of Arts in Political Studies. She has served as the Constituency Assistant for the Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Seniors, and Long-Term Care, and volunteers for the Red Cross.

Since May, the division has also bid farewell to **Scott Best**, Engagement Coordinator who returned to the Communications and Engagement Division, Senior Data Scientist **Reed Smith** who accepted a new position as a Labour, Research and Economic Analyst with the Manitoba Teachers' Society and **Janelle Blaikie**, Senior Capital Projects Manager, who has accepted a new opportunity in the Department of Economic Development, Investment, Trade and Natural Resources as Manager of Strategic Projects.

For the list of key department contacts, visit: www.edu.gov.mb.ca/aboutus.html.

We Value Your Input!

Would you like to share some of your facility's ideas or tell us about a program or celebration at your facility? Would you like to share a quote about why you love being an early childhood educator? Email us at CDInfo@gov.mb.ca with the subject line "ELCC Newsletter" and you could be featured in our next edition.

For general inquires about the Early Learning and Child Care Division:

Website: www.manitoba.ca/childcare

Email: cdcinfo@gov.mb.ca

Phone: 204-945-0776

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