



An Eye on Early Learning and Child Care in Manitoba

Summer 2011

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More Funding for Child Care

The Manitoba government recently announced major investments in child care, as part of Budget 2011. Over the next two years, the province will fund 46 capital projects, including 25 new centres and 21 renovated sites. This commitment will result in 54 new child care centres being built during Family Choices: Manitoba's Five-Year Agenda on Early Learning and Child Care.

Funding for 2,100 more child care spaces was also announced to give parents and

their children better access to child care.

More funding for 400 more nursery school spaces will reduce fees to \$5.00 from \$9.40 per child per session.

This will make it easier for children from low-income families to attend early childhood education programs.

This year's \$21.3 million investment in early childhood education will continue to improve services to Manitoba families and help give children a strong start.



Gena Harris - Director of Les Tournesols de St. Vital Inc.,
Theresa Oswald - Minister of Health, Premier Selinger

Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care

New Name, Same Program

The Manitoba Child Care Program is now called Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care (MELCC). The new name will better reflect the education and learning taking place in child care facilities across Manitoba. All correspondence and forms will now use this new name.



Let's Keep Summer Activities Safe

Follow the safety rules:

Direct supervision of children at all times is very important during field trips and water play.

Outdoor Play

- Develop specific plans for your centre to ensure appropriate supervision is provided for children at all times and based on individual needs.
- Record where children are at all times.
- Ensure staff members take a list of children's names with them.
- Count your children:
 - before leaving the centre
 - when arriving in the playground
 - several times while outside
 - before going back inside
 - upon re-entering the centre

Field Trips

- Take small, rather than large, groups of children on field trips.
- Provide a better ratio of adults to children to ensure children are properly supervised on outings. Even with very small groups, include at least two staff members, including an ECE II or III.
- Use extra safety measures, including:
 - **counting your children** frequently (before departing, upon arrival, several times during the outing, before returning and before exiting transportation)
 - providing children with hats, pinnies or t-shirts with the name of the centre
 - making sure each staff member is assigned, and accountable for, specific children

- providing a cell phone for staff to use during emergencies
- Consider onsite field trips to avoid busy parks or water areas (ex: use a sprinkler or soaker hose for children to cool off; use tents to go on a make believe camping trip)

Water Activities

Child care facilities must follow strict rules when children are in and around water. Drowning is the second-leading cause of unintentional death among Canadian children between the ages of one and four.

Child care providers must ensure supervision that protects the health and safety of each child by:

- assessing natural, or other hazards, to determine the appropriateness of the activity
- providing direct supervision and keeping children within arm's length distance at all times
- developing specific plans for supervision, including where centre staff are located, their specific duties and the children assigned to them
- following the City of Winnipeg adult to child ratios required at wading pools:

Age of Children	Adult to Child Ratio
Infant to 1 year	1 to 1
2 to 3 years	1 to 2
4 to 5 years	1 to 3
6 to 9 years	1 to 8
10 to 12 years	1 to 12

Remember

- Written parental approval is required before children can participate in water activities, such as visiting or using pools, wading pools, spray pads or the beach.
- If a public swimming pool, municipal wading pool or beach is used, direct supervision is required and a qualified pool attendant, beach patrol or lifeguard must be on duty.
- If a wading pool is used at a child care centre or home, direct supervision is required and the pool must be emptied immediately after use.



- If using a spray pad, rules posted at the park must be followed (ex: Children must wear shoes.)
- Even when a beach patrol or a lifeguard is on duty, child care centres and homes are strongly discouraged from taking children to the beach, due to the additional safety risks and supervision challenges.
- If a family or group child care home has an approved above-ground or in-ground pool:
 - Providers must meet the outdoor space requirements listed in the licensing manual
 - Keep a ratio of 1:1 when children are in or around the pool area.
 - Get written parental approval before allowing children in care to use the pool.

For more information, refer to the safety regulations and guidelines (best practices for centres) for supervision, outings and outdoor space.



online child care Registry Launched

In April 2010, the Manitoba government announced Canada's first province-wide Online Child Care Registry (OCCR) as part of *Family Choices: Manitoba's Five-Year Agenda for Early Learning and Child Care*.

Launched in Brandon on October 14, 2010, the OCCR will benefit Manitoba families and child care facilities. Families can use the online tool to search for licensed child care providers, based on their specific needs. Families can register online and put themselves on program waiting lists. They can also register with one or more child care providers and update their registration information any time. The OCCR is available in both English and French.

Child care providers now have their waiting lists online with accurate family and child information. These online wait lists remain current. Child care providers can use their online waiting list for enrolment planning and placing children when they have spaces available.

The OCCR will provide the Manitoba government with centralized information about child care needs across the province.

The Online Child Care Registry was launched region by region across Manitoba. These regions include Westman, Parkland, Northern, Interlake, Eastman and Central.

The online registry was introduced in Winnipeg, on June 20, 2011. Parents can register at www.manitoba.ca/onlinechildcareregistry or call toll free 1-888-213-4754 for more information.

Providers can learn more about the OCCR by going to www.gov.mb.ca/fs/providerupdate.



Gord Mackintosh, Minister of Family Services and Consumer Affairs launches the Online Child Care Registry at Fuzzy Bears Child Care Centre in Brandon.



Kokum's Little Friends Daycare Adopts Curriculum Framework

As part of the Brandon Friendship Centre, Kokum's Little Friends Daycare offers 32 preschool and four infant spaces to core area residents of Brandon. The centre is multicultural with staff speaking Ojibwa, Mandarin, Cree and English. The centre also cares for a number of children with additional support needs. Soon, the centre is planning to add another 12 infant spaces.

Director Anna-Kay Gordon says the centre's transformation began three years ago when it became obvious that positive change was needed. Anna-Kay identified problems with children's behaviour and toilet training, racial issues, language barriers and employee stress. She said she recognized the problems, but was not sure how to restore balance.

At this time, quality enhancement specialist Gerrie Stolz visited the centre to lead a workshop about curriculum framework and a staff discussion about their current practices and values. This session brought the staff together as a team. It confirmed that the staff had similar values and beliefs about child care. Everyone agreed that it was time for change. Gerrie was invited to visit the centre again to help staff develop strategies for change.

Anna-Kay revised the centre's schedule, so transitions were reduced from 17 to 9 per day. Free play was increased significantly and scheduled from 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Toilet training was staggered, so not as many children were using the bathroom at the same time. Children were invited to learn about new things and were not forced to participate in circle time. Children were given choices and time to be inventive. Staff – called teachers as part of Aboriginal culture – developed their program based on each child's interest. Emergent curriculum was introduced.

"Magic happened," says Anna- Kay.

Within a week of introducing changes, behaviour management issues stopped. She now receives an incident report once a month, instead of daily. Children are allowed to be creative. Teachers have time to observe children's curiosity and interests. This helps them design their programs. Parents are welcomed at the centre.

Every month, parents review their children's work with the centre's teacher. Teachers have two hours of planning time – one hour during nap time and a half an hour at the beginning and end of the day.

The centre also organized the children into multi-age groups, which improved interactions between children and teachers. At first, there was resistance to this idea. Some teachers thought the older children would overpower the younger ones. Other staff was concerned about not being true to the Aboriginal culture by mixing age groups identified as Turtles, Wolves, Wise Owls and Eagles. Teachers now see that mixing age groups resulted in promoting Aboriginal practices. Older children could be role models and help younger children in their group.

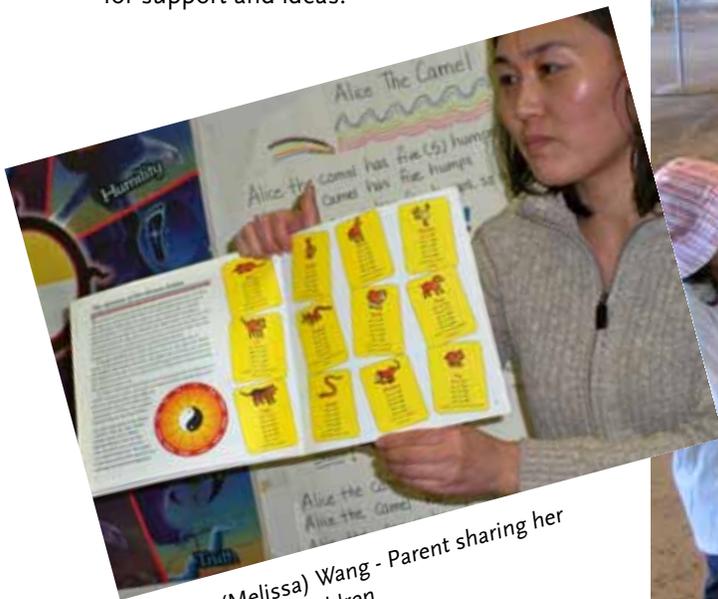
Three years later, Anna-Kay says the program is running smoothly. Teachers have learned a lot about themselves and are working more closely with each other. The centre now has 200 children on its waiting list though they used to have trouble filling spaces. Anna-Kay's advice to others working to strengthen a child-centred approach:

- Be open to feedback – listen to the truth and begin the change process.
- Provide leadership on the floor to guide new routines and model play-based learning.
- Include the team in introducing changes.
- Listen to staff's suggestions to find solutions and keep the lines of communication open.



Elder Frank Tacan Sr. or UNKA (grandfather in Ojibwa) sharing his story about the White Buffalo

- Provide training for the whole team.
- Ensure staff communicates well with parents to keep them informed about their child's development.
- Be patient with children and staff when introducing change. It takes time for everyone to adjust.
- Maintain your centre's unique core values.
- Recognize that change is hard work but the rewards are amazing.
- Work with your curriculum framework mentor for support and ideas.



Xianona (Melissa) Wang - Parent sharing her culture with the children

ECE II Rebecca Spraggs with the Wolves group on a field trip to see the airplanes that children saw flying above the centre



Pension Supports Child Care Providers

Starting in October, for a two-year period, child care employees will now need to pay only two per cent of their gross annual salary to receive a total pension contribution of eight per cent. Half of employees' four per cent pension contribution will be paid by the province as an incentive to sign up. Manitoba will also pay up to four per cent

of the employer's share of staff pensions.

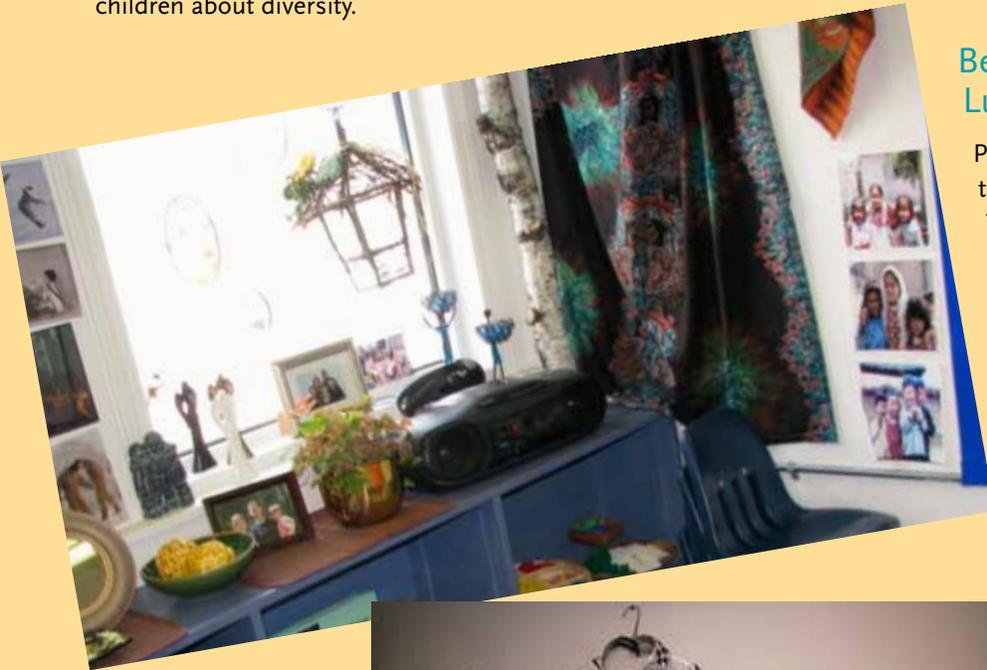
The province will also reimburse 50% of home child providers annual RRSP contribution up to \$1,700. To recognize the work of long-term child care providers in homes and centres, Manitoba will offer a retirement benefit equal to four days pay per year of service to a maximum

of 10 years at age 65 (or from 55 to 65 with age and years of service totalling at least 80 at retirement).

Pension support for the child care field began in December 2010. Manitoba is the only province, outside of Quebec, to offer a province-wide plan to the child care field.

Diversity

Diversity refers to the range of similarities and differences among children, staff and families. When children are exposed to diversity at an early age, they accept others more easily and feel they belong. These centres provide good examples of how to teach children about diversity.

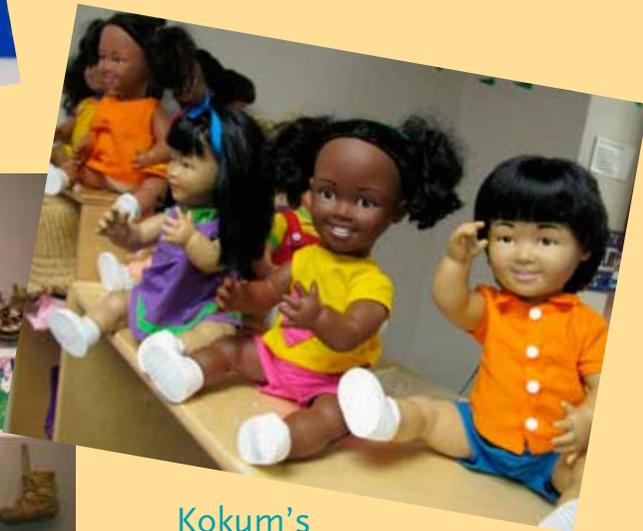


Beautiful Savior Lutheran School Inc.

Photos of children and their families promotes the diversity of the children attending the centre. They also provide opportunities for children to recognize themselves, which promotes positive self-identity and respect for others.

Univillage Student Day Care Inc.

Facilities are encouraging families to share stories and items about their own cultural traditions and celebrations. This helps children understand that everyone in their program and community is unique and valued.



Kokum's Little Friends Daycare (Brandon Friendship Centre Inc.)

Opportunities are provided for children to explore similarities and differences with a variety of play materials that represent Manitoba's diverse population. This is done in a variety of play areas with books, play food, dress-up clothes, puzzles and more.

Discovery Children's Centre Inc.

Diversity is incorporated into regular routines and experiences throughout the day, such as providing real, rather than toy, musical instruments, dancing to music of various cultures, serving ethnic foods at snack time, or using simple words such as "hello" or "goodbye" in different languages.



Create homelike, cozy spaces

The environment should be a place where children, families and the staff want to be, a place where adults and children are comfortable and enjoy spending time together. Some good examples are shown in these pictures:



Beautiful Savior Lutheran School Inc.

The indoor setting should be familiar, reflecting families and their cultures. Natural colors, plants, children's artwork and framed family photos create a homelike play area.



Gillam Preschool and Child Care Centre Cooperative Inc.

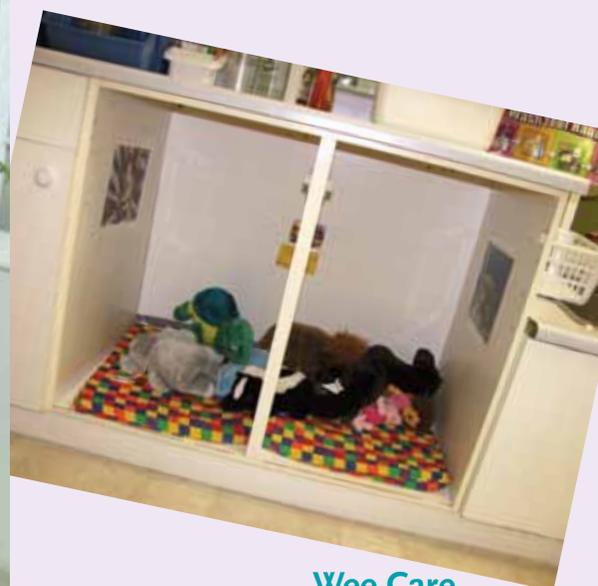
Comfortable seating, arranged in a way that is similar to a living room at home, encourages small group conversation that builds friendships.



Rainbow Day Nursery Inc.



Leila Day Care Centre Inc.



Wee Care Child Care Centre

Providing a space where a child can feel safe from interruptions by others gives them time to be alone and relax.

Items that are inexpensive and easy to find can be used to provide private space for one or two children that is visible and easy to supervise.

Learning through Play

Early Returns: Manitoba's ELCC Curriculum Framework for Preschool Centres and Nursery Schools defines curriculum as how we organize opportunities for children to learn and develop throughout the day. Child care centres providing meaningful, relevant play opportunities can enhance children's learning and development by offering a curriculum that:

- gives enough free play time for children to guide and direct their own play
- extends children's play
- provides play-based experiences

(Hirsh-Pasek, Golinkoff, *Why Play = Learning* 2008)

Research shows that children learn best through play.

During the last two years, quality enhancement specialists from Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care worked with staff to develop a play-based curriculum at 312 full time child care centres. These specialists - Kerri Pruden, Monica Lytwyn, Gerri Stolz and Robyn McEvoy – encouraged centres to offer a child-centred curriculum, based on play and discussion about their unique curriculum approach. Anne Grewar, child care resource co-ordinator at The Family Centre in Winnipeg, also worked with nursery schools that received enhanced funding to help them develop a play-based, curriculum plan.

Play is an activity that is obviously enjoyed by children. Despite its fun nature, play cannot be considered a waste of time or an activity to be put aside so children can focus on "real" learning. Play can provide unlimited possibilities for learning and development. Early childhood educators should focus on play in their planning and time with children.

(N. Howe, *Commentary on Smith, Pellegrini, Hirsh-Pasek and Golinkoff*)

Large blocks of free play time throughout the day are essential for children to become fully involved in meaningful experiences.

(Ferguson and Dettore,
To Play Or Not To Play: Is It Really a Question)

Opportunities to learn through play should be based on children's interests, abilities and needs. When children are

curious and interested, they actively participate and learn on their own. Research supports play-based curriculum.

"In a truly enriched and challenging environment created for and *with* the children, free play means extended opportunities for children to guide and direct their own play and, presumably, their own learning. While there is certainly room for some structured activity in the classroom... and guidance, we must not lose sight of the meaning and importance of free play for children." (Howe, 2009)

Through self-directed play, children can decide where, when and how to play. Their play often includes pretending or imagination. Children are in charge of the play and the learning that goes along with it.

"When it is self-directed, play leads to feelings of competence and self-confidence."

(Hewes, 2006)

Other skills and concepts children learn through self-directed play include:

- social skills and relationship building leadership
- communication and organization
- imagination and creativity
- independence and safe risk taking
- empathy and self-regulation
- negotiating, conflict resolution and problem solving

To succeed in kindergarten, children need social skills, curiosity and a willingness to try new activities – and all are supported by play-based learning. (E. Doherty, *Voices from the Field*). Practicing the skills developed through free play promotes children's success in school and life.

"Play nourishes every aspect of children's development – it forms the foundation of intellectual, social, physical and emotional skills necessary for success in school and in life."

(J. Hewes, *Let the Children Play: Nature's Answer to Early Learning.*)

Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale Revised Edition (FCCERS-R)

Workshops introducing the Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale Revised Edition (FCCERS-R) to family child care providers have been held across Manitoba. During these workshops, family child care providers learned how to use the FCCERS-R to improve the quality of their program. Workshops took place in June 2009 and November 2010 with 117 family child care providers attending.

Developed for family child care providers, FCCERS-R was first published in 1989. It is used internationally to assess family child care homes. Four child care co-ordinators (CCCs) – Kathy Morton, Jo-Anne Palanuk, Carol Gardiner, Phyllis Klimpke – were trained to use FCCERS-R by one of its authors. The CCCs then offered the information workshops to family child care providers as a self-assessment, goal-setting and personal development tool. Research has shown that FCCERS-R is a good resource for family child care providers wanting to improve their programs.

FCCERS-R promotes quality programming by helping family child care providers:

- make informed decisions about future purchases of toys and equipment
- identify areas where more resources may be needed



Debbie Thiessen and Wendy Kissick

- evaluate children's play and personal space
- plan and set goals by focusing on specific items
- educate themselves and parents of children attending their family child care home

Providers attending the workshops were excited about FCCERS-R. They could see immediate benefits of using the tool in their family child care homes. Participants easily understood FCCERS-R and had fun learning.

FCCERS-R is currently being used by family child care providers for self-assessment and goal-setting as part of *Family Choices: Manitoba's Five-Year Agenda for Early Learning and Child Care*.



Teresa Pottinger, Christa Greaves, Emerlinda Paculada



(l to r) Nassim Haji, Debbie Proshen, Kim Onagi, Teresa Pottinger, Christa Greaves, Carol Gardiner – FCCERS Instructor, Emerlinda Paculada

Internationally educated staff in the early childhood education field

In 2004, the Early Childhood Educator: Internationally Educated Qualifications (ECE: IEQ) program was created to recognize the formal early childhood education of new Canadians. Participants, with previous post-secondary education in early childhood education, attain an Early Childhood Educator II (ECE II) classification after demonstrating competence at the ECE II trained level, according to the Manitoba Child Care Program's Standards of Performance. After successfully completing the ECE: IEQ program, participants will also be able to enter a recognized post-diploma ECE III certificate program.

Since 2005/2006, 69 internationally-trained newcomers have successfully completed the ECE: IEQ process and attained an ECE II classification. Currently, 10 participants are enrolled in the program.

The ECE: IEQ Program is designed for people who are currently under-employed in child care and who have the required combination of prior learning (ex: related degree or diploma and experience) in the child care field. To be eligible, applicants must:

- be employed for over 20 hours per week in a licensed child care centre or nursery school in Manitoba
- be willing to upgrade to meet current ECE II requirements
- have at least two years of formal early childhood education with a degree or diploma from an international post secondary institution that has not been recognized as ECE training, according to the Manitoba Child Care Program policies on qualifications
- have at least two years of experience working with preschool children before coming to Canada
- have the centre's support
- have an English Language Benchmark assessment (where applicable)

Kala Bharath, a recent graduate of the ECE: IEQ program, immigrated to Canada from India in September 2008. She was offered a full-time job at Epiphany Child Care Centre in September 2009 after she demonstrated her skills working part-time, followed by a term position. By October, Kala had applied to the ECE: IEQ program and in September 2010, she entered the program.

To be eligible, Kala provided original documentation of her previous education, including a diploma in specific learning difficulties for children aged two to seven. She also had



Kala Bharath, Lea Dabalos, Julianna Borkowsky, Deepa Raghavan, Angie Golder, Xiaohong Li

support from her centre to enter the ECE: IEQ program. Kala's supervisor and mentor, Angie Golder, is also a graduate of the ECE: IEQ program, so she understood the process and support needed to help Kala succeed. Kala says Angie was her "big backbone." She provided guidance, listened to Kala's ideas and never made Kala feel that her questions were "silly."

As one of several staff at her centre that have succeeded in the ECE: IEQ program, Kala says that all of her colleagues were helpful in the process.

The ECE: IEQ program benefits participants in the program and the provincial child care community. Participants benefit by having their previous experience and education recognized so they can attain an ECE II classification. The Manitoba child care field is strengthened by keeping staff already trained in early childhood education.



Who is the Delegated Authority in Your Centre?

It is important to have clear lines of authority in an emergency. Normally, the centre director has the authority during emergency situations and co-ordinates the response. It is also important to decide who is responsible for communication with parents and media. As the director must be focussed on the immediate needs of the children, parents and staff during an emergency, responding to the media is often the responsibility of the board chair or owner/operator.

Since you never know when an emergency is going to happen, it is essential that directors designate alternates whenever they are away from their centres. The alternate then takes on the authority and responsibility to co-ordinate an emergency response. The delegation of authority should be considered when making staff schedules.

It is strongly recommended that the director, or a designated senior staff member, is always present when the centre is open.

Designated alternates should be selected based on training, experience, maturity and familiarity with the centre, parents and children. They should know:

- your centre's safety plan thoroughly
- what decisions need to be made
- all emergency procedures
- how to give brief, clear instructions
- how to stay calm and think on their feet during stressful situations
- how to communicate with parents to make sure they are given a consistent, accurate, calming message
- your centre's policies about the release of information
- how to respond to the media in a professional way

The lines of authority should be written out for everyone's information. For example, the order of the staff members in charge can be indicated on a separate posting or indicated directly on the staffing schedule. This ensures that all staff members can:

- know who is in charge in an emergency at any time of day
- tell emergency response personnel who is in charge
- tell parents or visitors who is in charge
- direct media to the designated authority

The key to an effective response is thoughtful preparation. Be sure that you determine who is in charge, during all hours of operation, so they can receive the necessary training and practice as the delegated authority. This will help to prevent confusion. It will also reduce the risks in an emergency situation.

Information and Networking Workshops for Nursery Schools

During winter 2011, Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care partnered with The Family Centre to offer workshops in Winnipeg, northern and rural communities. The sessions were specifically designed to help nursery schools provide quality children's programs. Topics discussed included:

- observing for curriculum planning
- invitations to learn
- documentation and inspiration
- journaling
- teaching parents through play
- encouraging creative art

Manitoba's 2010/2011 Early Learning and Child Care Scholarship

Jennifer Papadopoulos received Manitoba's \$1,500 Early Learning and Child Care Scholarship awarded to St. Boniface ECE students. Jennifer qualified for the award by enrolling in the full-time Francophone ECE diploma directly from high school, where she had to maintain a grade point average of at least 70. Her first year of ECE training has been very satisfying.



Family Choices Equipment and Minor Renovations Grants Make a Difference

The *Family Choices* Equipment and Minor Renovations grant has resulted in noticeable improvements to child care centres across Manitoba. Since 2007, the Family Choices capital grant has provided matching funds of up to \$20,000 over three years to help licensed, non-profit child care centres pay for large-scale equipment, furniture or outdoor play space development and minor renovations.

Response to this grant has been strong with 280 centres receiving funding in 2007/2008, 325 in 2008/2009 and 255 in 2009/2010. In 2010/2011, this grant was used to help centres follow the locked door policy required by April 1, 2011 as part of the Child Care Safety Charter.

Centres eligible for funding had to:

- meet licensing requirements as established in *The Community Child Care Standards Act* and Manitoba Regulation 62/86
- reflect best practices for early learning and child care
- ensure accessibility for people with disabilities
- have the required number of trained staff or approved staffing plans

The following examples represent a small sample of the positive changes seen across Manitoba with the support of Manitoba's Equipment and Minor Renovations grants:

Little Bo Peep Early Learning Centre Inc., Winnipeg

Grace Howard, director of Little Bo-Peep Early Learning Centre Inc., is pleased with the new windows installed at the centre in the fall of 2010. All three child care centres located in the Prendergast Centre in Winnipeg – including Little People's Place Inc. and Windsor Park Children's Care Centre Inc. – now have new windows to brighten the rooms for children and staff. There is more natural light, better staff morale and the children love to look out the windows.



Discovery Children's Centre Inc., Winnipeg

Connecting to the outdoors and nature was made easier for children attending Discovery Children's Centre Inc. after several rooms were renovated. The children and centre staff enjoy fresh air via open windows and a great view of the outdoors. A new doorway will eventually open onto a deck with sand and water stations. New furniture and play areas complement the renovations to make the rooms positive learning environments for children.

On February 15, Discovery Children's Centre Inc. hosted a reception to celebrate the completed renovations and thanked funders and friends for their support.



Grandview Tiny Treasures Children's Centre

By moving from one small room in Grandview School into two rooms with about four times the space, Tiny Treasures Children's Centre was able to expand from 16 spaces in 2007 to 30 spaces. All spaces have already been filled by local families. Centre staff are considering other ways to provide much needed child care.

With the renovations, funded in part by Manitoba's Equipment and Minor Renovations grant, parents know their children are spending time in a pleasant environment with lots of natural light and a variety of age-appropriate equipment. The improvements include new windows, a kitchen area addition and child-sized chairs and tables.

Child Care Co-operative Development

Manitoba has three provincial co-operative development officers who work with community groups who want to establish a child care co-operative. The officers will explain:

- how co-operatives operate
- how to register as a non-profit child care co-operative
- how to develop policies and procedures for a co-operative

They will also help strengthen existing child care co-operatives, if requested. The co-operative development officers – located in Brandon, Portage La Prairie and Winnipeg – provide service across Manitoba.

For more information, call Rochelle Harder at the Community and Co-operative Development Branch at 204-945-3379 in Winnipeg; toll free 1-866-479-6155.

Community Living Manitoba President's Award

The Manitoba Child Care Program was honoured to receive the 2010 President's Award for Inclusive Child Care from Community Living Manitoba at a reception on September 24, 2010.

Community Living Manitoba is an organization "dedicated to the full inclusion in the community of persons of all ages who live with an intellectual disability." Each year, this organization honours individuals and organizations with its President's Award. This prestigious award recognizes outstanding achievement in promoting the best interests and community inclusion of people with an intellectual disability.

Previous recipients, in the early childhood category, include the Inclusive Policies Working Group, Discovery Children's Centre and mentors from the Inclusive Child Care Capacity Building Project.



Waskada Wee Ones Early Learning Centre, located in Waskada School, celebrated its grand opening in April 2011. The centre has four infant and 16 preschool spaces plus 15 nursery school spaces at a different site.

This project was first introduced in 2007 by Dale Peake, former superintendent of Southwest Horizon School Division. He believed that schools and child care centres should work together to provide learning opportunities for children. To deliver the best service to parents and their children, Mr. Peake believed that having child care centres in schools would better serve parents and children. It would also strengthen the connection between early childhood education and elementary school through staff communication and mutual support. With provincial board governance funding, community support and

Waskada Wee ones Early Learning Centre

co-operation, the Waskada Wee Ones Early Learning Centre was completed.

Many people contributed to the success of this project, including:

- child care centre board chair Allyson Brown, director Wendy May and centre staff
- superintendent Brad Kyle and Brian Spurrill, secretary-treasurer of Southwest Horizons School Division
- child care co-ordinator Barb Baumung and program manager Sandra Smith

The strong working relationships developed during this project will provide the foundation for other division schools and child care centres to work together to deliver the best service to children in their communities.



L-R) Allyson Brown (board chair), Wendy May (director), Candice Woodcock (assistant director), Barb Baumung (Child Care Coordinator), Gary Williams (Mayor of Waskada), Brad Kyle (Superintendent, Southwest Horizon School Division)

Funding for Board Governance Projects

A grant is available to help child care centre staff plan, develop or introduce an alternative board governance model for child care in their community (ex: geographic, linguistic, cultural).

Centre staff should consider how the idea will:

- build on existing community resources for children
- improve child care centre operation
- involve parents
- result in cost-effective operations
- help volunteer child care boards

Funding to support a board governance project may be used to:

- consider amalgamating under one board
- review and prepare regional centre policies by identifying similarities and leading discussions to resolve key differences
- seek advice about how to incorporate with other sites
- determine how budgets should be managed under one board
- help establish financial policies for the group
- develop a group purchasing process to cut costs at each centre

Some of this work can be done by centre staff (ex: using a grant to hire temporary replacements to cover centre duties) or by using a grant to hire an outside advisor (ex: consultant, lawyer, accountant).

Effective Board Membership

“ **Collectively**, a board of directors is the **legal entity** that is the corporation or agency. This means the board, as a group, is **responsible** for the proper conduct of the agency’s affairs. When an individual becomes a board member, he or she **commits** to help run that agency to the best of his or her ability. In addition, the new member agrees to **learn** about the agency and the responsibilities of a governing board so that **sound decisions** are made which ensure the agency is run **effectively and efficiently**. ”

The Roles, Responsibilities and Functions of a Board, FSCA

Board members can stay informed and effectively oversee child care centre operations by:

- attending and contributing at monthly board meetings
- ensuring at least one board member has access to the centre’s online site
- understanding the financial status of the centre by reviewing the cash flow and budget monthly
- approving annual budget audits and ensuring the auditor’s recommendations are followed
- introducing new ideas that are in the best interests of **all** children attending the centre and their families
- requesting a monthly director’s report that summarizes:
 - child care co-ordinator’s comment sheets and a re-licensing checklist to make sure the centre complies with child care regulations
 - complaints and how they were resolved
 - serious injury incidents
 - status of employees to ensure staff training needs are met
 - new provincial requirements and plans to put them in place

Effective Board Meetings

To improve communication and efficiency at board meetings, boards of directors should follow an established process that includes:

- preparing a draft agenda (ex: the board chair and centre director)
- circulating the draft agenda to board members in advance so they can add items and be prepared for discussion
- organizing the agenda with the most important items at the beginning
- reviewing and approving the agenda at the beginning of each meeting
- ensuring all board members have opportunities to give their opinions
- recording meeting minutes that include the topics discussed, decisions made, actions required, confidentiality where necessary
- ensuring that new items are added to the agenda and discussed with **all** board members present

Board members should be caring, intelligent and inquisitive.

Eleven Graduates at the Workplace ECE program to serve Dauphin and the surrounding area

In late 2010, 11 Workplace Early Childhood Educator (ECE) students from rural communities, including Sifton, Waterhen, Dauphin, Birtle and Ashern, graduated from the Assiniboine Community College – Dauphin campus. It was two years of “sweat, laughter, hard work and brain busting” says Workplace ECE co-ordinator, Janet Berezowecki.

The students worked at their child care centres while studying part-time to complete their ECE diplomas. Students used their new knowledge immediately to work with children at their centre and improve programs. One student developed a writing centre after noticing a child’s interest in writing. Story sacks and music prop boxes were also created by the students and used by children attending the centre.

With Workplace ECE training available to staff working in rural centres, learning opportunities for children in child care will be strengthened now and into the future. About 80 people, including family, friends, co-workers and board members, attended the graduation ceremony – a testament to the many lives each student has already touched.

The graduates are **Tammy Jonasson, Teresa Prokipchuk, Carrie Baker, Candace Demeria, Candice Weigelt, Karen Bretecher, Marsha Asselstine, Jamie Boudreau, Connie Taylor, Debbie Stokotelny and Debbie Telfer.**

Child Care Safety Charter and Code of Conduct Keeping Children Warm in an Evacuation

The **Portage Ukrainian Nursery School** has a unique idea for keeping children warm in an evacuation. Board member Marie Caners designed black ponchos, which were assembled with the help of other parent volunteers, to keep the children warm in emergencies. With front pockets and hoods, the ponchos will keep the children warm and cozy during an emergency evacuation. Children love to wear them and often want to take them home.

Children are also easily identified when wearing the ponchos. The name of the nursery school is printed in large letters

on the front of the poncho and the design of the poncho makes them stand out in a crowd. The ponchos are stored in a big hockey bag beside the exit door, so they will be easily accessible when needed. The poncho project involved everyone – parents, children and staff – in developing a strong safety plan, says director Lori Carpenter.

Each poncho costs approximately \$20 for materials. If other centres are interested in making the ponchos, call Lori Carpenter at 1-204-857-7485 for more information.



Zachary, Marie Caners and Brielle



Cory Spratt, Lori Carpenter and Tricia Stangl

Urban Circle Training Centre offering ECE Diploma Training

On February 8, 2011, Urban Circle Training Centre (UCTC) held a pipe ceremony to open their two-year ECE diploma training program. With financial support from the province, UCTC is working with Red River College to offer ECE training off campus up to 25 Aboriginal participants. Aboriginal teachings and life skills components are included in the training package. considered when compensating new or existing ECEs.

Child Care Coordinator Retirements

After 31 years, **Betty Kelly** retired as a child care coordinator from Central Manitoba in March 2011. She worked with many centres and family child care providers during her career and always focused on the best interests of children and families. Prior to her employment with the government, Betty remembers using child care as a parent and was the director of the Portage Day Care Centre when child care was first regulated. It's been a wonderful journey, she says!



Shuana Richards, Director of Morden Community Child Care Centre Inc., Betty Kelly, Lucille Hayward, Director of Wee Care Child Centre Carman Inc.

Laurey Craig and **Gale Simpson**, child care coordinators from Winnipeg also retired this Spring. Gale retired on June 17, which is the same date she began working as a coordinator 26 years ago. She says it was exciting in the early years when Manitoba was just starting to build a child care system. Many centres were opening, renovating or expanding which is similar to today. Gale also treasures the relationships she developed with child care providers. **Laurey** worked part time for many years in St. Vital while raising her own family of five children. Their experience and skills will be missed.



Gale Simpson

New Child Care Co-ordinators Community Service Delivery

Winnipeg:

Paulette Tremorin	Inkster	204-948-4506	paulette.tremorin@gov.mb.ca
Carmen Zubin	Seven Oaks	204-948-4265	carmen.zubin@gov.mb.ca
Lisa Ludwig	River East	204-938-5191	lisa.ludwig@gov.mb.ca

Eastman:

Estelle Funk	St. Pierre-Jolys	204-433-2576	estelle.funk@gov.mb.ca
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Central:

Marci Sul	Portage la Prairie	204-239-3121	marci.sul@gov.mb.ca
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Did you know....

- Red River College reports that 91.7% of their 2008-2009 Workplace ECE graduates are employed in child care
- Board members and directors from 91 child care centres attended 3-hour enhancing board governance workshops in 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 facilitated by Manitoba's Agency Accountability and Support Unit
- 54 Manitoba child care centres operate as co-operatives
- Frontline ECE IIs earned an average wage of \$16.54 in 2010-2011. While Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care guarantees a wage of \$15.50, experience, training and skills should be considered when compensating new or existing ECEs.

MELCC Financial Analysts and Areas of Responsibility

Revita Dyck

945-1063

Central Region

Winnipeg Community Area – River East/East St. Paul, Elmwood, Transcona/River East

Julie McLean

945-7356

Parklands and Interlake Regions

Winnipeg Community Area – River Heights/Fort Rouge, Fort Garry/Lindenwoods/Fort Richmond/St. Norbert/Waverly Heights, St. Boniface/Windsor Park (Ilene Marchenko), St. James/St. James Assiniboia/Crestview/Westwood, Assiniboine South/Charleswood/Tuxedo/Headingley

Fereshteh Daneshfar

945-3241

Westman Region

Teresa Cianflone

945-2679

Eastman and Northern Regions

Winnipeg Community Area – St. Boniface/St. Vital/Windsor Park/Southdale/ Island Lakes, Seven Oaks, Inkster, Downtown, Point Douglas/North End, Woleseley/West End

Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care (MELCC) Staff Changes

- **Carmelle Meilleur**, former child care specialist, became the acting assistant director, Compliance, Program Development and Qualifications.
- **Kris Piché**, previously with Treasury Board, became assistant director, Services and Administration in late 2010
- **Debbie Whitehouse** joined the program in April as an administrative assistant
- **Sarah Whiteford** and **Diann Dunbar** moved into new program/policy analyst positions with the program in July 2010; Diann is currently on maternity leave and **Angel Delorme** is replacing her until March 2012



Congratulations to MELCC Staff

Sigrid Quinn - 30 Years of Service

Sigrid Quinn celebrated 30 years of service in Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care – Finance. Sigrid has devoted her career to helping centres manage their budgets and ensuring grants are issued in a timely, accurate way. Wishing you continued success, Sigrid.

Debby's and Margaret's - 25 Year Milestone

Debby Neufeld and Margaret Ferniuk recently celebrated 25 years with Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care. Both have worked in several positions to help make sure Manitoba has a strong early learning and child care system. Debby now co-ordinates MELCC Information Services and Margaret is MELCC's director.

Family Choices: Manitoba's Five-Year Agenda for Early Learning and Child Care

PROGRESS REPORT TO JUNE 2011

Agenda Commitment	Progress Report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 6,500 more child care spaces funded by 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding committed for 5,600 child care spaces for children of all ages in need of care.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Increased nursery school enrolment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced funding for 829 nursery school spaces, so more children can access early learning opportunities. • Maximum fee of \$5 per session maintained with full subsidies for qualifying families available.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Family Choices Building Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding approved for 114 projects to renovate, expand or create new child care centres, including 54 new child care sites. • Grants provided in November 2008 and June 2009 help facilities buy equipment, enhance centre security and complete renovations to support high quality environments for children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Child Care Safety Charter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In June 2008, Manitoba becomes the first Canadian jurisdiction with a legislated Child Care Safety Charter. • Resources and supports, including province-wide workshops, provided to facilities to help them develop comprehensive safety plans and codes of conduct. • Weather radios given to programs. • Financial supports provided to help child care centres meet visitor access requirements with all programs in compliance with the locked door requirement or an approved alternative.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Age-appropriate curricula and enhanced program quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials developed for use by preschool centres and enhanced nursery schools as they define their play-based, early learning curricula. • Mentorship and support provided by the quality enhancement team to help programs articulate their play-based curriculum using the Early Returns Curriculum Framework. • Infant and preschool environment rating scales are used to improve program quality. The family child care home-rating scale is introduced as a self-assessment tool.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Centralized Online Registry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A centralized registry developed to provide parents with current, reliable information about child care in their communities. • The registry, launched in Brandon, is now available in all regions of the province to serve families.

Agenda Commitment	Progress Report
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Lowest Fees Outside of Quebec 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manitoba continues to regulate maximum fees (only Manitoba and Quebec do so). Our province has the lowest fees outside Quebec. • Fees across Canada monitored.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Greater Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program name is changed to Inclusion Support Program and regulations established to support inclusive programs for children. • Resources are distributed to help child care centre staff create an inclusion policy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Flexible Hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The province is currently studying the need for off-hours and seasonal programs. Options are being explored.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stronger Workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six per cent unit increase provided in operating grants – three per cent in July 2008 and three per cent in July 2009. • Wage adjustment fund established to support hourly wages of \$15.50 for ECE IIs and \$12.25 for child care assistants in training. • Workplace training expanded. • Annual training grant increased to \$350 for child care assistants and also extended to ECE IIs. • A new recruitment campaign launched – “It’s the small wonders that make this career great.” • Family Choices Scholarship Fund established as an incentive to high school graduates to enroll at University College of the North and Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface (areas with the greatest labour shortages). • Funding for pension plans and retirement supports for child care workers launched December 2010 and includes support for the employer contributions to pension plans up to four per cent of employee salary, matching RRSP contributions for family child care providers and a retirement benefit for child care workers. • A two-year incentive, effective October 2011, established to cover half of centre employees' 4 per cent pension contribution.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strategic Expansion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research is underway to identify the need for the strategic expansion of child care spaces in under-serviced areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stronger Parental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two community groups funded in 2010/2011, four in 2009/10 and six in 2008/09 will support projects that enhance board governance. • Ongoing board orientations available for new child care board members. There will also be training sessions for child care centre board members. • Board members from 91 centres across Manitoba received board governance training in 2010/2011 and 2009/2010.