



Fostering Our Foster Families

Indemnity

Children in care are encouraged to participate in recreational and social activities in order to have fun, explore interests, and socialize with other people. Often the parent/guardian is asked to sign "Parent Consent", "Release", "Liability", or "Waiver" forms. Many of these forms are asking to hold harmless or indemnify the organization from harm or loss during activity participation. However, when a child is in care the Province assumes this responsibility and requires approval. If there is a claim and approval has not been provided by

the Province, any payment is charged to MCFD regional/local budget.

The "Director" must consider two things: 1) Is the activity safe and appropriate for the child, 2) If in the form the following wording: "indemnify or hold harmless the organization"; "save harmless"; "assume full liability"; or "remise"- this form **MUST** be approved by the Risk Management Branch (RMB).

As a foster parent, you need to be showing these types of forms to your social worker so that they can review these considerations and seek the appropriate

approval. The turnaround time for the RMB is usually within 24 hours.

Community Bridge

North Peace Community Resources celebrated their 40th anniversary with an updated name, and new vision. Community Bridge; Strengthening people. Enriching lives. The mission is to provide support, educa-

tion, and professional counselling programs for individuals and families to build more positive futures. Our new vision is "Strengthening people. Enriching lives." Here is to another successful 40 years!



Foster Parent Recruitment, Retention, and Support

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Special points of interest:

- ☺ Indemnity
- ☺ Community Bridge
- ☺ New Website
- ☺ New FASD Key Worker
- ☺ Welcome George Deigh

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New FASD Key Service Worker

Vanessa Lalonde is Fort St. John's new Keyworker. Her role is to work directly with families during and after diagnosis of a child with FASD. The Keyworker will help families with accessing resources; learn skills, develop an ongoing **network of support** and use Positive Behavior Support to address challenging behavior. The Keyworker Program provides indi-

vidual and community based services in Fort St. John and Fort Nelson. Depending on the needs of the family, the Keyworker may work with the family directly in their **home/ community**.

It takes a special kind of person to be a foster parent.

FASD Facts

- Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) refers to a variety of permanent disabilities caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol.
- Alcohol during pregnancy results in changes to the developing brain at neurochemical and structural chemicals.
- Scientific evidence has conclusively shown that alcohol consumption during



- pregnancy can cause fetal harm.
- No two people with FASD will have the same challenges due to the wide variation of alcohol effects on brain

development.

- A common misconception is that FASD is associated with social, ethnic or cultural background.
- Medical signs are difficult to recognize in newborns, infants and young children.

New Pre Service Orientation Training

Pre-service orientation training will be kicking off this spring in our three main communities of Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, and Fort Nelson. Pre-service orientation is an information session that gives prospective foster parents an overview of the foster care system in BC. Participants learn about how to become a foster parent, what being a foster parent involves, ministry expectations of foster parents, and the shared experiences of current foster parents. Completing the pre-service orientation is a mandated step to becoming a foster parent.

Topics covered will be: a) Standards for Foster homes; b) Family Care Home Agreements; c) Family Care Rates; d) Protocols; e) Team Approach; f) Attachment; g) Grief and Loss; h) Infant Development; i) Human Development; j) Children with Special Needs; k) Trauma; l) FASD; m) Placement and Positive Parenting; and n) Care for the Caregiver.



Survey Results

On January 22, 2014 a survey was sent out to the Foster Parents of Fort St. John. The results revealed that 84.62% of families are interested in learning about attachment, 76.92% are interested in mental health, and 69.23% are interested in learning about FASD, Trauma and Behavior changes. The families of Fort St. John would like these trainings

delivered via website, reading materials, and face to face. One of the questions on the survey was "What is your greatest challenge in fostering?" Many answered that there is a lack of communication between you, the foster parents and MCFD, lack of support with the children's needs, and not being fully equipped to work with children coming from different situa-

tions. As a foster parent support agency we hope to use these results to improve support delivery.

**"Joy lies in the flight, in the attempt, in the suffering involved, not in the victory itself."
-Mahatma Gandhi**

Life Story Books

Life books are a helpful tool for children living in Foster Care. Life books can help children retain connections to people who have been important in their lives and may help children integrate past experiences with present circumstances. Life books are beneficial for giving children a connection to who they are and where they came from and can be effective for build-

ing self-esteem and helping cope with past and present circumstances that the child might be facing.



Community Bridge

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I would like to let everyone know who your new Regional Coordinator is; Kathleen Hume is a Parent, Foster Parent, Adoptive Parent and Aunty to many, many children. She has worked out of the home as a Family Support Worker and Parent Educator for many years as well. In all that she has done her focus has been providing children and families hope for them to build a life together in spite of challenges faced.

Recruitment

Being a foster parent is a challenging, but very rewarding endeavor that can not only benefit the family and the child, but also the community. We are currently working on recruiting more foster parents in Fort Nelson, BC. We are in desperate need of more families living in Fort Nelson. We are very dedicated to making a connection with families living in Fort Nelson, our goal is to make sure that not only the child's needs are being met, but the foster family's as well.

