



BC Family Child Care Association

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

BC Family Child Care Association (BCFCCA) is a provincial organization of child care providers in the province of BC. Our vision is to promote and create awareness of professionalism in family child care through education and advocacy.

BCFCCA is a non-profit, charitable organization that is made up of volunteer board from different aspects of the child care field from across the province.

During the labour dispute between the BC Government and BC teachers, many requests from the media for information and interviews were received by the office of BCFCCA.

With the normal start of the school year cancelled due to the strike, many families found they were searching to find childcare.

The BC government announced in August that all families with children under 13 years of age could be eligible to receive \$40 per day per child to be used to access child care and/or tutoring services while the education dispute continued. Many families indicated that this is a welcome relief as they try to balance work, school and the family obligations, but the question of finding available space within a child care centre was still a problem.

It was a concern for both parents and professional caregivers when ads started to popup during the teachers strike for available child care spaces, which not all of these spaces were in licensed child care facilities.

What parents need to understand is the different types of care that are available in the province. Children need to be in healthy and safe environment that meets the criteria of the Community Care and Assisted Living Act, provincial legislation that licensed and registered child care programs are required to uphold. This should be of concern to parents, as children may be put in a position where their health and safety are compromised. All Licensed Programs are required to meet the requirements of the Child Care Licensing regulation in regards to both physical health and safety, assessment of suitability of the caregiver which includes an educational component, criminal record clearance for persons living in the home of 12 years of age or older, a current First Aid certificate, reference checks, health clearance, and immunization records for the children in care. Fire and emergency procedures including provision in the event of a major catastrophe must be in place to mitigate any emergency. It is also imperative that there be a record of each child's date of birth, any allergies or health issues, and emergency contact information. Individuals choosing to operate a child care program without a Community Care Facility Licence or being register with a local Child Care Resource and Referral office they could be putting the children of BC at risk.

There is a very good booklet put out by the provincial government a few years back that is a guide for parents when they are looking for child care and a link to it can be found on the BC Family Child Care Association's web-site at:

http://www.bcfcca.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Parents_Guide_to_Selecting_Child_Care.pdf

This guide helps to explain the different licensing requirements for each type of child care license that is given to providers. This guide also explains about unregulated care and how there should only be two children present at all times over the caregivers own children and if there is more than the allowed children present that the potential risk factors start to increase.

For an example, Family Child Care license is for seven children and of those seven, only four children can be under the age of four which for most family child care providers those are the spaces that they can fill all the time so there will be two maybe three spaces in some family child cares that could be filled by school aged children for those providers who do not have school aged children themselves.

Parents also need to be aware that even if there is more than one care providers this does not increase the number of children that the provider can care for. Parents need to look at the license of each facility they are looking at.

When questions of unregulated care comes up, it would be best for the parents to discuss this with their local Licensing office and the Child Care Resource and Referral office to get a better understanding on the potential risk factors of unregulated care.

Parents can find the number of their nearest Child Care Resource and Referral ("CCRR") office by calling the Child Care Help Line in Greater Victoria at 250-356-6501 or Outside Greater Victoria toll free at 1-888-338-6622 or on the web at:

http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/cc_resource.htm

The CCRR Program provides support, resources and referral services for parents and services to child care providers in communities across BC.

It is a free service to the parents and the CCRR staff will give them names and phone numbers of who have available spots. This service is funded by the Province of British Columbia.

Parents also need to remember that although a child care home may be licensed and/or a member of the local CCRR program, you as a parent must make the final decision as to whether a child care arrangement is a good one. Parents need to listen to their inner voices and if something bothers them, they should listen to that voice it just might be right!

Not all child care facilities are the right fit for your child, check around in your area for the right fit for your child.

BCFCCA also has a check list for selecting child care on our parent resources page at the link below:

<http://www.bcfcca.ca/resources/parent-resources/>